

NEGROES PURCHASE CHURCH AND HOMES ON ENRIGHT AVENUE

Sale of Stone Edifice at Corner of Newstead Followed by Other Transfers Between Sarah and Taylor.

RESIDENTS BLAME WHITE CONGREGATION

Declare Negotiations to Sell Building Brought About Movement on Part of Negro Buyers.

Sale of the First United Presbyterian Church, a stone edifice, at the northeast corner of Newstead and Enright avenues, to a negro congregation, in the face of protests from adjacent churches and white residents in the neighborhood, has been followed by the sale to negroes of several houses on Enright, between Sarah street and Taylor avenue, which was once one of the most attractive residence sections in the West End.

The fact that the church had been sold was confirmed yesterday by the pastor, the Rev. H. H. McConnell, who said the deal was closed several weeks ago.

Since that time, a negro Bishop, the Rev. Nelson Cleve, formerly of Memphis, has purchased one of the best houses in the 4100 block, and the Rev. W. J. Turner, negro presiding elder, has bought the house at 4459 Enright avenue, neither of which blocks has had any negro residents before.

Many houses in the four blocks cost upward of \$10,000—some of them more than twice that much, and most of the owners have lived in them many years. They have strenuously opposed the admission of negroes to the street, but now, learning of the sale of the church, are offering their homes for sale to anybody who will buy.

Blame White Congregation.

Both they and the negro real estate dealers who are selling the houses for them charge the white congregation with opening the street to negroes. The Rev. Mr. McConnell said negroes had bought houses in the street before there was any talk of selling the church, but was unable to point out any of them.

The only negro known to have moved in so far is Harry Arnold, an attache of Judge Mix's division of the Police Court, who is occupying a house in the 4200 block. After he moved in, about three months ago, somebody threw a brick through his window one night, and police guarded the place for some time.

When it became known, in October, that the Board of Trustees of the church was dickering with a negro congregation, protests were made to the Church Federation by the First Presbyterian Church, at Sarah and Washington; the First Christian Church, at Delmar and Pendleton; St. George's Episcopal, at Pendleton and Olive, and the Seventh Day Adventist Church, at Washington and Newstead, all of which are within a few blocks. A conference was arranged by the Church Federation officers.

Cheaper for White Buyer.

Robert Rutledge, a real estate dealer, who is a member of the First United Presbyterian, represented it in the negotiations with the negroes. They had paid \$1000 down, on the purchase price of \$30,000. The trustees agreed, however, that if a white buyer could be found within six weeks, they would sell for \$25,000. No buyer was found, the pastor said, and the deal with the negroes went through.

The Lane Tabernacle A. M. E. Church, at 3966 Fairfax avenue, is the negro congregation which bought the church. The terms are \$9000 to be paid before the building is turned over next May, and the balance at \$5000 a year.

Persons who own houses on Enright avenue told a Post-Dispatch reporter who visited the neighborhood yesterday that there was no talk of negroes buying houses on the street until the church was offered for sale.

Irvin Smith, who occupies offices with Rutledge, today told a report that he had more than a dozen houses in the four blocks for sale to anybody who would buy. He said the sale of the church had made the whites eager to get off the street and negroes eager to move in.