WILEY COLLEGE AND THE LITERACY PROJECT

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ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS

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In the years after the Civil War until the 1930s, blacks in America undertook a literacy project -- a vast effort, long-lived, undertaken not by the power, authority, or bureaucracy of government, but instead by blacks acting on their own, unaware of similar efforts in a thousand other places. In the project, Wiley College in Marshall, Texas, a Historically Black College, assumed the obligation to develop leaders, equip teachers, and contribute in any way possible to Negro literacy. Scholars of black colleges have lumped all black colleges together and assumed that what was true about one college was true of all. While this paper does not argue that Wiley College is a representative case study, its story is so different from widely accepted narratives about black colleges that the paper supports the need for historians to take a fresh look at accepted narratives. Commonly held narratives state that the two crucial elements of Negro college success were overall direction by northern church denominations in the 1800s and financial support from northern foundations in the early decades of the twentieth century; they deny agency to leaders and supporters of HBCs like Wiley College. The narrative I trace shows people of Wiley, its President, Matthew W. Dogan, and the blacks of East Texas in charge of the college and engaged in the literacy project.
List of Tables

2. GEB Grants to Schools Over/Less Than $1,000,000. Page 39.
3. Comparison of Jones Study (1917) and Klein Study (1927). Page 43.
List of Illustrations


By 1900 the black colleges had trained in Greek and Latin and Mathematics, two thousand men; and these men trained fully 50,000 others in morals and manners, and they in turn taught thrift and the alphabet to nine millions of men, who today hold $300,000,000 of property ... It was a miracle ... Above the sneers of the critics [stood] one crushing rejoinder: in a single generation they put thirty thousand black teachers in the South and wiped out the illiteracy of the majority of the black people of this land.

W.E.B. Du Bois

Introduction

When Henry B. Pemberton received his A.B. degree, magna cum laude, from Wiley College, he not only achieved a personal goal, but also participated in an historical benchmark. This graduation ceremony was the first in the college’s history and Pemberton was the only student that graduated that day. The year was 1888; the college was located in Marshall, Texas. How did such an event come about in young Henry’s life? Pemberton’s parents, Charles and Eliza, both who had been enslaved, had settled in Marshall after emancipation. Charles died in 1883, leaving his son the enormous task of combining schooling with the necessary support of his mother and two young siblings. Upon graduation, Pemberton was appointed to the Wiley faculty. During those years, Pemberton also taught in rural schools during the summers and started a Saturday and rainy day school for adults. So strong was Pemberton’s commitment to education, that in addition to his other teaching responsibilities, he established a church with a Sunday school, more to teach literacy than to worship.

Pemberton began teaching in public schools in 1894 and continued his career in public education for fifty years, until his death in April 1944 at age seventy-seven. He saw the need for a stand-alone, non-sectarian, public high school. Because taxpayer dollars would not go to build a black high school, Pemberton sought and received permission from Marshall’s city superintendent of schools, Chesley Adams, to raise the funds necessary to build, equip, and operate a high school. He borrowed the money by mortgaging everything he owned for the school and then raised the money to pay back the money he had borrowed.

2 Personal Note: I have served on the Board of Trustees of Wiley College since 2002.
3 “Pemberton, Henry B.”, Wiley College Archives, vertical files, 112.
Called Central High School, Pemberton became its first principal. The school was an abandoned church turned into a school on a hill between Crockett and Border Streets in Marshall, Texas. When those facilities became grossly inadequate, he saw to it that the new high school was located on the edge of the Wiley campus. Remarkably, Pemberton found time to complete his A.M. and Ph.D. degrees at Illinois Wesleyan University. He served as the president of the Colored Teacher’s Association of Texas, was a member of the Inter-Racial Commission of Texas, on the Board of the Texas Y.M.C.A., colored branches, faithfully performed many other civic duties, and held offices and served on committees in the church at the local, regional, and national levels. Many would agree with the editor of the Marshall Morning News, H.M. Price “if Wiley [College] had not turned out but one graduate, and that was Pemberton, it had justified its existence.” In his lifelong devotion to educating the blacks in the South, Pemberton was like many, if not most, of the school’s future graduates. In drive, resourcefulness, uncommon devotion, and achievement, few could exceed his example. Here was a great man.

Pemberton was the embodiment of what I argue was the literacy project – a movement among blacks beginning in 1865 with roots in the previous twenty-five years. The literacy project was a vast effort, long-lived, undertaken not by the power, authority or bureaucracy of government, but instead by blacks acting on their own, unaware of similar efforts in a thousand other places. It was an immense movement, organized by

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5 In recognition of his lifelong commitment to the public high school education of Negroes, the city of Marshall named the school in his honor. Wiley College has since acquired the school and it still carries his name.
6 Pemberton, 115.
7 The concept of “project” is associated with Michel Foucault and is particularly prominent in his Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison, according to Scott McLean and Heather Rollwagen, “Progress, Public Health, and Power: Foucault and the Homemakers’ Clubs of Saskatchewan,” Canadian Review of Sociology 45 (2008), 225-245.
shared passion and values. To the degree possible in a population of 1,000,000 people, education was the goal that united blacks. Blacks engaged in this effort to achieve as a people the goal of universal literacy. Blacks acted for their own benefit in their own community, often unaware that blacks living just a few miles away were engaged in a similar work. This was a “project”, defined by its vastness, over a long period, undertaken at every level of the community life, operated without direction from a government or established bureaucracy, and sustained by the continuing commitment of elites and commoners alike. Different actors assumed different obligations in the project. Wiley College’s obligations were to develop leaders, equip teachers, and contribute in any way possible to Negro literacy.

The purpose of this paper is to provide a counter-narrative to much current historiography that credits northern whites for the remarkable achievement of literacy for newly emancipated blacks. The paper focuses on the agency of blacks in East Texas and particularly at Wiley College. The college’s role in the project was to develop leaders and equip teachers. Nothing less than a nearly all-consuming literacy project among blacks accounts for the rapid increase in black literacy in the years after the Civil War.

Before emancipation, States enacted criminal sanctions, prohibiting anyone to teach slaves to read. State legislators repeatedly rewrote these laws, called the Black Codes, upping punishment and defining more specifically acts that violated the law. Risking savage beatings from their owners, many blacks continually sought any opportunity to learn. Whites used every level of power over blacks to keep literacy low. While there were earnest efforts among blacks to teach and to learn, literacy was only

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8 For a comprehensive digest of all black codes, see Heather Andrea Williams, Self-Taught: African-American Education in Slavery and Freedom, (Kindle edition, 2005), Appendix.
five percent at the time of emancipation. While unsuccessful, nevertheless, the efforts of the teachers and the learners were a predictor of the lengths blacks would go to learn to read. Blacks became convinced that education was power; more than that, education was freedom; even more than that, there was a spiritual element to education: education was redemption. Before the Civil War ended, white missionaries from the North, often called “schoolmams”, went to areas where the northern armies had defeated the Confederacy and began educational missions. Emancipated blacks welcomed them and formed a partnership. Blacks built the school, paid the teacher, and found her housing. By giving money to the school, doubling their taxes, paying tuition, providing transportation to teachers, and, sadly, defending both the school and the teachers from arson and unprovoked attacks, the freed people demonstrated their conviction about the importance of literacy.

The “schoolmam” effort was not a long-term solution to the problem of black illiteracy. The “schoolmams” who went south to educate the blacks led a difficult life of isolation. For months at a time, not one other white person would have incidental contact with a missionary, nor did the missionaries feel at home with freed men and women. Arson was common. The Northern Methodists compiled a list in 1879 of thirty-four attacks on their missionaries and teachers during the 1870s; nineteen of the victims were white and fifteen were blacks; white southerners killed three whites and four

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9 For a comprehensive review of the literature on educational efforts before Emancipation, see Williams, Self Taught, Location 1-1780. She is particularly helpful in her discussion of how black soldiers hounded whites during the war: “This was a fairly common occurrence: men enlisted illiterate and mustered out able to read and write.” Location 814. The literacy gained by black soldiers during the war was a substantial part of the five percent literacy of all blacks – demonstrating the extraordinary low level of literacy among the enslaved in the pre-bellum period.


12 Williams, Self-Taught, Location 114.
blacks. By the early 1870s, many white missionaries had left the south. Historians have long disagreed about the motives, values, and racial prejudices of the "schoolmams." Their attitudes range from contemptuous to derogatory to sympathetic. The relationship between white and blacks in the schools was not an easy one. Educating blacks occurred in the "complex, textured relationships" between northern whites, southern whites, and southern blacks. Relations with northern missionaries sometimes proved challenging -- for southern blacks and northern whites could be partners or combatants. Yet, with the small numbers of blacks equipped to teach at the time of emancipation and the large increases in literacy over the next generation, the only conclusion possible is that the Yankee "schoolmams" made a substantial if imperfect contribution to black literacy.

While blacks appreciated in most cases the efforts of the "schoolmams", they decided that the long-term solution to the problem of their illiteracy was to teach each other. Even when "schoolmams" were not present, observers found remarkable evidence of blacks educating each other in small, rural, agricultural towns. The Federal Government agency empowered to provide aid to the newly emancipated blacks was the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen and Abandoned Lands, usually, called the Freedmen's Bureau. It operated in the years 1865-1877. John W. Alvord was its superintendent of schools, and so traveled extensively across the South to observe black schools. The extent of emancipated persons' devotion to learning continually surprised him. Alvord witnessed throughout the South blacks educating themselves. "In absence of other teaching they are determined to be self-taught and an elementary textbook or

13 McPherson, Abolitionist Legacy, 174.
14 For a helpful discussion of the historiography of the "schoolmam" effort, see Brazzell, "Bricks without Straw", 27.
15 Williams, Self-Taught, Location1270.
the fragment of one may be seen in the hands of Negroes." Alvord found native schools throughout the South:

Many of them in places that had not been visited by the Freedmen’s Bureau or the Northern Benevolent Societies. They were found .... through the interior of the whole South. [He concluded that] this educational movement among the freedmen has in it a self-sustaining element. It is wholly their own. The officers of the Associations are colored men. The teachers are all colored.

James D. Anderson, Adam Fairclough, Heather Ann Williams, indeed every historian who has studied black education after the civil war, testifies that in their research they unexpectedly happened upon evidence of outposts of education in rural and isolated areas of the South. No whites were aware, much less assisted blacks in founding, staffing, and operating these schools. The glory of seeing these schools requires historians to marvel at the wonder of this vast, amorphous, self-generated, and energized project.

If the solution was to teach each other, then there was a need for black higher education. Churches founded most black colleges during Reconstruction, 1865-1877. Reconstruction provided the safe space to found black colleges. It was a clear departure in southern history and the conditions favorable to starting and expanding black higher education would not occur again. In this milieu, leaders in the Methodist Church founded Wiley University in 1873. In some measure, the name “university” displayed hopes for grandeur. More significantly, its name signaled that the school would have elementary, secondary, and college course work. It had to be so. There was no public elementary education for blacks in the South. In 1896, ninety percent of the students at Wiley were in grades one through twelve; in fact, many said it was little more than an elementary school. As late as 1917, 176 of Wiley’s 384 students were in the elementary school. By the early 1920s, the availability of public elementary

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16 Williams, Self-Taught, Location 1280.
education permitted Wiley to discontinue its elementary school. Similarly, there was no pool of high school graduates awaiting college admission when Wiley welcomed its first students in 1873. The only way to have a prepared college student was to prepare her. It was not until the last decade of the nineteenth century that Pemberton opened Central High, and at that time, Central High was one of only thirteen public high schools in Texas open to blacks. Public high school education ended the need for Wiley to continue its high school. It no longer admitted new students after 1929 and the college closed its high school in 1932. Wiley dropped university from its name. It became Wiley College, a small, liberal arts, historically black college.

In the years after Reconstruction ended in 1877, an era of triumphant and unbridled white supremacy and the enactment of the Jim Crow legal system prejudiced blacks in every arena of life. The end of Reconstruction was a blow to African-Americans and ushered in a bleak period of their history. Yet, blacks took advantage of the time by increasing their literacy, as this chart demonstrates.

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Wiley College was one of approximately seventy-nine African-American colleges in the South founded after emancipation that survived to the 1930s. Historians have emphasized the importance of the W.E.B. Du Bois -- Booker T. Washington battle on the direction of higher education for blacks. Du Bois believed in a classical education, with a curriculum similar to other liberal arts colleges in the North. Washington wanted industrial education, advertised to provide a trade and upgrade a student’s wage earning potential. Schools, historians conclude, felt a need to conform to Washington’s model of industrial education even though many blacks believed it retarded the development of black leadership. Previous histories emphasize the dominance of either the northern church denominations or the northern foundations as determinative in the mission the schools pursued. Wiley College tells a different story. Wiley did not feel a need to tack toward a Washington-style industrial education to secure foundation funds; the church was more bursar than controller of the college’s choices; and the foundation grants,

while eagerly sought, were not sufficient in size nor regularity for the college to depend on foundations to operate. Foundations imposed too many restrictions for Wiley College to rely on them for needed funding. Accordingly, Wiley felt no need to define its mission in a way that foundations would find acceptable. African-Americans at Wiley College drove the mission of the college.

Throughout the history of black colleges and universities, critics have disparaged the schools as being “just teacher’s colleges.” For Wiley College, that identity was its glory. In a convention of black teachers in Alabama in 1888, Rev. G. U. Elliott thundered:

Teachers, you are the shapers of thought and the molders of sentiment, not of this age and of this generation alone, but of ages and generations to come! You are making history by those you teach ... You are the few that are molding the masses.

The practice of teaching, particularly teaching first generation students, was a sacred calling and learning brought redemption. The jaded professionals of the General Education Board, linked to the Rockefeller Foundation, became uncomfortable when blacks talked about education as salvation. Novelist and essayist Richard Wright in Twelve Million Black Voices declared, “Any black man who can read a book is a hero to us. And we are joyful when we have a black man speak like a book.” As Juan Williams and Dwayne Ashley observed, education was, the “north star” of black aspiration. What has become an epithet about black colleges was its crowning achievement. Calling Wiley a teachers’ college made Wileyites proud. Easy to overlook was that the mission also included development of leaders for the black community. Wiley was not a

vocational school. It intended that the teachers educated at Wiley would become leaders. Wiley expected its teachers to go right from college to some small, rural town in agricultural East Texas, often to be the only truly literate person and a town’s one teacher. The literacy project undertaken by blacks required well-equipped teachers. These teachers needed also to be leaders. In addition to equipping teachers, developing leaders was a core mission of the college.

Much scholarship on black colleges lumps all black colleges together and assumes that what is true about one college is true of all.28 While the scope of this paper does not demonstrate that historians can reliably look at Wiley College as a representative case study, its story is so different from widely accepted narratives about black colleges that the paper does support the need to take a fresh look at accepted narratives in understanding black colleges. In this introduction, I argue that there was a literacy project among the emancipated blacks and the scope of it was breathtaking. Three sections follow discussing how Wiley College did not adhere to commonly held narratives of the past as they relate to the Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois battle; the influence of northern denominations; and the impact of northern philanthropy. In my conclusion, I will demonstrate how these existing narratives wrongly deny agency to the blacks of East Texas, the people of Wiley College, and its president, Matthew W. Dogan. For forty-six years, he articulated the mission of the college and never veered from it.

The literacy project needed Wiley to equip teachers. With an extraordinary singularity of purpose, Wiley pursued that goal during the forty-six year tenure of its president, Matthew W. Dogan. Education was not the only priority for blacks following emancipation. Land ownership, fair contracts, suffrage, equal treatment in legal proceedings, and other civil rights vied for the attention of blacks. In the midst of these

agendas, education captured the energy, money, and passion of blacks. It is through the framework of project that I explore how one small, African-American college understood its mission as a part of a larger project that engaged nearly all blacks.

**Church Support for Wiley College**

Much current historiography credits white Protestant denominations of the North with defining the direction of black colleges. A contrary view holds that the churches tired of supporting their progeny. Neither view is true about Wiley College. The Methodist Episcopal Church fractured over slavery in 1844 and out of that turmoil emerged the Methodist Episcopal Church (North) including the black congregations of the south and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Until the two denominations reunited in 1929, this schism would have far ranging consequences for the denomination. White Southerners could no longer soften, slow down, or block legislation to aid blacks. In the Methodist Episcopal Church were many abolitionists. James Brawley, historian of American Methodism’s initiatives in black education, describes the Northern Church as a social gospel denomination whose mission was social transformation. Before the Civil War, wherever possible, the church showed concern for those in bondage. After the war, the Methodist Church launched an extraordinary number of southern black colleges modeled after the liberal arts colleges of the Northeast.

Similar to actions taken by many other Protestant denominations, the Methodist Church established the Freedmen’s Aid Society (FAS) initiative for “the relief and education of the freedmen and people of color.” Its focus was education. Within the first seventeen months of operation, the FAS founded fifty-nine schools. By 1900, there

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29 McPherson, Abolitionist, 143, disagrees with this conclusion. In his footnote, he credits Henry Allen Bullock, A History of Negro Education in the South, (Cambridge, MA: 1967), 123, for making the argument that the churches grew weary.


31 Peeps, “Northern Philanthropy”, 255.

32 Brawley, Methodist Concern, 60.
were twenty high school academies, eleven colleges, one junior college, one theological school, and one medical school. It also founded thirteen other colleges that did not survive.33 The FAS devoted all its energy to education. The missionary society and the church extension society carried out the denomination’s missionary efforts.34 In the Bishops’ letter to the church announcing the creation of FAS, D. W. Clark, secretary of the Board of Bishops, wrote, “Religion and education alone can make freedom a blessing to them. The school must be planted by the side of the church; the teacher must go along with the missionary.”35 Putting religion and education on equal footing was a remarkable act; normally all new missions would be secondary to the church’s main mission of evangelizing. However, here the education initiative was co-equal to the work of the missionaries.

The FAS brought together church leaders passionately committed to a vigorous implementation of the Bishops’ 1866 proclamation. A cohesive bureaucracy would continue to support black education. At nearly every quadrennial conference, the church would debate and often take action to change the FAS name or merge the role of the FAS into a larger bureaucracy. Never was a reorganization effort successful in dismantling the independence of the initiative. Even as the general conferences of the church changed its name and merged it into other church agencies and commissions, there was always independence to the FAS mission and its role in supporting education for African-Americans.36 Methodists had established and funded a permanent agency of the church to provide education for blacks. Over time, Methodists increasingly demanded that the leadership and the faculty of the schools founded by FAS be

33 Brawley, Methodist Concern, 83-84.
34 McPherson, Abolitionist, 149.
35 Brawley, Methodist Concern, 61.
It had become clear that there was little role for white teachers of black students. At all levels of education, the need for black teachers was vast.

The Methodist Church had always been divided into Conferences - usually one or two per state. FAS criteria for founding and supporting a new college included a location in an underserved area, one that could draw support from and provide education for two or three of the church’s conferences, and had a high density of African-Americans. A college in Marshall, Texas seemed to be a superb location. At the juncture of East Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Arkansas, Wiley was Methodism’s first college west of the Mississippi River. Twenty percent of the country’s African-Americans lived within two hundred miles. Marshall, the fourth largest city in Texas and the county seat for Harrison County, had more slaves in 1860 than any other county in Texas. Within two hundred miles were Dallas, Houston, and Shreveport. Marshall was the first city in Texas to have telegraph service. During the war, it had been the capitol of Missouri’s confederate government in exile. When Vicksburg and Port Hudson fell to the Union army in 1863, the confederacy was cut into two parts, and communication with Richmond, the capitol, became exceedingly difficult. It appeared that Marshall would become the new capitol of the Confederacy. Yet, there was another side to the decision to place a black college in Marshall. East Texas was “about as backward a region

37 McPherson, Abolitionist, 284.
Wiley College drew its students primarily from the two hundred mile radius of Marshall, TX. Google Maps.
as America knew.” There were few paved roads, little indoor plumbing, and it was an area always at risk of a punishing drought. Most blacks after the war engaged in agriculture -- particularly cotton -- and few achieved financial independence. Beginning in the 1890s, drought and boll weevil infestation depressed cotton yields in East Texas. Simultaneously, cotton prices fell due to increasing supply from newly opened agricultural areas in central and west Texas. Harrison County had impressive potential as a site for a black college; however, its vulnerabilities undermined the financial strength of the school and the financial ability of its students to continue with their studies.

Marshall, Harrison County, Texas became the first college that the FAS established west of the Mississippi River. The FAS controlled the administration of Wiley in the college’s early years. While there was a Wiley College Board of Trustees, it only met annually at commencement and exercised little authority. Indeed, Joseph C. Hartzell, secretary of FAS, took full responsibility for choosing Isaiah B. Scott to be the first black president of Wiley, observing, “This gives an opportunity for another good colored man to come to the front and make a success.” Initially it paid the total cost of college operations and capital projects. Later, the FAS paid the president’s salary and all professor salaries. FAS provided one hundred percent of the capital needs of the college through the early 1920s. From time to time, it would rescue the college in financial peril. The church provided emergency financial assistance in 1893, when the college was on the verge of bankruptcy; in 1906, when the college desperately needed

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help with current accounts; in 1919, when $15,000 was needed to eliminate operating
debt due in part to malfeasance by the school’s finance director43; and in the mid-1920s,
when the Texas Board of Education insisted on Wiley having a cash cushion to continue
to certify Wiley graduates without further testing.44 Wiley, in its early years, was
dependent on the FAS for its survival.

The first five presidents of Wiley College were white and, as Cyrus W. LaGrone
reports, “when the whites were running it, it did not go well.”45 Wisely, during the 1880s,
the college abandoned its original and remote campus for a fifty-five acre parcel in
Marshall. It was hardly a college though -- ninety percent of its students were in its
elementary or secondary schools, or taking industrial classes. The FAS decided to
appoint the college’s first black president, Reverend Isaiah B. Scott. He served three
years before the church lured him away to become editor of the church’s newspaper,
The Southwestern Christian Advocate. In 1896, FAS leadership appointed Matthew W.
Dogan, Sr. to become Wiley’s second black president.

William and Jodie Dogan, the parents of M. W. Dogan were, as Dogan’s
biographer stated, “industrious, frugal, and sturdy.”46 Parents of six children, they had
bought their own freedom and the freedom of their children in the years before the Civil
War. The family lived in Pontotoc, Mississippi. They heard that in Holly Springs, Mississippi,
three hundred miles away, was a school for blacks. For the sole purpose of educational
opportunities for their children, Dogan’s father gave up his successful business as a

43 See correspondence in the FAS papers between the Secretaries of FAS and Dogan for
the entirety of Dogan’s presidency. Many of the letters were funding requests by Dogan,
the FAS response, asking for more information and the Dogan response. This interaction
could continue several cycles until finally FAS granted some portion of the request.
46 Warmoth T. Gibbs, President Matthew W. Dogan of Wiley College: A Biography, 1930,
14. [No other bibliographic information is available; Bridwell Library, Perkins School of
Theology, Southern Methodist University, Dallas, TX. has an original copy, and a copy is
available at the Wiley College library.] Gibbs, Dogan, 22.
barber and the family moved to Holly Springs. There young Dogan enrolled in Shaw Methodist University, later called Rust College. He attended first grade through high school and then continued there until awarded the bachelor's degree, received in 1884. From his earliest days, M.W. Dogan understood that education was important. Following graduation, he taught mathematics at Rust, and then in 1888 joined the faculty of Central Tennessee University, later called Walden College. In 1896, at age thirty-three, the FAS appointed him president of Wiley where he would serve forty-six years until, in declining health at age seventy-nine, he retired. He died five years later. It appears that among Dogan’s searing events of childhood was the three hundred mile move to Holly Springs for the single purpose of going to school. He gave his life to education. After college graduation, he taught until he became Wiley’s president. Education was his singular calling and la raison d’être.

Coping with racism was not easy for Dogan. During the period 1903-17, whites lynched twelve blacks in Marshall. Dogan biographer Warmoth T. Gibbs observes, “racial feelings were intense and bitter. The KKK, white leagues, and other terrorist organizations were being organized through the lower south. ...” In this milieu, Dogan’s leadership emphasized the value of education, the certainty of gradual progress for the Negro, the necessity of inter-racial good will, the proper comportment of a learned person, and an attitude of respect for black and white, student and faculty, church or community leader. Dogan was a conservative. He insured that Wiley College graduates, as his biographer Gibbs observed, “are discreet leaders… Wiley produces a great company of conservative leaders who really hope for the advancement of the country… [they] are tolerant of certain conditions until they can be changed by the most careful movements.”

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47 Gibbs, Dogan, 23.
48 Gibbs, Dogan, 14.
49 Gibbs, Dogan, xliii.
Railway Company, declared that “his visions are stabilized in reality, [he has] a winsome personality, most kindly spirit, gentlemanly demeanor, and a stalwart character that is but the fruit of the finest living.”

5’6”, prominent forehead, piercing eyes, pointed nose, thin firm closed lips.

He lived a life of strict discipline. He warned his students many times of the risks of frivolity, including this admonition about materialism:

The glitter of gold and the charm of bank notes possess such a fascination for the average man that the best of his energy is expended in pursuit of them. The development of the finer qualities of mind and soul are reckoned of secondary importance...It is matter not mind, wealth not culture, cents nor sense.

Not seen by many was a more scratchy side of his personality. When he had met the requirement for a foundation payment, Dogan sent a telegram on July 15, 1932, requesting payment. Ten days later, when he had not received payment, he wrote, “I have been expecting daily a draft from you for $2181.00 to cover the balance due Wiley

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50 Gibbs, Dogan, 74; Photo and description of Dogan, circa 1927, Gibbs, Dogan, 25, 74.
51 Gibbs, Dogan, 62
A wily, skilled, impatient, and hard-working president led the college for forty-six years, negotiating the conflicts of a college presidency, with the added strain of racism during times of extreme financial distress.

Methodists strongly supported its black colleges and the bureaucracy insured that the level of support would not go down. However, church support could not keep pace with its rising expenses. Almost all scholars agree that black colleges were ill financed and their weak financial situation was reflected in their education and operations. In response to their critics, leaders of black colleges have observed that adequate finance is the one thing that has not been tried to remedy the ills of black colleges. Whites founded black colleges, but the colleges were never meant to put blacks on a level playing field. While Methodists were earnest and faithful in their support over time, their financing was never adequate to establish colleges competitive with northern white schools. Nevertheless, the financial support from the Methodist Church was reliable, regular, and unconditional. The church’s financial support of Wiley did not stop there. All too often the church stepped in and saved Wiley from financial collapse.

The corresponding secretaries administered the operations of FAS between meetings of its Board. Beginning in 1891 there were two secretaries, one black and one white. For the most part the letters were the tepid correspondence between a supplicant and benefactor. Dogan wrote, putting forward the financial needs of the college for the year. A secretary of FAS would respond, rarely turning down any request, but asking for additional documentation and suggesting that funding one hundred

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percent of the request was not likely. I. Garland Penn, secretary from 1912-1920, reminded Dogan, "Then again, Brother Dogan, there are other schools we must look after ... I hope you see the point and know you will be satisfied."\textsuperscript{54} It seemed as if no item was too small to engage the principals: Penn wrote the president of Wiley College:

> In looking over the bills forwarded by you, I notice two or three matters which undoubtedly you can explain. In the bill of Weisman Hardware Company, I note $1.50 for cartridges. In that of Jo Wesiman $3.10 for shoes [indecipherable] … if these items were personal, they ought not to be included in any order or account expense of the college. The Board is very particular about Rule No. 5 on page 18 of the Handbook.\textsuperscript{55}

Interspersed with the day-to-day conversation by correspondence were times of brusque letters. Whether by theft or incompetence, "Brother" Brown, Wiley's chief financial officer, unknown to Dogan, accumulated many unpaid debts to the considerable alarm of the overseers in Cincinnati in 1917. Dogan's writing style changed. Here was not the confident, in charge, responsible college president. In response to questions about the debt, he said, "I wish to again state that I am not responsible for it."\textsuperscript{56} FAS paid the $7,005 to clean away the unauthorized debt.\textsuperscript{57} FAS demanded to have all the outstanding bills. Dogan had neglected the operation of the finance office. He did not know the full extent of the problem. Therefore, he was unwilling to certify that there were no more outstanding bills. The bills kept coming; $7,005 rose to $11,000. All Secretary P.J. Maveety could do was to sputter that finances "are entirely in charge of the President and he is responsible for all supplies."\textsuperscript{58} As the matter headed to resolution, Penn wrote Dogan:

> I have seen the correspondence coming to the office ... I am certainly surprised that you did not keep track of Brother Brown in his management of the financial affairs, so that you could have kept him from plunging in debt the way he did. ... 

\textsuperscript{54} I.G. Penn to Dogan, August 30, 1919, FAS papers. See also unsigned letter of one of the secretaries to Dogan, Nov. 29, 1919, FAS.
\textsuperscript{55} P.J. Maveety to Dogan, July 20, 1914, FAS.
\textsuperscript{56} Dogan to Maveety, July 16, 1917, FAS.
\textsuperscript{57} Maveety to Dogan, July 20, 1918, FAS.
\textsuperscript{58} Maveety to Dogan, July 16, 1918, FAS.
Why continue to write to this office such sentences as "there are a few more bills which I will send in my next letter" ... the situation is very grave owing to the way the business has been handled in these years.\textsuperscript{59}

Dogan's August 5, 1918, reply to Penn's letter could not have pleased him. Dogan continued to be unrepentant and unwilling to take responsibility for what had happened in his finance office. Dogan expressed regret and "sharing to an extent" responsibility.\textsuperscript{60} The situation was serious enough that Dogan offered to resign, an offer not seriously considered in Cincinnati.

In 1921, Dogan thought himself the wronged one due to the failure of FAS to keep a promise to fund $4,000 to $5,000 for library books and scientific apparatus. Laboriously he pointed out the consequence of FAS's non-action: faculty would leave; advertised courses could not be conducted; the General Education Board would not fund Wiley; Wiley would lose its certification for its graduates to be licensed as teachers without further testing, grousing "what am I to do when these investigators from the state department come?"; and Wiley would become one of those Negro schools that did not live up to its catalogue announcements. Dogan did all he could to make the tone of the letter prickly. The letter is addressed to "Brethren" not to the secretaries by name, as was his custom. He included neither opening pleasantries nor gestures of friendliness in the closing. The letter repeatedly hammered away at the FAS's failure to fund.\textsuperscript{61}

Outside of financial matters, Dogan and the FAS secretaries said little. Dogan repeatedly complained about the deterioration of his health, due to overwork at Wiley. Finally, the Secretaries told him to quit it. Dogan could not help himself,

My health is not good, but I am at my post. You advised me once not to advertise my physical defects, but I feel so poorly sometimes that I have to talk it. My stomach has given me lots of trouble all summer. The physician calls it

\textsuperscript{59} Maveety to Dogan, August 1, 1918, FAS.
\textsuperscript{60} Dogan to Maveety, August 5, 1918, FAS.
\textsuperscript{61} Dogan to Brethren, October 11, 1921, FAS.
gastritis. Am taking treatment and am careful in my diet and hope to get well soon. 62

Except for the brief periods of criticism one to the other and moments of weariness, it is monotonous correspondence between petitioner and sponsor. The major achievement Dogan would boast about was achieving certification so that a Wiley graduate would need to take no further examination after graduation for a teacher’s license. Dogan reported on this achievement first in Texas and later in Oklahoma, Louisiana, Arkansas, and North Carolina in 1917. 63 Occasionally he would mention accreditation achievements. Remarkably absent was discussion about the mission of the school. Dogan never connected any project to the broader mission of the college. Nor did FAS show any interest in the mission of Wiley. Increasingly FAS was bursar, not partner. Wiley’s strategic direction came from the milieu: Wiley College was a part of the literacy project and its role was to develop leaders and equip teachers. Dogan developed the plans in response to the community’s expectation of Wiley College. The Wiley mission was, at the same time, imposed by the black community and chosen by Dogan. The strategies and plans came from Dogan, assisted by his administrators and faculty, all persons of color. 64 In areas of mission and program, the church was silent.

While silent in areas of mission definition, the church was necessary to the college’s development. The white bishops of the Methodist Church established the FAS and the board of FAS caused to be founded Wiley College. The FAS named Wiley College to honor one of FAS’s founders and board members, Bishop I. W. Wiley. Elected vice-president of FAS at its organizing meeting in 1866 and upon the death of its first president, Bishop Davis W. Clark in 1871, with the exception of two years, he was president of the Board until his death in 1884. Initially, FAS with its offices in Cincinnati,

62 Dogan to unnamed Secretary, date uncertain but assumed to be October 23, 1922, FAS.
63 Dogan to Penn, August 25, 1917, FAS.
64 By 1915, faculty and administration at Wiley were 93% black. McPherson, Abolitionist, 412.
Ohio, was the chief funder and closely controlled the college. FAS provided over fifty percent of the school’s revenue until 1924. Then the percent of revenue from the church declined gradually over the years. The Methodist Church did not grow weary in supporting their prodigy colleges for blacks in the South. Between 1920 and 1925, Wiley College’s denominational support increased from $15,000 - $25,000 annually, a compounded rate of 10.75% annually. The growth was incremental. However, Wiley’s growth in expenses was exponential due to increasing enrollment and escalation of costs. Doubtless, there would be no Wiley College without the Methodist Church. The college has always depended on church financial support. Yet, in spite of continuing financial dependency, Wiley was independent of church direction. Dogan, conservative as he was, never entertained a project that the church would find objectionable, so it is impossible to measure to what extent the church would fund the college if it thought the college had gone far astray of what the church thought the work of the college should be. Wiley’s existence depended on the FAS and the general church behind it. Repeatedly, the church rescued the school from ignominious failure with unbudgeted emergency funds, thrown as a lifeline to a drowning swimmer. The church did not attempt to barter its financial assistance for changes in the definitions of Wiley’s mission, strategy, or plans. The church was in a position to use its largesse to direct the college, but it made no attempt to do so. It was bursar. Wiley, in its obligation to the literacy project and in service to blacks chose its direction: it would teach literacy to first generation students, develop leaders, and equip teachers.

**Foundation Support for Wiley College**

Nineteen hundred and five was annus horribilis for Wiley College. Five campus fires destroyed important buildings including the central administration building, the refractory, a women’s dormitory, and two small classroom buildings on the Wiley campus. Dogan worked to construct urgently needed buildings. In 1902, Andrew
Carnegie had established a ten million dollar fund to build libraries for many colleges. Dogan requested Carnegie to fund a Wiley College library. Carnegie turned Wiley down rudely with these words from his secretary, “With a plant consisting of only one building costing Forty-two Thousand Dollars, and no endowment, Mr. Carnegie does not think it would be advisable to sink money in the erection of a special library building.” It appeared that there would be no Carnegie Library at Wiley College.

Dogan found an alternative route to get a second hearing from Carnegie. Emmett J. Scott had studied at Wiley for three years and later became, in 1897, Booker T. Washington’s confidential secretary. From then until Washington’s death in 1915, it was never possible to tell what Washington had penned and what was ghosted by Scott. Scott maintained a fondness for Wiley and a friendship with its president. After Carnegie’s letter of rejection, Scott wrote to Washington “requesting that he take up the Wiley College request” in a meeting that Washington was to have with Carnegie. Wrote Scott, “The work being done by Wiley is such as to entitle it, I believe, to consideration at Mr. Carnegie’s hand.” After Washington’s meeting with Carnegie, on March 26, 1906, Carnegie’s secretary wrote Dogan, “He will be glad to pay for the erection of the library.”

As a condition of Carnegie’s gift, Wiley College would have to match it with an endowment for maintenance of the library. The college, however, was unable to raise the funds. Washington wrote to Carnegie, “Mr. Scott is very anxious that this school, from which he came, secure one of your libraries … to raise fifteen thousand dollars, however, is something of a hardship.” In lieu of the match, Washington suggested an annual pledge by Wiley’s trustees for five hundred dollars, the match guaranteed by the

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65 Carnegie Corporation of New York Archives, Rare Books and Manuscript Library, Butler Library, Columbia University, NY, II.A.1.B., P. Secretary to Dogan, February 3, 1905.
67 Carnegie Papers, P Secretary to Dogan, March 26, 1906.
Freedmen’s Aid and Southern Education Societies. Carnegie waived the condition of the match in May 1906 but urged that this action not be made public, a promise that Dogan was happy to make.\textsuperscript{69} Waiving the match proved not to be unprecedented. Robert Norrell, Washington’s biographer, summarized that Carnegie helped at least twenty-two black educational institutions get Carnegie libraries. The applicant first made the request to Carnegie, who sought Washington’s opinion. “If Booker approved, as he always did, Carnegie offered money, usually with the stipulation of a local match … when it could not raise the matching funds … Booker begged him to waive the match requirement.” Carnegie then granted the money.\textsuperscript{70} With the Carnegie funds in hand, Wiley built a dramatic library, the only Carnegie funded black college library in Texas.\textsuperscript{71}

An imbedded historiography presumes that black colleges had to have Booker T. Washington’s blessing to get northern foundation funding.\textsuperscript{72} The way to get his blessing was to adopt industrial education. Embracing Washington, many concluded, meant embracing Industrial education, considered by many blacks to be inferior education, education inimical to black political aspirations, and education designed in a way to limit the progress of African-Americans. Black colleges, it is thought, tilted to industrial education and then Washington advocated for them at the GEB and with other foundations that funded black higher education. Although the scope of this paper is limited to Wiley College, the persistence of this belief is difficult to understand. Only two schools totally embraced industrial education, Hampton and Tuskegee. They did so well before northern foundation funding was a consideration. Many schools that the GEB

\textsuperscript{69} Carnegie Papers, Carnegie Secretary to Washington, May 7, 1906.

\textsuperscript{70} Robert Norell, Up from History, 312.

\textsuperscript{71} Heintze, Texas Black Colleges, 139.

\textsuperscript{72} Industrial education, according to Washington, was a combination of mental and manual education to give blacks the prospect of financial stability above the subsistence level. He wanted to equip teachers “not only in the schoolhouse but on the farm, in the flower garden and the house.” Norrell, Washington, f 22, 450: “A Speech before the Alabama State Teachers’ Association,” in Booker T. Washington Papers, Open Book Edition (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2008): vol 2: 193-5.
supported were strongly opposed to industrial education, including Fisk, the black schools in Atlanta, and Dillard. Combined, these schools received over $21,000,000 from GEB, 54% of its total grants to black colleges. The idea of a connection between industrial education and the GEB funding needs at least reexamination. Wiley tells a different story than current historiography concludes. It kept its classical curriculum and its president maintained a friendship with Washington. Dogan was always at his side when he was in Texas and was a part of the welcoming committee during a trip to Shreveport seven months before Washington died. The assistance given Dogan by Washington in part dispels the notion that Washington would aid only colleges with an industrial pedagogy. Wiley was founded by the church with a classical education model and had little industrial program. The Wiley experience and Norrell’s observation that Carnegie looked to Washington for approval of a black college application and that approval was “always” forthcoming further undermines the contention that Washington would assist only colleges whose curriculum was based on industrial education.

In 1934, Horace Mann Bond, Dean of the School of Education at Atlanta University, declared that the overarching question facing those involved in higher education for blacks was: “Shall the school in which Negro children are enrolled have objectives, curricula, and methods which are distinct from those enrolling American White children?” Booker T. Washington, the leader of blacks at the turn of the century, answered that question with a “yes”. Washington built a magnificent campus at Tuskegee, Alabama. Famous for its industrial education, Tuskegee had programs in the trades and provided agricultural education in its degree work and in extensive continuing education. While famous for industrial education, Tuskegee’s real

74 Norrell, Up from History, 312.
contribution was remarkably similar to Wiley’s: Tuskegee would develop character and equip teachers. The name of the school, Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute, suggests its priorities: it was a normal school (teacher’s college) first and an industrial school second. In 1890, a student could choose academic subjects leading to a life as a teacher or one of fourteen trades. Most of the graduates of Tuskegee were on the path to become teachers. Initially the white industrial philanthropists were interested in Tuskegee because of its industrial education, believing the only correct role for black schools was to build a better-trained work force. Fully aware of the biases of the white northern funders, when Booker T. Washington went north, he stressed the trade school emphasis and played down the fact that most of his school’s diplomas went to teachers who had chosen the academic track. His biographer wrote that he knew what he was doing: he would become a master of indirection, and the hidden hand of action.

Among blacks, though, industrial education was highly controversial. Many believed industrial education was a distinct form of inferior education. In both contemporaneous and historical accounts, many blacks agreed with William H. Watkins that the educational system available to blacks, including industrial education, limited progress for African-Americans. The controversy over education pedagogy became personal in the ongoing battle between Booker T. Washington and W.E.B. Du Bois.

Washington’s biographer, Robert Norrell, describes how deeply personal was the animus between Washington and Du Bois. It was rooted in a belief by Du Bois that Washington had blackballed him from a number of positions of promise where he had

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76 Norrell, Up from History, 97.
77 Norrell, Up from History, 60.
78 The most comprehensive statement of this position is William H. Watkins, The White Architects of Black Educational Ideology and Power in America, 1865-1954, (NY: Teachers College Press, Columbia University, 2001). The contemporaneous account arguing the other side is Fosdick, Adventure in Giving. James D. Anderson presents a balanced view, arguing that: “Both schooling for democratic citizenship and schooling for second-class citizenship have been basic traditions in American Education”, in Black Education in the South, 1.
made application, particularly the Assistant Superintendent for Negro schools in the
Washington, D.C. system. He also believed that Washington had torpedoed some of his
foundation grant proposals. Washington, on the other hand, believed that Du Bois was
unnecessarily pejorative in his published articles, particularly his oft-quoted chapter three
of his Souls of Black Folk, entitled “Of Mr. Booker T. Washington and Others.” Particularly
hurtful was this well-crafted statement:

But so far as Mr. Washington apologizes for injustice, North or South, does not
rightly value the privilege and duty of voting, belittles the emasculating effects of
caste distinction, and opposes the higher training and ambition of our brighter
minds, -- so far as he ... does this, -- we must unceasingly and firmly oppose them.

So developed this extreme dislike that would intensify until Washington’s death in 1915.

Industrial education as an accepted education for blacks had a lifespan from
the 1870s to the early 1920s. Samuel Chapman Armstrong established industrial
education in 1868 with the founding of Hampton Institute of Technology. Booker T.
Washington left the coalmines in Malden, West Virginia in 1872 to travel five hundred
miles to enroll there. Soon after graduation, Washington founded Tuskegee in 1881.
Whites believed in industrial education. In 1890, Congress passed the Land Grant
College Act Amendment, calling for the establishment of land grant colleges for African-
Americans. The amendment required each state that did not have a unitary system of
higher education had to have at least one public college for African-Americans and the
legislation partially funded the development of these schools. The curriculum of these
schools was to be industrial and agricultural. There was a similar pattern at these schools.

79 Norrell believes all this untrue and points to its absence from his sources. Argument
from silence is always difficult to sustain. Certainly, Booker T. Washington was not above
such behavior, as Norrell’s observation and evidence of Washington’s indirection would
support. In addition, no doubt, any negative words about Du Bois would be ones that he
would not want to memorialize in his papers. I conclude that the Du Bois accusation of
what Washington did to torpedo his chances is not proved but nor is the reciprocal
proved. Norrell, Up from History, 60, 96-7, 173.
original, Chicago, IL: A.C. McClurg and Co., 1903. 35.
Resembling Tuskegee, only about ten percent of the students took classes in agriculture or the trades. Industrial education became the only higher education that many whites thought appropriate for blacks. Its inadequacies became increasingly apparent to blacks and whites alike. President Theodore Roosevelt in 1908 summoned to the White House Dr. Wallace Buttrick, secretary and executive officer of the General Education Board (GEB), a philanthropy of John D. Rockefeller that funded black education in the South. Roosevelt had accepted an invitation from Tuskegee Institute’s President Booker T. Washington to speak on campus, and wanted advice. Roosevelt told Buttrick he intended to promote agricultural and industrial education. He said he would not recommend any further education for blacks. Buttrick replied that the teacher who gave the instruction would require education that is more advanced. Roosevelt agreed and conceded that the South must have normal schools to train teachers. He would stop there. Buttrick asked who was going to teach in the normal schools.

Buttrick had traveled far. Initially, he supported only industrial education for blacks in the South. Now he believed all education needed to be improved, including classical college education. He had come to believe that industrial education was not sufficient for blacks in the South. He convinced Roosevelt. Roosevelt titled his speech at Tuskegee “No Place to Stop.”

Tuskegee’s pedagogy aimed to equip teachers rather than create skilled craftsmen. Tuskegee required each student do two hours daily of hard, physical labor. The purpose was not to develop a trade or agricultural skills. Its labor component was to build character. Tuskegee’s graduates would be persons of character equipped to teach. Wiley also required all students to do physical labor—one hour of manual labor daily, more to save expenses than as a part of a young persons’ education. Wiley had a

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81 Fairclough, “Being in the Field”, 81.
82 Fosdick, Adventure, 188.
classical orientation, as the attention to Hebrew, Latin, and literature underscored. More important than their difference on industrial versus classical education is that Wiley and Tuskegee shared a mission to educate first generation students, preparing them to be leaders, and equipping them to be teachers.

This conflict between Washington and Du Bois became increasingly public and nasty during the period of 1895-1915. Then in 1915, Booker T. Washington died and without him, industrial education lost its most powerful spokesman and thereafter many of its adherents. A clear winner emerged as blacks rejected industrial education and demanded education patterned after the pedagogy of the northern classical colleges. A number of factors contributed to this outcome, none more important than the rejection by black leaders of the idea that blacks ought to have a unique curriculum. Eric Anderson and Alfred A. Moss, Jr. in Dangerous Donations argue that much of the educational development in the early twentieth century was in response to the demands of blacks that their education follow national standards. They would not accept a curriculum disdained in white schools. Students also demanded that black schools have a curriculum similar to white schools; there were student demonstrations, even riots, at Hampton and Tuskegee in the early 1900s. North Carolina in 1925 raised standards for teacher certification to require a four-year college degree from an accredited college to be certified for grades nine through twelve. When a Hampton or Tuskegee diploma did not meet standards for teacher certification, the era of industrial education was ending.

Historiography has characterized the animus between them as a battle between two titans, each with his own army, locked in ideological conflict over this one issue of industrial education. In fact, Wiley’s history shows that the situation was one of changing

83 Anderson and Moss, Dangerous Donations, 38.
84 Anderson, Education of Blacks in the South, 273. See also Anderson and Moss, Dangerous Donations, 89.
alliances. Dogan and Du Bois agreed that there should not be a different education for
blacks than whites. Nevertheless, Dogan and Washington were together on other issues.
On issues regarding the appropriate method of securing civic and political rights, Dogan
sided with Washington. Dogan was not indulgent with students or teachers who
believed in constant agitation and they did not last long at Wiley. Doubtless, Du Bois
would conclude that Dogan’s discrete leaders were wrong in not “unceasingly and firmly
opposing ... in every civilized and peaceful method” available the opponents of black
civil and political rights.

The shared role as president of a black college brought Dogan and Washington
together. Generally, black college presidents have been criticized for their conservative
class. Christopher Jencks and David Riesman reinforced the most negative
stereotypes of black college presidents when they wrote:

...the authoritarian atmosphere of the Negro colleges, with the intervening
trustees, the domineering but frightened president, the faculty tyrannized by the
president... Presidents dealt with multiple stakeholders including students, faculty, African-American
supporters, northern whites, and local white political and police power. Avoiding being
in the newspapers on black-white issues was a necessary skill for black college presidents.
Daniel Thompson in Private Black Colleges at the Crossroads said that until the 1960’s,
black colleges were regarded as conservative and non-confrontational in their
respective communities. They scrupulously refrained from taking any active part in civil
or political protest. Dogan distanced himself from the civil and political clashes of his

85 Gibbs, Dogan, 41.
86 Du Bois, Souls of Black Folk, 35.
88 D.C. Thompson, Private Black Colleges at the Crossroads, (Westport, Connecticut:
Greenwood Press, 1973), 16. Gasman will provide additional insights into the dynamics of
black college presidents in “Conservative Reputation of HBCU Presidents”, forthcoming,
based in part on a lecture by the author at Columbia University, November 2, 2010. See
also Fairclough, “Being in the Field,” 70.
 Nevertheless, he was one of the first black college presidents to permit faculty, as early as World War I, to join the National Association of Colored People (NAACP). Dogan artfully embraced the passions of Washington and Du Bois, while navigating a third way.

Booker T. Washington and Matthew W. Dogan had this great difference: in addition to being president of a college, Washington was the leader of blacks. Washington was subject to intense criticism from the time of his 1895 Atlanta Exposition speech to his death in 1915. Whites criticized him for his muffled disapproval of southern racial practices; blacks for betraying his people’s deepest aspirations. His legacy was in great measure the result of what he did away from Tuskegee. Dogan, conversely, played on the Wiley College stage where his conservative creed did not expose him to the battering delivered to Washington. This allowed M.W. Dogan to die praised by black and white alike. His lower profile allowed his institutional success as president of Wiley to be his legacy.

The battle between Washington and Du Bois deeply affected the direction, values, and roles of blacks in their freedom struggles of the twentieth century. Much of the historiography assumes that each college had to choose between classical education, alignment with W.E.B. Du Bois, and disqualification from foundation support; or, industrial education, alignment with Booker T. Washington, thus providing important inroads to foundation funding. Dogan had staked out a path for himself and Wiley College that neither wholly embraced Washington nor fully opposed Du Bois. The result: the Washington Du Bois struggle mattered little to Wiley College.

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The General Education Board and Wiley College

Beginning in the last decade of the nineteenth century, northern industrialists, including John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, William H. Baldwin, George Foster Peabody, John F. Slater, Robert C. Ogden, and Anson Phelps Stokes, turned to the needs of higher education for blacks in the South as a major national issue. Initially they had funded initiatives for public education for grades one through twelve. Each school served blacks or whites, separate but never equal. The philanthropists knew that private philanthropy could not fund public education, so their efforts were to assist states develop universal public education. As these efforts were beginning to show success, the industrialists turned their attention to higher education for blacks. Early on, the industrialists agreed that a comprehensive report on the quality of black colleges was needed. As early as 1901, philanthropists sought to assess the state of black higher education. In 1901, a group of fifty philanthropists including the young John D. Rockefeller, Jr. chartered a train to visit outstanding Negro schools, dubbed the “millionaires special” by antagonistic Southern newspapers. As the philanthropists determined that they would be making grants to black higher education, they coalesced on the need for a comprehensive assessment of the current state of higher education among blacks. Accordingly, the Phelps-Stokes Fund collaborated with the U.S. Bureau of Education in the Department of the Interior to do a comprehensive study of higher education for blacks in the South. The Phelps Stokes Fund provided its Education Director (Chief Executive Officer) Thomas Jesse Jones to be the chief researcher. His bona fides were impeccable: Welch-born; educated at a Southern university, a Midwestern college, a nondenominational theological school, and an Ivy

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90 Fosdick, Adventure, 4-5.
League school. He had done extensive study on the 1910 Census, particularly the data on blacks. Over several years he headed a research team that was thorough and produced an impressive document, published in two volumes in 1917: Negro Education: A Study of the Private and Higher Schools for Colored People in the United States. Jones had a bias for industrial education. He reported each college’s offerings in industrial education. However, his work transcended the dichotomy between industrial and classical education. He wanted a “modern” education and eschewed the teaching of classical languages including Latin, Hebrew, and Greek. He believed that there was excessive emphasis on bookish studies at black colleges. Too little attention, he thought, was devoted to the sciences. His conclusions on black colleges were brutal:

Only three institutions have a student body, a teaching force, and equipment and an income sufficient to warrant the characterization of “college”. Fifteen other institutions [including Wiley College] are offering college courses which represent a wide variation of standards. Fifteen other schools are teaching some college subjects.

Thirty-three out of 653 private and state schools that called themselves college met the rudimentary requirement of teaching some college subjects. Nevertheless, he conceded that black colleges, with all their limitations, were the chief supplier of public school teachers, religious leaders, and physicians to blacks.

W.E.B. Du Bois wrote a contemptuous critique of the Jones report. He acknowledged that this was the first comprehensive scholarship on black colleges and so it was worthy of commendation. Having said that, he ripped into the Jones report based on Jones’ scorn of teaching Greek and Latin. He pointed out that there were no public schools to prepare young blacks for higher education and so his criticism of black

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92 Jones, Negro Education, II, 1.
93 Jones, Negro Education 1, 58-61.
94 Jones, Negro Education, I, 12.
college students’ insufficient preparation for college was blaming the victim. He dismissed the idea of allowing the GEB to dominate policy toward black colleges as “unfortunate and dangerous” due to GEB’s “long ago surrender to the white south.” Most noteworthy is his impassioned statement that opens this paper: “It was a miracle … Above the sneers of the critics [stood] one crushing rejoinder: in a single generation they [black colleges] put thirty thousand black teachers in the South and wiped out the illiteracy of the majority of the black people of this land.”95

Jones used four metrics to assess each college: student body, teaching force, equipment, and income. He found that at Wiley, of the 314 students, 176 students were in first through eighth grade; 170 students were in secondary school, and 38 were in college. Nevertheless, he found the student body promising. Only eight faculty members, he reported, taught college courses, and these professors had to teach in the high school, too. He listed the equipment without commenting on its sufficiency with the exception of praise for its Carnegie library. He reported various financial information, mixing balance sheet, income statement, and cash flow statement items to create an amalgam, concluding with the observation that the college was weak financially and reporting that the cash balance at year-end was $500. His assessment was that Wiley College was not in the same league as Fisk, Howard, and Meharry Medical School, but rather it was in the next rung with fifteen other black schools, offering college courses with a wide variation of standards.

In some measure, Jones came to an odd set of conclusions. In his introduction, he declared that the most urgent need for the black community was for black teachers. Ten million blacks served by 32,000 teachers were totally inadequate. Black colleges

were graduating only 2,443 students a year. Hence, his conclusion was that the most important work of black colleges was educating teachers.\textsuperscript{96} Yet he did not assess schools’ competence and focus on equipping teachers. Neglecting assessment of teacher education results in a report that repeats the mistake he identified in other similar reports: failure to assess adaptation of the school to pupil and community needs. He had promised an assessment of a school’s competence in supplying teachers “with knowledge and vision.”\textsuperscript{97} It did not. Jones’ report on Wiley does not evaluate what he had called the most important work of black colleges.

Doubtless, when the report became available, Dogan laid aside the first volume and went to page 581 of Volume II, where the report on Wiley College is located. At the conclusion of the report, he read Jones’ recommendations:

1. College classes be restricted to junior college;
2. Teacher training course with ample practice teaching be developed;
3. Courses in science, history, and social studies be strengthened; and
4. Theory and practice of gardening and industrial courses be made effective.\textsuperscript{98}

Dogan had worked hard to receive the recognition by the state Board of Examiners of Texas and Louisiana. A degree from Wiley guaranteed a teacher’s license without further testing. By suggesting that Wiley limit itself to being a junior college, all of that effort would be lost. Jones insulted Dogan with his observation that teacher education could be enhanced “with ample practice teaching”. He believed in the excellence of his teacher education program. The recommendations about a “modern” education and enhancement of industrial education could not have come as a surprise. The Jones’ report seemed to attack Wiley at its point of greatest strength: educating first generation students, preparing them to be leaders, and equipping them to teach. It

\textsuperscript{96} Jones, Negro Education, II, 581-3.
\textsuperscript{97} Jones, Negro Education, I, 22.
\textsuperscript{98} Jones, Negro Education, II, 583.
\textsuperscript{98} Jones, Negro Education, II, 582-3.
would continue to perturb Dogan well into the 1920’s. He wrote Jones in 1922 asking him to reinvestigate Wiley “with the view of getting a higher rating.”

99 It was an improbable initiative and nothing came of it. When the capability to equip teachers was questioned, it brought out a side of Dogan that few saw. In addition to being winsome, with a kindly spirit, gentle demeanor and stalwart character, he could be argumentative, impractical, and defensive.

Much of the historiography on foundation support for black higher education has concluded that black colleges allowed their thirst for foundation funds to define their mission and that foundation money was decisive for the colleges. Colleges, it claimed, moved away from a classical curriculum to industrial education. None of this was true of Wiley College. Dogan showed no interest in industrial education. On Wiley’s campus was the King Industrial School for Women, run by the Women’s Home Missionary Society of the church, not by Dogan and Wiley. Though some form of cooperative agreement was possible with King School, Wiley College did not attempt to integrate the two curricula. When the King Home burned down in 1919, the Women’s Society rebuilt it. It burned down again two years later. There is no record that Dogan did anything to provide for the continuation of the program. The program died without a mention in the Dogan – FAS correspondence. The extent of the partnership of the schools was a land sharing agreement. Jones in his study looked at each school separately. Even the push of his recommendation to each of the schools failed to result in the King School becoming a more vital part of Wiley. At minimal expense, Dogan could have easily had an industrial education competency. He then could have emphasized it where and

99 Dogan to Penn, March 1, 1922, FAS.
100 Gibbs, Dogan, 74.
when it would benefit the school. He refused. Dogan believed that the task of Wiley
College was a classical education adjusted to include the natural sciences. He would
not countenance pedagogy with different objectives, curriculum, and methods from
those employed in colleges for whites. However, having said that, there is
correspondence between Dogan and the GEB in the late 1930s and early 1940s. Dogan
sought funding for an agricultural program seemingly modeled after the Tuskegee
program that included course work in agriculture for students and summer continuing
education for regional farmers. They were improbable requests. The GEB ended its
practice of making awards to individual schools in the mid-1930s. It was financing
graduate scholarships and faculty fellowships and later would provide the first substantial
gifts in launching the United Negro College Fund. Dogan knew of the shift in emphasis as
the GEB had warned Wiley that it had to meet the final deadline to receive the GEB
grant for endowment, as the funds would not later become available. The GEB would
not be funding individual colleges. Dogan’s requests for funding were single short letters,
not likely to excite a funder, and the proposals received prompt and curt denials.  

Ronald E. Butchart, in his recently published Schooling for the Freed People,
observed that previous histories on education for blacks in the post-emancipation era
are over-reliant on American Missionary Association (AMA) archives. The AMA archives,
he explains, are “large, wonderfully organized and accessible, while others are smaller,
scattered and more difficult to access.” Freedmen’s education, he argues, was not
merely the AMA writ large. Indeed. The same observation is true in studying black
colleges. Most frequently, studies have been Fisk, Tuskegee, Hampton, and the Atlanta

102 Dogan to L.M. Favrot, April 9, 1936, GEB; Return response, May 7, 1936, GEB; Internal
Memorandum of GEB, February 7, 1940, GEB; Wiley plan to develop cooperative plan on
agriculture, March 6, 1940, GEB; Dogan to Fred McCuistion of GEB, December 12, 1940,
GEB; Brierley to Dogan, December 11, 1941, GEB; Internal Memo of GEB by McCuistion,
April 20, 1942.

103 Ronald E. Butchart, Schooling the Freed People: Teaching, Learning, and the Struggle
for Black Freedom, 1861-1876, (Chapel Hill, NC, 2010), xvii.
University Center (Atlanta University, Clark College, Interdenominational Theological Center, Morehouse, Morris Brown, and Spelman). Each has large, wonderfully organized, and accessible archives. These schools each received more than $1,000,000 in GEB funding. Many of the remaining eighty-four funded colleges, including Wiley, lack extensive archival material. The impact of foundation funds on a black college is not a single story. Black college relationships with foundations were not Fisk writ large. Looking at Wiley College’s experience with foundations tells a far different story than that of Fisk, Atlanta, Tuskegee, and Hampton. Below is the record of grants from GEB to black colleges:104

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>GEB Grants</th>
<th># of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Atlanta Center</td>
<td>13,793,000</td>
<td>1,057</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fisk</td>
<td>5,226,000</td>
<td>563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tuskegee</td>
<td>3,887,000</td>
<td>1,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dillard</td>
<td>2,157,000</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hampton</td>
<td>1,325,000</td>
<td>382</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Virginia Union</td>
<td>1,044,000</td>
<td>501</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subtotal</strong></td>
<td><strong>27,432,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>4,138</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All others (76)</td>
<td>11,200,000</td>
<td>9,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Negro College Fund</td>
<td>2,778,000</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>41,410,000</strong></td>
<td><strong>13,860</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The GEB gave 66% of its grants to schools that enrolled 30% of black college students; and, 34% of its grants to schools with 71% of total black students.

Wiley College received $393,874 from the General Education Board. $300,000 of that was for the Wiley College endowment. The General Education Board awarded the $300,000 grant in 1928, subject to the college raising in cash an equal amount. It took until December 31, 1937 for Wiley to raise the match. In the 1920s, the central

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104 GEB grants: Fosdick, Adventure, Appendix III; Student Count for 1926-27, Klein, Survey of Negro Colleges, Table 1, 946, with the exception of Tuskegee student count wrongly stated at 97; correct count is 1500, Norrell, Washington, 15, 311.
interest of the GEB was in funding college endowments. Frederick Gates, John D. Rockefeller’s principal adviser on all his philanthropic activities, believed that “no college worthy of the name had ever long survived on the slender, fitful and ever diminishing resources of current contributions. Endow or die has been the universal imperative of higher education.” In making the grant, the GEB gave Wiley until December 31, 1932, to match the grant in cash. Two years before the deadline, Wiley seemed confident that it could achieve the match. The founder of a successful pharmaceutical company, Henry Pfeiffer, and his wife, Anne Memer Pfeiffer, donated $100,000 at the beginning of the campaign. By January 22, 1931, an internal General Education Board memorandum reported that blacks who lived close to Wiley pledged $65,000 to the campaign. Soon thereafter cotton prices plummeted. Nearly all the pledges from blacks in the area were uncollectable. Dogan and the GEB exchanged barely disguised acrimonious correspondence regarding the match. Dogan was attempting to keep his institution solvent during the Great Depression when his donors were barely surviving. Knowing that he would not be able to raise the required funds any time soon, he sought without hint of supplication repeated extensions of the deadline. The GEB never acknowledged that Wiley College, a small black school in rural East Texas, would have any difficulty raising the required funds. Most black colleges were in the same situation and requested extensions of their deadlines to raise the match. While never acknowledging the problems that Dogan faced, it readily understood them, and was repeatedly willing to give requested extensions.

Late in 1936, Dogan received word that the GEB would give the college one final extension, until December 31, 1937, for Wiley to meet the conditions of the match for the

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105 Fosdick, Adventure, 132.
106 GEB internal memorandum of Irene E. Golden, January 22, 1931, GEB.
107 Correspondence Dogan to GEB and Secretaries of FAS to GEB, and their replies, 1932-37, GEB.
endowment grant. Dogan worked tirelessly to raise the final dollars, not achieving the total until the deadline day. True to their contentious relationship, the GEB threatened not to certify the final donation as the check had not cleared the bank by the deadline. The GEB reconsidered, certified the funds raised, and sent Wiley College its grant. The ordeal left Dogan exhausted.

In addition to the $300,000 endowment award, the college received an additional $93,874: a grant of $25,000 for a women's dormitory (1924); a grant of $30,000 for teacher salaries, to be paid over three years, $15,000 (1928), $10,000 (1929); and $5,000 (1930); and special grants due to the depression of $10,000 (1931); and $5,000 (1933). In addition, the GEB granted Wiley $23,874 in unknown grants. These were welcome gifts. With an operating budget in the range of $100,000 - $125,000, these gifts were not sufficient to make Wiley feel dependent on the General Education Board. Excluding the endowment grant, the grants amounted to $6,698 per year over the period 1924-1938. The GEB had extensive conditions on how the money could be used and conditions to be met before distribution.108

Poorly capitalized schools with limited sources of annual revenue needed reliable, stable, and unconditional funding to thrive. Foundations did not provide that to Wiley. Dogan had to endure a gauntlet-like experience to get the funds, even though the GEB had pledged them. As a matter of consistent practice, the GEB required schools to be debt free and have an operating surplus each year. Additionally, schools needed to have adequate financial systems. To assist the school to meet the standard of an adequate accounting system, the GEB caused to have published Trevor Arnett's College and University Finance in 1922.109 It became the standard for small colleges

108 Correspondence between Dogan and GEB and between FAS and GEB, 1924-1933, GEB.
seeking GEB funding. Finally, to insure that a college had fund raising capacity, GEB required nearly all grantees to match its GEB grant. The inability to raise matching funds was the greatest impediment for many small, undercapitalized black colleges to access GEB funds. Under these circumstances, the grants of the General Education Board did not substantially help Wiley College. Other than draining off hours of Dogan’s time, the GEB had no impact on Wiley and Wiley did not alter its program or mission in any way to secure GEB funding. The foundations were nearly irrelevant to Wiley.

**Conclusion**

A decade after the Jones report, Dogan turned to page 823 of a massive new report on black colleges and universities prepared by Arthur J. Klein, chief of the Division of Higher Education of the Bureau of Education of the Interior Department.\(^{110}\) He was pleased with what he read. Klein’s report was more comprehensive than the Jones report. While Jones spent his whole first volume on historical issues regarding education for blacks at all levels, the Klein report focused only on higher education. His report concentrated on observations of colleges, one college at a time. Eighty-five percent of its 967 pages were individual college reports. It included everything that Jones did and other subjects as well. He reported extensively on tuition and fees, physical plant, the high school, enrollment, degrees offered, faculty, educational equipment, and extracurricular activities. Klein did not bring to his report a bias toward industrial education. His underlying assumption was that blacks needed “more education, better education, and higher education” and that the lack of black teachers was “serious”.\(^{111}\) Most notable about his report was that he was full of admiration for the educational achievements of blacks and the role black colleges contributed to these achievements.

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\(^{110}\) Klein, *Survey of Negro Colleges*.

\(^{111}\) Klein, *Negro Colleges*, 2.
Based on size and program, Klein found that there were seventy-nine “significant” colleges and universities. He excluded schools from his study of ten or fewer students. Klein marveled at the indications of increased size, income, and financial resources of all the black colleges and universities. Indeed, the gains were impressive.\(^{112}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison of Jones Study (1917) and Klein Study (1927)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jones Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools worthy of study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Annual Income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Physical Plant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endowment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Endowment Income</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between 1917 and 1927, taken as a whole, there was a geometrical increase in the size, scope, and financial strength of black colleges.

The Klein report noted that Wiley served Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. Wiley had downsized its high school using it largely as a place for practice teaching. It had extension outposts in San Antonio, Dallas, and Houston. The states of Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and North Carolina certified Wiley’s graduates to teach without having to pass an exam. The University of Southern California, University of Kansas, and Northwestern, among others, accepted its students for post-graduate studies. It had a college enrollment of thirty-eight according to the Jones report; ten years later Klein reported 352, plus 177 in its extension schools.\(^ {113}\) Klein found that the

\(^{112}\) Comparison of Jones Study (1917) and Klein Study (1927); chart designed by author.

\(^{113}\) Klein, Survey of Negro Colleges, 823-36.
education of the faculty of fourteen at Wiley was excellent and in large measure, it met the requirements of accreditation. Klein concluded that the location was superb. Wiley College’s determined push for excellence impressed Klein, as did its continuous focus on its mission of developing leaders and equipping teachers.114

His offered five recommendations:

1. Discontinue its secondary school at once;
2. Raise a productive endowment of $500,000;
3. Reclassify faculty salaries of faculty;
4. Substantially reduce teaching loads in some departments; and
5. Reduce class sizes in German, history, and college algebra to no more than thirty students each.115

The report could only have pleased Dogan. Repeatedly it affirmed the centrality of equipping teachers and the effectiveness of the Wiley College program in doing so. It had high praise for all the work Dogan had been doing to improve the college academically and found that the college was largely meeting accreditation standards. It found the faculty well educated and well credentialed. Its warnings about the weaknesses of the college financially were kindly stated. It affirmed the curriculum and believed that the faculty was competent to teach that curriculum. The reader of the report would have no doubt about the ability of Wiley College to provide first class teacher education. All could be confident: Wiley College was achieving its mission.

Artfully buried in the report were expressions of concern about Wiley’s finances. Klein alerted the knowing reader that in the previous five years, its dependence on tuition and fees increased substantially, while donations increased incrementally. There was a forty-three percent increase in revenue with a seventy-one percent increase in student fees and a twenty percent increase in church support. Much of the increase in student fee income came because of growth in the student body; a forty-four percent

114 Klein, Survey of Negro Colleges 835.
115 Klein, Negro Colleges, 836. Regarding #3, Klein recommended that certain disciplines be paid more where the shortage of degreed faculty was acute.
increase to 352. Student fees increased from forty-nine to fifty-eight dollars, an eighteen percent increase. Klein concluded that the rate of increase in student fees was unsustainable. He observed that Wiley had a “very small productive endowment of $860.” Finally, and ominously, for a school that had suffered through multiple fires, Klein reported that only four of its fifteen buildings were fireproof.\textsuperscript{116} Klein also noted that colleges sponsored by northern, white denominations often failed to identify benefactors of great wealth as the church contributions made this unnecessary. Klein thus identified the financial problems that have impaired the school for the remainder of the twentieth century and into the new millennium. A school ill financed from its founding was never able to overcome the consequences of continuing inadequate revenue.

Klein, surprisingly, failed to summarize what his data showed. The $41,410,000 GEB grants to black colleges, most given on a matching basis, had improved the financial strength of all the black colleges, taken together. Nevertheless, each black college did not share in the growth of all black colleges. Their growth was decidedly uneven. There were winners and losers. There were continuing inequalities in infrastructure, resources, and operating budgets of black colleges.\textsuperscript{117}

\begin{table}
\begin{tabular}{|l|c|c|c|c|c|c|}
\hline
College & Students & Annual Income & Physical Plant & Endowment Income & Endowment Income & Expense/Student/Year \\
\hline
Fisk & 563 & 452,749 & 427,134 & 293,543 & 14,329 & 804 \\
Tuskegee & 1500 & 451,168 & 2,202,000 & 6,177,000 & 308,000 & 300 \\
Wiley & 352 & 48,880 & 389,481 & 860 & - & 141 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\end{table}

\textsuperscript{116} Klein, Negro Colleges, 824-6.
This comparison of these schools demonstrates the inequalities: Tuskegee is the best endowed, yet it has a nearly identical operating income as Fisk. Wiley spent $141 per student; Fisk $804. Indeed, not all black colleges were alike.

Following promptly on the heels of the Klein Report was a report on Wiley’s accreditation status. Wiley did not achieve accreditation in the early 1930s -- no black school did. The Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools did agree to do an assessment study for black schools. It would designate schools A - B - or C class. In 1933, the Association named Wiley an “A” class college, signifying it met most of the standards that would be applicable to white schools. Wiley was clearly the best black college west of the Mississippi and ranked well ahead of many Methodist schools. In the midst of a drive to persuade the GEB to fund Wiley, FAS Corresponding Secretary P.J. Maveety claimed that Wiley was Methodism’s best black college.

This paper argues that studying Wiley College provides a counter narrative to three elements of generally accepted historiography. What Wiley demonstrates provides cause to reexamine the history of black colleges. The Washington -- Du Bois battle did not matter to Wiley College. The church was significant in Wiley’s early years, however, increasingly it became bursar and did not involve itself in setting the mission of the College. And, foundations did not make a difference to Wiley College. If this is so, there is a question: well, what did matter? The answer: the newly emancipated blacks of the East Texas region and, specifically, Wiley’s students, faculty, and particularly its president, Matthew W. Dogan mattered. Wiley existed in the social and intellectual milieu of emancipated persons. To an astonishing degree, blacks decided that growing literacy was their most important purpose and set out a literacy project that was amazingly successful in reducing illiteracy among blacks from 95% in 1865 to 30% in 1930.

118 Brawley, Methodist Concern, 141.
119 Maveety to Sage of the GEB, February 3, 1923, GEB.
New York University historian Walter Johnson wrote an essay, “On Agency”, arguing that the role of the social historian is to give agency to the slaves. Later in the article, he expanded the formulation to include all dispossessed people. What did the emancipated people, he asks, do of their own will and volition? The emancipated taught themselves how to read, write, and do arithmetic. They paid their taxes. Then they paid them again to have a teacher, build a schoolhouse, and equip it with barely adequate furniture, supplies, and books. Then sometimes they paid for education a third time as parents paid tuition for their children to go to school. The parents—many of whom decided that they were too old to learn to read—made education for their children the core of their family life. One student recounted this about his schooling: “My mommy and daddy is pushing me. The school is pushing me. Oh, well, I gotta do good.” A North Carolina school official explained, “The old Negroes went earnestly to work to learn to read. They failed...but they resolved that they would secure education for their children.” Smallwood’s study on literacy among blacks in Texas concludes that the help of the Freedmen’s Bureau and the northern denominations were important, nevertheless, black self-help was the primary factor in success. It was also important, he thought, for the blacks to control their own education. Generally historians of black colleges, church historians and historians of philanthropy push aside the most important factor of black college success: the blacks themselves.

Dogan’s legacy was his achievements at Wiley. He enjoyed the collegiate sport accomplishments of Wiley, particularly the inauguration of the football program and its rise to champions of the Southwest Athletic Conference of the national Negro league. Over a five-year period beginning in 1927, Wiley was basketball champion four times. He

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121 Johnson, “On Agency”, 114
122 Walker, Highest Potential, Location 2820.
123 Quoted in Margo, Race and Schooling, 45.
124 Smallwood, “Early Freedom Schools in Texas”, 792.
was pleased that seven national Negro sororities and fraternities took hold at Wiley.\textsuperscript{125} Mostly, though, he took pride in the growing academic strength of Wiley. The school achieved near accreditation status while he was president. Dogan was particularly proud of the strength of the teacher education program. Before he retired, a Wiley degree eliminated the need for a student to take additional exams for teacher licensure in four states: Texas, Louisiana, North Carolina, and Oklahoma. Michael R. Heintze, author of Private Black Colleges in Texas, points out that Wiley was growing numerically while charging the highest tuition and fees and paying the highest faculty salaries of all black colleges in Texas.\textsuperscript{126} These triumphs fully justified the remarks of President M.S. Davage of Clark University. In 1921, he said that Dogan was “a pioneer among Negro college presidents, today his colleagues gladly accord him first place.”\textsuperscript{127}

In assessing his legacy, these observations deserve consideration. From 1896 to 1942, the college survived! It overcame the obstacles of racism, the great depression, reduced reliance on the church for financial support, and the diffidence of northern church leaders to trust that a Negro could lead a college.\textsuperscript{128} As the many black colleges that failed during the years of the Dogan presidency attest, the survival of the enterprise was not guaranteed. Wiley’s academic achievements under Dogan were real and impressive. He had an accreditation-status faculty and broadly met the standards of accreditation. He claimed independence for Wiley. Wiley reduced its financial dependence on the church and its mission was not driven or defined by the church. Nor did the Washington -- Du Bois struggle result in the school tilting to industrial education. He grew the school without substantial assistance of northern foundations. To be a black

\textsuperscript{125} Wiley College website, \url{http://www.wileyc.edu/history.asp}.
\textsuperscript{126} Heintze, Black Colleges in Texas, 130, 152-3.
\textsuperscript{127} Gibbs, Dogan, 68.
\textsuperscript{128} Several black presidents of colleges had done badly in managing finances. As a result, denominations recoiled from appointing a black president. “Not until the depression was over and black aspirants had been thoroughly trained in bookkeeping and fiscal efficiency were any more black principals or presidents appointed.” McPherson, Abolitionist, 284.
college in these years imposed a mission to educate first generation students, develop leaders, and equip them to teach. Dogan did not waiver from the mission to equip teachers in the forty-six years of his presidency. He did it well. Wiley fulfilled its part of the literacy project: it developed leaders and equipped teachers.
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-----., Author’s correspondence with Robert Norrell, May 26, 2010.