

Richard L. D. and Marjorie J. Morse Department of Special Collections

Finding Aid - George Washington Owens papers ()

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George Washington Owens papers

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Summary information

Repository:	Richard L. D. and Marjorie J. Morse Department of Special Collections
Title:	George Washington Owens papers
Archon Collection ID [alternative]:	195
Date:	1875-1950 (date of creation)
Physical description:	2.00 Linear Feet
Physical location:	Pre-fire 2018: Stack H:R11/S8/Sf6; Box, 2.00 Linear Feet
Language:	English
Dates of creation, revision and deletion:	
Note [generalNote]:	Preferred Citation: [item title], [item date], George Washington Owens papers, Box [number], Folder [number or title], Morse Department of Special Collections, Kansas State University Libraries.

Administrative history / Biographical sketch

Note

1875 Born on farm near Alma, Kansas; parents, Samuel F. and Anna M. (Gordon) Owens, were former slaves who migrated to Kansas by river boat and received 50 acres of free public land in Wabaunsee County, Kansas.

1894 Mother died of cancer.

1896 Enrolled at Kansas State Agricultural College where he was the only black student.

1899 First black to graduate from K-State (June 8). Accepted position at Tuskegee Institute in Alabama with Booker T. Washington, Principal, and George Washington Carver, Director of Agriculture.

1900 Placed in charge of dairy herd and creamery at Tuskegee, a faculty position. George and Waddie

1901 Married Waddie L. Hill, a graduate of Clark University in Atlanta; they had four children, one died in 1902; other children graduated from Virginia State College.

1907 Father died of tuberculosis.

1908 Took position at Virginia Normal and Industrial School (later named Virginia State College) in Petersburg to establish agricultural program.

1918 Selected to organize vocational agriculture in county training schools in Virginia.

1919 Established first 5 black departments of vocational agriculture under Virginia State Board for Vocational Education.

1920 Officially designated as state teacher-trainer, Virginia State College. George Washington Owens, 1920

1921 Wife, Waddie, died.

1927 Wrote constitution and by-laws for New Farmers of Virginia, the beginning of national organization, New Farmers of America, which joined the Future Farmers of America in 1965.

1932 In recognition of 25 years of service to Virginia State College, the new agricultural building was named Owens Hall.

1945 Retired as chairman of Department of Agriculture at Virginia State College.

1950 Died at age 75.

1978 George Washington Owens Papers donated to University Archives and Manuscripts by his daughter, Ana Elnora Owens.

Custodial history

It received accession number P1988.18.

Scope and content

The Owens Papers (1890-1946) contain ten items consisting of a scrapbook, two diplomas, two certificates, and five photographs. They were donated to the University Archives by his daughter, Ana Elnora Owens. The scrapbook contains a handwritten autobiography (20 pages) and a "History of Agricultural Instruction in Virginia" (14 pages), both written in 1945-1946. Owens' autobiography describes his childhood in Kansas (near Alma in Wabaunsee County) and his experience at Kansas State Agricultural College as the first black to graduate from the institution in 1899. It provides a description of his employment at Tuskegee Institute after graduation where he worked under Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver. He left Tuskegee in 1908 to take a position at the Virginia Normal and Industrial School (Virginia State College) in Petersburg where he had a very successful career. His writings describe the agricultural program at the school and his work in Virginia as the leader in vocational agriculture, including his organizational efforts for the New Farmers of Virginia that became the New Farmers of America. He provides an extensive list of others who were involved in vocational agriculture throughout the state. The two diplomas were awarded at the time of his graduation from high school in Wabaunsee County, Kansas in 1890, and Kansas State Agricultural College in 1899 where he obtained a bachelor of science degree in the "general course." The two certificates in the collection were awarded by Virginia State College. The first is a "Certificate of Merit" for ten years of service in 1945 and the second in appreciation for his teaching and service presented by the Alumni Association in 1946. Two of the five photographs show Owens as a student at KSAC in 1899 (one in his cadet uniform), two with his wife, Waddie Hill (a wedding photo in 1901 and another in 1903 with their newborn child), and one taken at the Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute in 1920.

Notes

Title notes

Immediate source of acquisition

Acquisition Source: Ana Elnora Owens donated her father's materials to Kansas State Libraries in 1978.
Acquisition Method: Donation.
Acquisition Date: 19780101

Arrangement

The Owens Papers (1890-1946) contain ten items consisting of a scrapbook, two diplomas, two certificates, and five photographs. They were donated to the University Archives by his daughter, Ana Elnora Owens.

Restrictions on access

No access restriction: All materials are open for research.

Conditions governing use

The researcher assumes full responsibility for observing all copyright, property, and libel laws as they apply.

Other notes

- **Publication status:** Published

Access points

- Kansas life and culture (subject)

Series descriptions

Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
23139: Box 1				
	<u>Publication status:</u>			

George Washington Owens papers

Published				
File / item list				
Ref code	Title	Dates	Access status	Container
23140	Item - Item 1: Scrapbook. A handwritten autobiography by George Washington Owens and a "History of Agricultural Instruction in Virginia"			
23141	Item - Item 2: Diploma. District Schools of Kansas, County of Wabaunsee, April 19, 1890			
23142	Item - Item 3: Diploma. Kansas State Agricultural College, 1899; signed by President Thomas Will			
23143	Item - Item 4: Certificate. "Certificate of Merit" for ten years service as a teacher of agriculture in the State of Virginia completed July 1, 1918; awarded July 5, 1945			
23144	Item - Item 5: Certificate. "Certificate of Appreciation" from Virginia State College Alumni Association; June 1, 1946			
23145	Item - Item 6: Photograph: (Photograph Collection-Vertical File. People): Student at Kansas State Agricultural College, 1899			
23146	Item - Item 7: Photograph: Military cadet, Kansas State Agricultural College, 1899			
23147	Item - Item 8: Photograph: Wedding, Owens and Waddie Hill, August, 1901			
23148	Item - Item 9: Photograph: Owens and Waddie with their child, 1903			
23149	Item - Item 10: Photograph: Owens as teacher, Virginia Normal and Industrial Institute, 1920			