

2002

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Recommended Citation

Jackson, Jr., David H. (2002) "Booker T. Washington's Tour of the Sunshine State, March 1912," *Florida Historical Quarterly*. Vol. 81: No. 3, Article 4.

Available at: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/fhq/vol81/iss3/4>

Booker T. Washington's Tour of the Sunshine State, March 1912

by David H. Jackson Jr.

Booker T. Washington, the preeminent African-American leader of his day, won followers and supporters by taking "educational tours" through Southern states. Traveling through Arkansas and the Oklahoma and Indian territories in 1905 won him much support for his agenda. His most successful tour, however, was through Mississippi in 1908, directed by Charles Banks, setting the standard for subsequent tours. On his Mississippi trip, Washington spoke to an estimated forty thousand to eighty thousand people. Over the years, he spoke to well over 350,000 black and white people through these campaigns. Indeed, they were his means to "meet the masses of my people and to instruct them as far as I can through speaking to help them in their industrial and moral life."¹ After the successful Mississippi tour, Washington traveled through South Carolina, Virginia, West

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1. Booker T. Washington to Charles Banks, 23 October 1907; Booker T. Washington to I.T. Harahan, 16 September 1908, both in Booker T. Washington Papers, Ned R. McWhorter Library, University of Memphis, Tenn., microfilm (hereafter cited as BTWP). Booker T. Washington, *My Larger Education: Being Chapters from My Experience* (Miami, Fla., 1969), 183-84, and chapter 3 entitled "My Educational Campaigns Through The South And What They Taught Me;" Theodore Hemmingway, "Booker T. Washington in Mississippi: October, 1908," *Journal of Mississippi History* 46 (February 1984): 29-42.

Virginia, and Tennessee in 1909, North Carolina in 1910, Texas in 1911, and Florida in 1912.²

Historians have well documented Washington's tours of Mississippi and Louisiana (1915) in scholarly journals but have not examined his 1912 visit to Florida.³ This essay focuses on the tour through Florida, the nine major stops that Washington made, the racial climate in 1912 Florida, the psychology and philosophy of Booker T. Washington and his supporters, and Washington's Tuskegee Machine, that "intricate, nationwide web of institutions in the black community that were conducted, dominated, or strongly influenced from the little town in the deep South where Washington had his base." According to historian Louis Harlan, the Tuskegee Machine was "broadly based throughout the black middle class, had powerful white allies and many recruits even from the Talented Tenth, [and] made rewards and punishments a central feature of its recruitment and retention of its followers." How the Florida wing of the Tuskegee Machine, especially the Florida Negro Business League, functioned in the Sunshine State is an integral component of the story of Washington's tour of 1912.⁴

Although race leader Bishop Henry McNeal Turner believed that Florida was a "paradise" for blacks and a place where they could make a lot of money, race relations in Florida in the early twentieth century were not good.⁵ In fact, race relations were in many ways worse for Florida blacks than for blacks in other southern states like Mississippi, Georgia, and Alabama. Although Florida is not usually considered part of the Deep South, white Floridians carried the same attitudes and assumptions of superiority as other southern whites. The state had its share of lynchings and mob violence, residential segregation, black codes, and discrimination. There was even the total destruction of an all-

2. "The Washington Tour in Florida," *The Southern Workman* 41 (April 1912): 198.

3. Charles Vincent, "Booker T. Washington's Tour of Louisiana, April, 1915," *Louisiana History* 22 (spring 1981): 189-98; Hemmingway, "Booker T. Washington in Mississippi," 29-42.

4. Louis Harlan, *Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader* (New York, 1972), 254-55, 271.

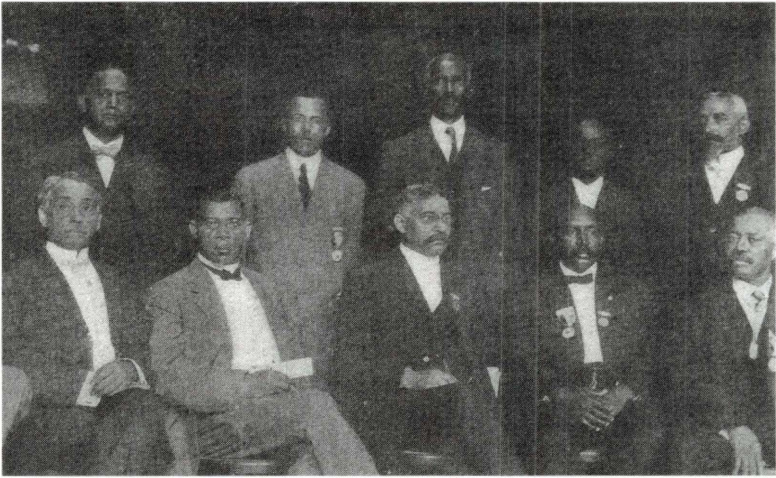
5. Stephen W. Angell, *Bishop Henry McNeal Turner and African American Religion in the South* (Knoxville, 1992), 217.

black town, Rosewood.⁶ The Democratic Party controlled Florida's political system and functioned on the tenet of white supremacy. Between 1880 and 1930, blacks were more likely to be lynched in Florida than any other state; for every 100,000 blacks, 79.8 were lynched. Mississippi followed at a relatively distant second with 52.8 per 100,000. In 1920, Florida led the nation with eleven lynchings.⁷

By the time Washington finished Hampton Institute, he believed that the problems facing blacks would only be solved through a program leading to economic independence. If blacks produced goods and services that others needed, customers would patronize businesses regardless of ownership. Southern whites needed to be persuaded that educating blacks was in the interest of the South. He taught that African Americans should be law abiding and cooperative for the sake of peace, and that industrial education would provide blacks with an economic niche that would not threaten or antagonize whites.⁸

Southern whites generally accepted Washington's message because they thought it condoned segregation. His public pro-

6. Michael Gannon, ed., *The New History of Florida* (Gainesville, Fla., 1996), 373-447; Joe M. Richardson, "Florida Black Codes," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 47 (April 1969): 365-79; Jerrell H. Shofner, "Custom, Law and History: The Enduring Influence of Florida's 'Black Code,'" *Florida Historical Quarterly* 55 (January 1977): 277-98; Maxine Jones, Larry Rivers, et al., "A Documented History of the Incident which occurred at Rosewood, Florida in January 1923," submitted to the Florida Board of Regents, 22 December 1993, in author's possession; David R. Colburn, "Rosewood and America in the Early Twentieth Century," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 76 (fall 1997): 175-92; Maxine Jones, "The Rosewood Massacre and the Women Who Survived It," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 76 (fall 1997): 193-208; Michael D'Orso, *Like Judgement Day* (New York, 1996).
7. Jones, "The Rosewood Massacre," 193; Stewart E. Tolnay and E. M. Beck, *Festival of Violence: An Analysis of Southern Lynchings, 1882-1930* (Urbana, Ill., 1995), 37-8; David H. Jackson Jr., "Forum," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 79 (winter 2001): 377-87; John K. Severn and William W. Rogers, "Theodore Roosevelt Entertains Booker T. Washington: Florida's Reaction to the White House Dinner," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 54 (January 1976): 308.
8. Booker T. Washington, *Up from Slavery* (New York, 1901); John Hope Franklin and Alfred Moss Jr., *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans* (New York, 1988), 244-46; Harlan, *Booker T. Washington*; Booker T. Washington, "Industrial Education Is the Solution," in Philip S. Foner and Ronald L. Lewis, eds., *Black Workers: A Documentary History From Colonial Times to the Present* (Philadelphia, 1989), 277-79; August Meier, Elliot Rudwick, and Francis L. Broderick, eds., *Black Protest Thought in the Twentieth Century*, (Indianapolis, 1971), 6-7.



Washington was the most famous of the many African American leaders of the 1910s, some of whom joined him on his tour of Florida. From left to right, standing: S.A. Furniss, W.T. Andrews, M.M. Levey, and J.C. Thomas; seated: J.C. Napier, B.T. Washington, S.E. Courtney, J.B. Bell, and Gilbert C. Harris. Photograph in Frederick E. Drinker, *Booker T. Washington: The Master Mind of a Child of Slavery* (Chicago: Howard, Chandler & Co., 1915); courtesy of Titus Brown.

nouncements minimized the need for political and civil rights, as well as higher education for blacks, leading whites to think that Washington essentially approved of blacks' inferior economic and social position. By way of contrast, many northerners believed that Washington's teachings made for peaceful relations between the races in the South by providing blacks with economic stability.⁹

Despite southern whites' interpretation of his message, Washington was acutely aware of the oppression and violence that blacks experienced throughout the South. Along with other members of the Tuskegee Machine, he practiced a "black survival strategy," acting deferential and conciliatory toward whites on the surface while not revealing his true thoughts and feelings. According to Louis Harlan, "while Washington publicly seemed to accept a separate and unequal life for black people, behind the mask of acquiescence he was busy with many schemes for black strength, self-improvement, and mutual aid." Historian Bobby

9. Franklin and Moss, *From Slavery to Freedom*, 244-48. See also Donald Spivey, *Schooling for the New Slavery* (Westport, Conn., 1978).

Lovett added, "Washington was masterful when playing on whites' racial prejudices. He knew which of their strings to pull; which ones to leave alone; and which battles to fight." When Washington and other Bookerites commented about "good and harmonious relations" between blacks and whites in the South, the words were meant for white consumption. Still, members of the Tuskegee Machine understood that to survive in the South and make some advances, especially along economic lines, they had to play games and "wear the mask." From behind the scenes, however, they often financed efforts to undermine legal segregation, peonage, and other forms of black exploitation.¹⁰

Booker T. Washington and other Tuskegee supporters did not view themselves as "Uncle Toms" or accommodationists. Rather they called themselves constructionalists, formulating "policies and programs to deal with the imposition and problems of racism, rather than react with mere words or with the threat of retaliation." Moreover, constructionalists "viewed their task as constructing a community and carving out space in a country inclined to keep them at the bottom of the social, political, and economic ladder." Ultimately, Washington and his supporters thought that individual uplift, personal achievement, and steadfast allegiance to the struggle for black advancement would elevate their race.¹¹

It was not unusual for Washington to hire private detectives to ascertain the sentiments of people in states where he was going to speak. For instance, several threats were made against his life as he planned his Mississippi tour. J. Matony of Cynthia, Mississippi, pleaded with Washington not to visit Jackson, the state capital: "It has been said that you will never leave in peace but in corpse or some other way, but not like you came . . . take heed in the name

10. Louis Harlan, "The Secret Life of Booker T. Washington," *Journal of Southern History* 37 (August 1971): 393-416; Bobby L. Lovett, *The African-American History of Nashville, Tennessee, 1780-1930: Elites and Dilemmas* (Fayetteville, Ark., 1999), 239; Pete Daniel, "Up from Slavery and Down to Peonage: The Alonzo Bailey Case," *Journal of American History* 57 (December 1970): 654-70; Pete Daniel, *The Shadow of Slavery: Peonage in the South, 1901-1969* (Urbana, Ill., 1972), 65-81.
11. Maceo Dailey, "Neither 'Uncle Tom' nor 'Accommodationist': Booker T. Washington, Emmett Jay Scott, and Constructionalism," *Atlanta History: A Journal of Georgia and the South* 38 (winter 1995): 25-28; Louis Harlan, "Booker T. Washington and the Voice of the Negro, 1904-1907," in Raymond W. Smock, ed., *Booker T. Washington in Perspective: Essays of Louis R. Harlan* (Jackson, Miss., 1988), 145.

of the Lord you may be safe." Washington hired F.E. Miller of the Pinkerton National Detective Agency to scout out Mississippi and travel with him for protection. Interestingly, the Tuskegeean does not appear to have hired any detectives before his Florida tour.¹²

Yet, Florida was not necessarily a safe place for Washington. In 1901, Washington dined with President Theodore Roosevelt at the White House. When white Floridians learned of the dinner, newspapers filled with criticisms for violating the code of racial etiquette. "Eating at the same table means social equality. Social equality means free right of inter-marriage, and inter-marriage means the degradation of the white race," E.Y. Harvey wrote to the Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*; "When the white race yields social equality with the negro it has defied the laws of God, and he will sweep them from the earth." To Harvey, social mingling could move from the dinner table to the bedroom, spelling the genetic annihilation of the white race.¹³

Although white Floridians were more acerbic toward Roosevelt than Washington, they still thought the Tuskegee leader had stepped out of his "place" by accepting the dinner invitation. The *Evening Metropolis* claimed that "Booker Washington lost the golden opportunity of his life in not declining the invitation to dine with President Roosevelt. Booker rather went back on his own advice to his race by accepting." Since the president never invited Washington to another White House dinner, white condemnations of the affair diminished over time. African Americans praised Washington for the dinner, and his prestige suffered very little over the long term.¹⁴

Controversy over Washington erupted again in Florida a little over a year later, early in 1903. William N. Sheats, the State Superintendent of Education and one of the South's most renowned educators, asked Washington to speak in Gainesville at a joint meeting of the General Education Board and county superintendents of education. Intense controversy arose because his audience was white educators at a white school, stirring up so

12. J. Matony to Booker T. Washington, 22 September 1908, in Louis Harlan and Raymond Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers* (Urbana, Ill., 1975), 9: 641.

13. Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*, 29 October 1901; For complete discussion, see Severn and Rogers, "Theodore Roosevelt Entertains Booker T. Washington," 306-18; Shofner, "Custom, Law, and History," 277.

14. Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*, 22 October 1901; Severn and Rogers, "Theodore Roosevelt Entertains Booker T. Washington," 315-17.

much commotion that the speech had to be moved to the courthouse in Gainesville. Washington even considered withdrawing his acceptance of the invitation.¹⁵ On January 30, the *New York Times* headlined: "Race Prejudice in Florida, Citizens of Gainesville Refuse to Allow Booker T. Washington to Speak in Auditorium." Jefferson B. Browne, chairman of Florida's railroad commission, summed up the sentiment of many Florida whites when he cautioned that Washington was "a threat to the preservation and purity of the white race." If blacks followed Washington's proscription of industrial education, they would think that "they too can dine with the white president in the North and sit on the rostrum with the white educators of the South."¹⁶

On February 5, Washington spoke in Gainesville to a racially mixed, standing-room-only crowd of two thousand. Blacks sat on one side of the courthouse and whites sat on the other. Washington's lecture lasted for two hours and was frequently interrupted by applause. After he finished, many in the audience rushed up to shake his hand. His talk was generally supported in both national and southern newspapers, and Washington's white associates felt he had disarmed his critics in Florida. Notwithstanding, in 1904, Sheats lost the Democratic race for state superintendent, his first major election defeat, largely because he had extended Washington the invitation. Sheats's friends suffered politically as well. White Floridians had not forgiven them for breaching the code of racial etiquette, and as Washington's tour of the state neared in 1912, it was possible that they had not forgiven him either.¹⁷

Booker T. Washington's Florida tour was sponsored by the Florida Negro Business League, the state affiliate of Washington's National Negro Business League, founded in 1900 in Boston. According to a program distributed at its third annual meeting in Richmond, Virginia,

The object [of the league] is to inform, as best we may, the world of the progress the Negro is making in every part of the country, and to stimulate local business enterprises

15. Arthur O. White, "Booker T. Washington's Florida Incident, 1903-1904," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 51 (January 1973): 227-49.

16. *New York Times*, 30 January 1903; *Jacksonville Evening Metropolis*, 2 February 1903.

17. White, "Booker T. Washington's Florida Incident," 240-44.

through its annual meetings and in any other manner deemed wise; to encourage the organization of local business for the purpose of furthering commercial growth in all places where such organizations are deemed needful and wise.¹⁸

Economic development and independence, self-help, and race pride were all encouraged by League members.¹⁹

In May 1906, some of Florida's leading African-American businessmen and women organized the FNBL in Jacksonville. Businessmen from all over the state were invited to attend, and organizers believed they could form a "good strong organization" that would "benefit and upbuild the colored race" if everyone cooperated. Although few details are known of the first meeting, the second annual session of the FNBL opened in Tallahassee on June 26, 1907, at the Monroe Opera House. Among those in attendance were Matthew M. Lewey, publisher of *The Florida Sentinel*; James C. Napier, Register of the U.S. Treasury and delegate from the executive committee of the NNBL; Nathan B. Young, President of Florida A&M College; and Professor John G. Riley, Tallahassee educator and businessman.²⁰

W. Thompson, president of the Tallahassee local league, presided. Twenty-minute long papers and speeches were delivered on various business topics. Napier gave the featured address, speaking for more than an hour on all phases of black life and the opportunities available for racial uplift. "He preached the doctrine of Booker T. Washington and was warmly applauded by the audience," a newspaper reported. Lewey was elected president of the FNBL, and his remarks "set out the actual purposes and reasons for such an organization among his race." Members also elected a nine-member executive committee.²¹

18. "Rules and Regulations in the program of Third Annual Session of the NNBL," 25-27 August 1902, National Negro Business League Papers, Ned R. McWhorter Library, University of Memphis, Tenn.; Circular letter from Washington to local Negro Business Leagues, 24 September 1915, BTWP.

19. For further reading on the NNBL, see James L. Nichols and William H. Croghan, *Progress of a Race* (Naperville, Ill., 1920), 211-29; John H. Burrows, "The Necessity of Myth: A History of the National Negro Business League, 1900-1945," (Ph.D. diss., Auburn University, 1977).

20. *The Weekly True Democrat*, 6 April 1906.

21. *Ibid.*, 28 June 1907. Other elected officers were J.D. McDuffy of Ocala, first vice-president; B.J. Jones of Lake City, secretary; Dr. A.W. Smith of Jacksonville, treasurer; and J.N. Dukes, state organizer.

Four years later, the 1911 FNBL meeting in Live Oak decided to invite Booker T. Washington to Florida. Members hoped that a visit would promote the philosophy of racial uplift through economics and education at the center of Washington's agenda. Traveling with a distinguished coterie of black leaders, Washington would demonstrate to detractors that he and the FNBL had support for his agenda. Lewey organized and conducted the entourage.²²

As Washington toured Florida, twenty to thirty-five distinguished African Americans accompanied him. Among them were James Napier; Charles Banks, first vice-president of the NNBL, businessman, and race leader from Mississippi; Dr. George C. Hall, Washington's personal physician and head of Provident Hospital in Chicago; Emmett Jay Scott, Washington's personal secretary; Major Robert R. Moton, commandant at Hampton Institute; Dr. M.W. Gilbert, president of Selma University; Honorable Robert Lloyd Smith of Texas, former House member of the Texas legislature, educator, and agrarian leader; and Alain Leroy Locke, a Phi Beta Kappa graduate of Harvard University and English Professor at Howard University. To avoid the humiliation of Jim Crow travel, Washington's entourage paid for their own special rail car. During the first week in March 1912, they visited Pensacola, Tallahassee, Lake City, Ocala, Tampa, Lakeland, Eatonville, Daytona, Jacksonville, and a number of whistle stops in between.²³

The first stop on the tour was Matthew M. Lewey's hometown of Pensacola. He worked as a teacher, postmaster, Mayor of Newnansville, Florida, served in the Florida House of Representatives, and was among the earliest licensed African-American lawyers in the state. Lewey served on the Executive Committee of the NNBL and, beginning in 1887, published *The Florida Sentinel*, one of the first black newspapers in the Sunshine

22. *The Tampa Tribune*, 7 February 1993; *The College Arms*, (March 1912) [publication was a monthly published at Florida A&M College for students and alumni].

23. "A Press Release on Washington's Tour of Florida," 8 March 1912, in Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers*, 4: 297-98, 11: 483, 486; *Gainesville Daily Sun*, 2 March 1912; Nicholas and Crogman, *Progress of Race*, 402-403; *Jacksonville Evening Metropolis*, 4, 6 March 1912; *The [Baltimore] Afro-American-Ledger*, 9 March 1912.

State. He boasted that his paper had the second largest advertising patronage of any southern black paper.²⁴

In 1907, Washington had referred to Pensacola as “a typical Negro business community” that illustrated how blacks had progressed economically since the Civil War. Roughly half of the city’s 28,000 residents were black. Although aware of the economic plight of Pensacola blacks, Washington still believed that Pensacola represented “that healthy progressive communal spirit, so necessary to our people.”²⁵ One-half of African Americans owned their homes and collectively paid about \$450,000 in property taxes. Unfortunately, this prosperity was short-lived. An April 1912 article in *The Southern Workman* surmised that in the western part of Florida “with its poorer soil the people lag far behind the active, progressive inhabitants of the eastern section with its fine soil, beautiful orange groves, and thriving cities In west Florida the colored people in general do not succeed nearly so well as among the more intelligent, progressive, and liberal white people of the eastern section.”²⁶ As one historian argued, “it would appear that the early promise of Pensacola as an area for black progress and success had by 1910 become an illusion.” The rise of white supremacy along with general economic decline led to a deterioration of black prosperity.²⁷

When Washington arrived in Pensacola on March 1, Mayor Frank Reilly introduced him to the audience of over two thousand (approximately eight hundred of whom were white) crowded into the Opera House. Robert Moton, commandant at Hampton Institute, led the audience in a few old-time plantation songs, including “Until I Reach My Home” and “In Bright Mansions

24. John W. Menard, *Lays in Summer Lands*, ed. Larry E. Rivers, Richard Matthews, Canter Brown Jr. (Tampa, 2002), 98; Jerrell H. Shofner, “Florida,” in Henry L. Suggs, ed., *The Black Press in the South, 1865-1979* (Westport, Conn., 1983); Jacksonville *Florida Union*, 20 May 1869; *The Washington Bee*, 9 March 1912.

25. Washington said he chose Pensacola not because it was superior to other black communities but because he was able to secure more complete information on this community than for others; see Booker T. Washington, *The Negro in Business* (Boston, 1907), 230, 231-36; Leedell W. Neyland, *Twelve Black Floridians* (Tallahassee, 1970), 9-14; Canter Brown Jr., *Florida’s Black Public Officials, 1867-1924* (Tuscaloosa, 1998), 104; Donald H. Bragaw, “Status of Negroes in a Southern Port City in the Progressive Era: Pensacola, 1896-1920,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 51 (January 1973): 294-95, 299.

26. “The Washington Tour in Florida,” 199.

27. Bragaw, “Status of Negroes in a Southern Port City,” 284, 296; Washington, *The Negro in Business*, 230-36.

Above," all sung in a way "only negroes can sing" as a newspaper reported. "We not only have the advantage in a state like Florida of securing land, but the further advantages of finding plenty of work," Washington proclaimed; "There are few if any members of our race who have spent any considerable length of time in seeking labor. Instead of having to seek labor, labor seeks them. Our condition is different from laboring people in many parts of the old world where they have to spend days and sometimes months in seeking labor and then are not able to find it." Even after those people found employment, the speaker later asserted, their earnings were "much smaller than the wage paid to the average negro man or woman in the State of Florida." The themes of securing land, finding work, and earning fair wages became staples of his speeches at every Florida city.²⁸

While blacks faced many disadvantages throughout the South, Washington asserted that "the soil in Florida draws no color line; its soil will yield as much of her riches to the touch of the blackest hand in Florida as to the touch of the whitest hand in Florida." Moreover, "the rain draws no color line. The sun draws no color line." In all these ways, blacks were placed on the same footing as whites. He encouraged blacks to abandon the idea that it was a disgrace to do certain types of work. Some, only a few generations from slavery, refused to perform "nigger work," rebuffing any jobs that approximated slave labor. In response, the Tuskegee leader proclaimed that "we must impress upon our people everywhere that it is just as dignified to work in a field or in a shop or in a kitchen or laundry as it is to teach school, preach the gospel or write poetry."²⁹ He also urged blacks not to waste time. "Everywhere we must impress upon our people the fact that the idle man or woman must be gotten rid of, that an influence must be brought to bear on them that will make them go work and earn an honest living and cease disgracing our race with their idleness."

28. *The Washington Bee*, 9 March 1912; *The [Lakeland] Evening Telegram*, 6 March 1912; *The Apalachicola Times*, 9 March 1912; *New York Age*, 14 March 1912; *The [Indianapolis] Freeman*, 16 March 1912; Richard C. Potter "Booker T. Washington: A Visit to Florida," *Negro History Bulletin*, n.d., Booker T. Washington File, Black Archives, Florida A&M University. Potter focuses exclusively on Washington's stop in Pensacola.

29. *The [Lakeland] Evening Telegram*, 6 March 1912; Leon Litwack, *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (New York, 1980), 338, 399, see also chapter 8.

Such behavior lent credence to stereotypes about blacks being lazy and shiftless. But whites also had to do their part by setting good examples. If whites followed the law, Washington thought that blacks would as well. Commenting on Washington's Pensacola address, one reporter argued that "if the members of his race would follow his advice they would improve their condition morally and financially."³⁰

Along the 250-mile route from Pensacola to Tallahassee, Washington waved at admirers from the rear platform of the train and made a number of whistle stops. He visited for twenty minutes in Quincy, where the entire student body of the Quincy Graded School met the Tuskegee "Wizard," sang *America*, and waved flags. W.A. King, principal of the Quincy Dunbar School, led a delegation that greeted Washington; ten-year-old Altia Hart presented him with a bouquet of flowers.³¹

His next major stop was Tallahassee on March 2nd. A parade of black artisans, professional men, and farmers, led by the Florida Agricultural and Mechanical College's brass band, escorted the entourage to Fisher's green where Washington spoke on "Some of the Essential Things in Race Development" to nearly five thousand people, of whom about two hundred were white. Later that evening, the Tuskegee leader and his party gathered at the college. A formal reception sponsored by President Nathan B. Young was held in the chapel where "for thirty minutes or longer all enjoyed the college songs and yells, interspersed occasionally with plantation melodies."³²

As President Young moved the party onto the rostrum, the audience arose and "gave a chautauqua salute." Washington presented a very stirring address, noting that although he had seen almost all the state institutions of the South, "the State of Florida . . . has provided for the Negroes in this state the best plant with the best equipment of any state in the Union." Moreover, "I am glad to add that it is the best kept up plant, the cleanest, and the most systematically arranged of any that I have seen." Afterwards, at an informal reception in the chapel, short addresses were made by

30. *The [Lakeland] Evening Telegram*, 6 March 1912; *The Apalachicola Times*, 9 March 1912; Bragaw, "Status of Negroes in a Southern Port City," 299.

31. "Press Release," 8 March 1912, in Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers*, 11: 483.

32. *New York Age*, 14 March 1912; *The Weekly True Democrat*, 26 February 1912, 5 March 1912; *The College Arms* (March 1912).

Napier, Gilbert, Hall, Locke, and others. Hall told the crowd to understand "we do not need more opportunities, but the sense to know opportunity when we see it. Not how much is within our reach but capacity to use it efficiently should be the slogan of every young man and woman." A reporter from Tallahassee's *The Weekly True Democrat* assessed the affairs as Washington "setting a good example and his learning has made him extremely conservative and his advice is along the most salutary lines." One participant recalled that "it was a rare treat to have so many distinguished visitors on our campus at one time."³³

Leaving Tallahassee, Washington and his entourage stopped at Lake City which had a notorious reputation for keeping African Americans in their "place." Only a few weeks before Washington's arrival, six black men who had been taken to Lake City for safe-keeping were lynched. Washington toured the city, attended a dinner at the home of Professor L.A. Jones, principal of the colored schools, and then spoke at the courthouse to an audience of white and black residents. As he began to speak, many whites responded disapprovingly; "Gri[m]-visaged, stoic looking, they were a hard set to move," one newspaper reporter noted, "and of course they had a corresponding effect upon the colored people in the audience."³⁴ Washington's speech addressed the importance of peace, good will, and mutual helpfulness between the races. He urged black people to be frugal and to seek economic stability, and insisted upon equal treatment and better schools for blacks. Then, to disarm whites in the crowd, he continued,

I know there are those outside of the South who do not understand conditions, who say that the negro has no friends in the South; but for the fact that in every community in the South where colored people live in large numbers there are white friends who stand by us, who help us, who guide us, who sympathize with us, who lend us money, who give us work, it would have been impossible for us to have made as much progress as we have made.³⁵

33. "The Washington Tour in Florida," 200. *New York Age*, 14 March 1912; *The Weekly True Democrat*, 26 February 1912, 5 March 1912; *The Florida Times-Union*, 4 March 1912; *The College Arms* (March 1912). For more on Nathan B. Young, see Clement Richardson, *The National Cyclopaedia of the Colored Race* (Montgomery, Ala., 1919), 420.

34. *The [Lakeland] Evening Telegram*, 14 March 1912.

35. *Jacksonville Evening Metropolis*, 4 March 1912.

As an example of “black survivalism,” the quote relates how Washington said things for white consumption even if he really did not believe them. (On other occasions, he and his key lieutenants joked privately about how they manipulated white people with such comments.) But such statements moved the crowd and won hearty praises after the affair. One astounded person wrote, “he completely mastered that set of men.”³⁶

On March 3, Washington conspicuously passed Gainesville and went to Ocala where the situation was entirely different than in Lake City. In Ocala, two blacks served on the board of aldermen, blacks owned large farms, grocery stores, drug stores, fine carriages, automobiles, and numerous nice homes. Ocala whites understood a more equal racial dynamic as well. Judge William S. Bullock, a southern white judge from the Ocala circuit, testified to

the fact that the Negro receives a fair trial in the courts of this section. In this community the Negro is given an equal show in the race of life. He enters into industrial contests, exhibits the fruits from his industry, and is awarded the first prizes at the county fair. As a merchant he is liberally patronized by the white people and when his wares and merchandise entitle him to it he is given the preference in trade. As a mechanic and contractor, witness what he is doing in our city. In educational and industrial lines we are not ashamed.³⁷

People hoping to hear Washington speak began arriving in Ocala on horseback and in buggies and wagons as early as 7:00 a.m., but Washington did not arrive until 11:30 a.m. On the platform with him were numerous prominent citizens including Mayor John Robinson, Editor F.E. Harris of the *Ocala Banner*, and Judge Bullock, a circuit court judge in Florida’s fifth judicial district since 1908, who introduced Washington to the audience of five thousand blacks and whites as “an inspiration to every negro in this

36. See for example David H. Jackson Jr., “Charles Banks: ‘Wizard of Mound Bayou,’” *Journal of Mississippi History* 62 (winter 2000): 275-76. For more detailed discussion, see idem, *A Chief Lieutenant of the Tuskegee Machine: Charles Banks of Mississippi* (Gainesville, Fla., 2002), 41-9; Louis Harlan, “The Secret Life of Booker T. Washington,” 393-416; “Press Release,” in Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers*, 11: 483-84.

37. “Press Release,” in Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers*, 11: 484-85; “The Washington Tour in Florida,” 199.

land and benefactor to this nation . . . he is taking the benighted, vicious, ignorant and superstitious negro from . . . [his] condition and clothing him in the garments of industry, intelligence and morality," he noted; "In short, he is qualifying the negro for citizenship."³⁸

Upon taking the podium, Washington announced that although whites had surpassed blacks at most things, there was one thing in which blacks had excelled: "making his own songs and singing them better than anybody else." It was an introduction for Major Moton "who sang a number of plantation melodies, to the delight of all, many in the audience joining in." And then Washington spoke. As with his other addresses, Washington's words in Ocala were interrupted by frequent applause. One observer thought that he had given "volumes of safe advice . . . and a great message of hope."

Washington also spoke at Fessenden Academy and Industrial School in Martin, which had been proclaimed by members of the Marion County Board of Public Instruction in 1908 as "the best colored school" in Florida. His visit was part of a larger effort by blacks in and around Ocala to display "righteous pride" in black businesses, homes, and the public school.³⁹

Washington's visit and address inspired blacks. Florida Negro Business League members opened the Metropolitan Savings Bank on September 9, 1913, which was "visited by large numbers of both white and colored people of the best classes." George Giles served as president of the bank; Joseph Wiley, first vice-president; and Frank P. Gadson, cashier. The institution opened with paid-in-capital of \$25,000 and rapidly growing deposits. During the first five weeks of operation, it conducted \$50,000 in business, had the well wishes of Ocala's three white banks, and offered interest of 5 percent on savings accounts.⁴⁰

From Ocala Washington's party traveled to Tampa where they arrived on the evening of March 4, 1912. Like many other Florida

38. "Press Release," in Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers*, 11: 484-85; Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*, 5, 7 March 1912; *The Florida Times-Union*, 4 March 1912

39. Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*, 5, 7 March 1912; *The Daily Sun*, 8 March 1912; *The Florida Times-Union*, 4 March 1912; Joe M. Richardson, "Joseph L. Wiley: A Black Florida Educator," *The Florida Historical Quarterly* 71 (April 1993): 458, 460, 463.

40. *New York Age*, 10 July, 18 September, 30 October 1913; Richardson, "Joseph L. Wiley," 467, 470.

cities, Tampa was characteristically southern and showed little interest in black education or black employment outside of menial jobs. In Tampa politics, a “white municipal primary” coalesced after the 1910 election of Mayor Donald Brenham McKay, effectively eliminating blacks from any meaningful voice in selecting local officials. The “white primary” continued in Tampa until the 1940s.⁴¹

Washington’s Tampa visit was marred by controversy. Two days earlier, it was decided that 50 to 75 cents would be charged for admittance to his speech at the Tampa Bay Casino in order to cover expenses. Once expenses were met, admission was to be free for those unable to pay. But the coordinators did not follow their own rules, continuing to charge people even after raising enough money to meet expenses. “The greater grew the pile [of money], the better it looked to the ebony eyes, and it kept on growing,” a white Tampa reporter mused. When Emmett Scott discovered what was transpiring, he insisted the collection be stopped.⁴²

When Washington found out, he considered not speaking at all because, according to the *Tampa Morning Tribune*, “he was not out in Florida trying to make money for himself, and he wasn’t going to trade on the name he has made to benefit the Tampa negroes.” One reporter claimed that as they waited, “some of the dressed up darkies sweat[ed] axle grease.” Ultimately, Scott prevailed upon Washington to lecture to the racially segregated audience of more than a thousand people who had paid and crowded into the casino. The evening ended more calmly with a “good Spanish supper” provided by the Tampa Business League.⁴³

On March 5, Washington and his party arrived in Lakeland. A procession began at the corner of Florida Avenue and Main Street and proceeded to the baseball field. Admission was 50 cents and about two thousand black and white people attended. “All the colored school children occupied one side of the bleachers, and sang ‘America’ and waved the national flag as he ascended the rostrum,” a local newspaper reported. Several hundred whites occupied another portion of the bleachers. Mayor S.L.A. Clonts

41. Leland Hawes, “Booker T. Washington slept here,” in *The Tampa Tribune*, 7 February 1993; Pam Iorio, “Colorless Primaries: Tampa’s White Municipal Party,” *Florida Historical Quarterly* 79 (winter 2001): 297-318.

42. *The Tampa Tribune*, 4, 5 March 1912.

43. *Ibid.*

cancelled his appearance, so former confederate General J.A. Cox introduced Washington, "in a feeling manner," reflecting on the experiences he had with slaves as a child on his father's plantation and the fidelity of his own slaves when he went to war.⁴⁴

The General declared that when he set forth to the war there was a fight between six of his men slaves as to which should accompany him, and that to the herculean efforts of his aide, he now owed his life. This boy...bore him off the field wounded when the Federal soldiers were within fifty yards of his body, and that while no white person save his wife, aged father and child were left on the plantation, they were tenderly cared for and protected by the thirty odd slaves remaining. "God forbid that I should now say one word or do one thing against the negro."

It was the type of theme Washington liked: portraying black people as more useful and enhancing friendly relations between the races. "I have but one object in view in coming into this state at this time," he told the Lakeland audience, "and that is to see for myself something of the progress made among the colored people and the existing relations between white man and black man."⁴⁵

Since many blacks worked on farms, Washington began by encouraging them to become better farmers. Echoing previous sentiments about outsiders not appreciating the relationship between blacks and whites in southern communities, he continued: "Wherever one goes into a community he will find that every negro has a white friend and every white man has one negro that he absolutely trusts and depends on. Whenever a negro gets into trouble in any community, he goes to a white man who helps him out of trouble, in fact, the average negro in Lakeland . . . keeps his white man picked out to use in troublesome times."⁴⁶

"The negro in the South is going to secure education of some kind or other," the Tuskegeean advised, thus "it seems to me that it is the wisest and best policy for the people of both races to unite

44. *The [Lakeland] Evening Telegram*, 4, 5 March 1912; Canter Brown Jr., *In the Midst of All That Makes Life Worth Living: Polk County, Florida, to 1940* (Tallahassee, Fla., 2001), 225.

45. "Press Release," in Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers*, 11: 485; *The [Lakeland] Evening Telegram*, 5 March 1912.

46. *The [Lakeland] Evening Telegram*, 5 March 1912.

and see that he gets the right kind of education, the education that will make him a better man, a better citizen and a more useful and more valuable laborer.” Moreover, “The negro wants education for his children. He has ambition to improve the life of his family.” Washington told whites that African Americans were inclined to live where schools operated on eight- or nine-month terms as opposed to three or four. “Our white friends can help us and help themselves . . . by seeing to it that the negro family is provided with just as good school accommodations in the country as in the city,” he appealed to his audience. Following his talk, his party toured the city and was entertained at the homes of various leading African Americans.⁴⁷

The “intensely Southern” white newspaper editor of Lakeland’s *Evening Telegram* gave significant coverage to Washington’s visit, and he faced criticism for doing so. The day following Washington’s address, however, the editor responded to his critics, proclaiming that his newspaper admired character and ability wherever found. Regardless of nationality, race, or calling, men like Washington were to be praised for their achievements, courtesy, and kindness. Washington was “as brave and true a Southerner as ever wore the gray.” Equally important, the editor argued that if blacks followed Washington’s advice, there would be no race problem in the country, and he hoped that Washington’s “words of wisdom will *linger long in the minds of the colored people* of this section, and *be to them* an inspiration to the things their leader stands for—honesty, industry, frugality and the general uplift of their race.” One can only wonder if most whites left the Tuskegee leader’s speeches with this view.⁴⁸

The editor was not as open-minded as he appeared. While he publicized Washington’s visit and the advice he offered African Americans, he did not recount the black leader’s words to whites. In contrast, blacks walked away from Washington’s speeches appreciating the ideas presented to *both* races, remembering his calls for better schools and longer school terms, better economic opportunity from whites, better treatment by whites, and an end to lynching and other forms of violence by whites.⁴⁹

47. Ibid.

48. Ibid., 6 March 1912; emphasis added.

49. Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*, 4 March 1912. For another example, see *The Apalachicola Times*, 9 March 1912; and *The [Indianapolis] Freeman*, 16 March 1912.

Washington's next stop was all-black Eatonville, home to the Robert Hungerford Normal and Industrial School. The Hungerford School, begun in 1899 through the efforts of Tuskegee graduate Russell C. Calhoun, was extremely successful. When Calhoun died in 1910, his wife, Mary (who attended Tuskegee from 1885 to 1890 but did not graduate) took over and continued to run the school effectively. Hungerford's curriculum was patterned after Tuskegee Institute's, and Washington had helped the school procure its first large building which consequently was named Washington Hall. The multi-purpose building housed a dining room, kitchen, and an assembly hall for guests on the first floor, and a girl's dormitory on the second.⁵⁰

As in Ocala, there was a mix up with Washington's itinerary in Eatonville. Several thousand blacks as well as tourists who had winter homes in the area gathered to hear him around 10:00 a.m. on March 6th, but Washington did not arrive until 5:00 p.m. Still, the anxious crowd had not abated. Washington and his entourage met "enthusiastic applause and the school's yell of 'W-A-S-H-I-N-G-T-O-N.'" The program began with students singing plantation songs. One of Washington's traveling companions, James Napier, introduced the Tuskegeean as "the very greatest Negro who ever lived on earth." Washington's words to the students "were full of pathos and humor as he reminded them of the homes they had left to come to school, and how they would find them on their return, and how they could help to better their condition." Remarks by several other members of Washington's entourage followed.⁵¹

On March 7th, Washington visited Palatka and Daytona. After a tour of Palatka's colored schools, he spoke at the Howell Theater. As in Ocala, Palatka had a reputation for eased race relations. At the time of Washington's visit, two blacks, Joseph A. Adams and Lee N. Robinson, sat on the city council. One month

50. "Press Release," in Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers*, 11: 485-86. For more on the Hungerford School, see Washington, *The Negro in Business*, 77-80; and Frank M. Otey, *Eatonville, Florida: A Brief History of One of America's First Freedmen's Towns* (Winter Park, Fla., 1989), 11-14, 19; *The Jacksonville Times-Union and Citizen*, 11 January 1908.

51. "Press Release," in Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers*, 11: 485-86; Nathalie Lord, "At Home and Afield, Washington at The Hungerford School," *The Southern Workman* 41 (June 1912): 387-88. For more on Eatonville and the Hungerford School, see Washington, *The Negro in Business*, 77-80.

after the Tuskegeean's visit, both men were reelected. As late as 1924, Palatka continued to have two black men on its governing authority.⁵²

At Daytona, the group visited Mary McCleod Bethune's Daytona Educational and Industrial School for girls. Bethune promoted her school as a place where people could actually witness "The Booker T. Washington Idea of Education Demonstrated." Washington first spoke before a large black audience at the First Presbyterian Church and later at the new Daytona Theater to an audience comprised of mostly white people, winter tourists, and "natives of the community." Both groups were highly supportive of his remarks, showering him with applause. Afterwards, the entourage dined at Bethune's school.⁵³

The last, and perhaps most colorful, stop on Washington's tour was in Jacksonville, "the biggest event of the kind that has been witnessed in the city for many years." The black community in "Jacksonville not only surpasses Ocala in business, thrift, and general progress among the colored people but equals any other city of its size in these respects and indeed outstrips most cities," evidencing what African Americans could accomplish "under good conditions and with fair educational facilities."⁵⁴ Washington and his party traveled from Daytona to Jacksonville by special train; "probably the first time a special train has been made up in this State to accommodate a negro," as the local newspaper reported. He arrived in Jacksonville on the evening of the 7th.⁵⁵

Washington's visit was sponsored by the Jacksonville Negro Business League. A brief examination of its membership provides insight into the status of functionaries serving the Tuskegee Machine in Florida. Abraham L. Lewis, a founder of the Afro-American Life Insurance Company and real estate mogul, had

52. Brown, *Florida's Black Public Officials*, 68-69, 178-79.

53. "Press Release," in Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers*, 11: 486; *The Florida Times-Union*, 2 March 1912; Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*, 9 March 1912; *The Daytona Gazette*, 9 March 1912; *New York Age*, 14 March 1912; Neyland, *Twelve Black Floridians*, 15-24; Leonard R. Lempel, "The Mayor's 'Henchmen and Henchwomen, Both White and Colored': Edward H. Armstrong and the Politics of Race in Daytona Beach, 1900-1940," *Florida Historical Quarterly* 79 (winter 2001): 277; Helen W. Ludlow, "The Bethune School," *Southern Workman* 41 (March 1912): 144-54.

54. Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*, 4, 5, 6 March 1912; "The Washington Tour in Florida," 200.

55. Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*, 4, 5, 6 March 1912.

helped Washington found the NNBL. By 1926, he was earning \$1,000 per month while black auto mechanics could expect \$48 per month and brick masons earned \$1.25 an hour. By 1947, Lewis paid more property taxes and owned more property than any other black in Florida.⁵⁶

As a youth, Joseph H. Blodgett had to work on a farm and had not received any formal education. Nevertheless, he overcame tremendous odds to become a successful businessman. By 1898, he went into the drayage business, had a wood yard, operated a farm and a restaurant, and became a real estate developer and builder. His two-story home called "Blodgett Villa" was "one of the finest owned by colored people anywhere." He also owned over one hundred rental properties in Duval County and built 258 homes in Jacksonville after the great fire of 1901. Blodgett even built A.L. Lewis's "grand home." Blodgett and Lewis were probably the first black millionaires in Florida.⁵⁷

Other notable members of the Jacksonville Negro Business League were Charles Anderson, Lawton Pratt, and William Sumter. Anderson successfully operated the Anderson Fish and Oyster Company, the motto of which was to "sell goods that won't come back, to customers that will." He later founded Anderson and Company bank in Jacksonville, housed on the ground floor of the Masonic Temple Building on Broad Street. After graduating from Cookman Institute, Pratt completed a program at the Parks School of Embalming at Cincinnati, Ohio, before returning to Jacksonville and starting the L.L. Pratt Undertaking Company with only \$60. By 1919, his holdings had grown so much that "he is ranked with the foremost of Jacksonville's business men," noted one source. Similarly, Sumter founded the Union Mutual Insurance Company in 1904, which grew from 10 employees to about 125 with forty statewide agencies by 1919.⁵⁸

While the economic atmosphere was favorable in 1912, Jacksonville's race relations were strained. A few days before Washington's arrival, Eugene Baxter, "a tall light-skinned darky,"

56. Marsha D. Phelts, *An American Beach for African Americans* (Gainesville, Fla., 1997), 24-36; Neyland, *Twelve Black Floridians*, 53-59; Richardson, *National Cyclopaedia*, 470; Loren Schweninger, *Black Property Owners of the South, 1790-1915* (Urbana, Ill., 1997), 222.

57. Phelts, *An American Beach for African Americans*, 28; Richardson, *National Cyclopaedia*, 435.

58. Richardson, *National Cyclopaedia*, 463, 466-67, 471.

was charged with robbing and murdering white grocer Simon Silverstein, and severely beating his wife, son, and daughter. Baxter's roommates and two other blacks were arrested and implicated in the crime.⁵⁹

The episode stirred intense racial feeling, and some of Washington's friends anticipated a lynching. Fearing for his safety, they encouraged him to cancel the leg of his trip to Jacksonville. Washington refused, insisting "that because there was special racial friction it was especially necessary that he should keep his engagements in the city." As the Tuskegee leader rode to the Duval Theater, one of the automobiles in his entourage was stopped "by a crowd of excited white men who angrily demanded that Booker Washington be handed over to them." Discovering that he was not in the car, the men allowed it to pass "without molesting the Negro occupant, who enjoyed to an unusual degree the confidence and respect of both races in the city."⁶⁰

Some 2,500 blacks and whites crowded into the theater. The program began with a few musical selections and the invocation. George C. Bedell, a white lawyer in Jacksonville who also served as president of the Board of Public Instruction, introduced Washington to the audience. The Tuskegee "Wizard" suggested that there was plenty of work available for Florida blacks, that it was not a disgrace to perform manual labor, and that blacks "must get rid of the immoral leaders everywhere, whether they are ministers or teachers, and let them understand that our pulpits and our school teachers' desks must be clean." He also urged blacks to buy as much land as possible "while it is reasonably cheap, but I warn you that land in a State like Florida will not always be cheap."⁶¹

In the midst of his speech, the audience heard a mob howling on its way to lynch the accused murderers of Simon Silverstein. Washington, "to the alarm of his friends, launched into a fervid denunciation of lynching and ended with an earnest and eloquent appeal for better feeling between the races." It was a bold move, for critics had often chastised Washington for not boldly speaking out against lynching. The mixed audience applauded his senti-

59. No admission fee was charged in Jacksonville for Washington's lecture; Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*, 7, 8 March 1912.

60. Emmett J. Scott and Lyman Beecher Stowe, *Booker T. Washington: Builder of a Civilization* (New York, 1918), 93-94.

61. Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*, 7, 8 March 1912; "Press Release," in Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers*, 11: 482, 486.

ments, one observer believing "undoubtedly they were applauding not so much the views expressed as the courage shown in expressing them at that place and under those circumstances."⁶²

The Tuskegee leader iterated that those who lived outside of the South always heard the worst things that happened between the races, but seldom heard the "best things that occur. One living outside the South hears of the lynchings, the burnings, and the work of the mob, but he rarely hears of what white people are doing in nearly every community of a State like Florida to help and encourage the colored people." Moreover, "the worst that occurs between the races is flashed by telegraph all through the world, while the best that occurs is seldom heard of outside of our immediate local communities. In no other part of the world can there be found white and black people in so large numbers who are living side by side in such peaceful relations as is true in our Southern States," Washington claimed; "This I say despite much that is wrong and unjust, despite the work of the mob which so often disgraces both races."⁶³

Had Washington urged armed resistance there probably would have been a race riot inside and outside of the theater. Had he chosen to leave Jacksonville because of the threat of violence, his enemies would have seized upon his rapid departure, arguing that Washington did not follow the advice he had given others. Washington knew well the implications of cowardice since he had used similar accusations to discredit Jesse Max Barber, editor of the *Voice of the Negro*, after the Atlanta race riot in September 1906.⁶⁴ In the meantime, the lynch mob repeatedly stormed the jail to take the prisoners. Only through the foresight of Judge R.M. Call to "save Duval County from the disgrace of a lynching" were Baxter, White, and Richardson removed from the jail and hidden outside Jacksonville. Still, citizens were promised "an immediate trial and punishment, if the prisoners are found guilty."⁶⁵

"It was feared trouble would start when the Booker T. Washington meeting came to a close and a careful watch was kept on the mobs at this time," the *Evening Metropolis* reported; "There

62. Scott and Stowe, *Booker T. Washington*, 94.

63. Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*, 8 March 1912.

64. Harlan, "Booker T. Washington and the Voice of the Negro," 144-45.

65. Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*, 8 March 1912; *St. Petersburg Daily Times*, 9 March 1912.

was no movement about the theater, however, and the negroes went to their homes without being molested." Washington attended a reception at Odd Fellows Hall where some leading citizens of Jacksonville spoke on a variety of topics meant to praise Florida and impress Washington. Dr. A.H. Attaway, president of Edward Waters College, spoke on "Our State"; Professor N.W. Collier, president of Florida Baptist College, elaborated on "Our Schools and Colleges"; Matthew M. Lewey discussed the "State Business League and Commercial Enterprise"; C. C. Manigault spoke on "Fraternal Societies"; Dr. A.W. Smith talked about "Our Professional Men"; and W.L. Lewis's comments on "The Press" concluded the program. The next morning, Washington toured the city and visited some of the schools, businesses, and homes owned by African Americans, then left Jacksonville for Chicago on business related to Tuskegee Institute.⁶⁶

Although he did not speak to as many people in Florida as he had in Mississippi, the Tuskegeean's Florida educational campaign was just as successful as previous tours. In a letter to Henry Lee Higginson, a Boston investment banker in the firm of Lee, Higginson and Company, Washington recalled "reaching large numbers of both white and colored people and arousing them on the subject of education and speaking out against lynching and other crimes and trying to bring about better relations between black people and white people." He concluded: "I am glad to say that the trip is a great success."⁶⁷

It is difficult to measure the direct impact of Washington's trip on black Floridians, but the Tuskegee "Wizard" achieved his objectives. He sold his agenda for racial uplift and attracted new followers. Additionally, the way he handled the Jacksonville incident surely won him even more admirers, helping to legitimize his claim to leadership. Legitimacy was important to Washington who was competing for the minds and hearts of black Americans with a new and more radical organization, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, founded in 1909.

Along with his entourage, Washington gained a great deal of publicity and exposure throughout Florida and the nation. The *New York Age*, *The [Baltimore] Afro-American-Ledger*, *The Washington*

66. Jacksonville *Evening Metropolis*, 5, 6, 7 March 1912.

67. Booker T. Washington to Henry Lee Higginson, 5 March 1912, in Harlan and Smock, eds., *Booker T. Washington Papers*, 5: 68, 11: 482.

Bee, *The Southern Workman*, and *The Florida Sentinel* all reported on his trip. Although W.E.B. DuBois, secretary of the NAACP, editor of *The Crisis* (the organ of the NAACP), and one of Washington's most vociferous critics, did not think highly of Washington's tour, he acknowledged the Tuskegeens's trip with one sentence in *The Crisis*: "Mr. Booker T. Washington and friends have been in the State of Florida making speeches."⁶⁸ Endorsements by Florida's leading black citizens showed adversaries like Du Bois that Washington could draw support not only from the black underclass but also from black leaders and elites in the Sunshine State.

68. *The Crisis*, April 1912.