SANCTUARY ON THE HILL: EXPLORING THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF KNOXVILLE COLLEGE

BY

TIFFANY MOMON

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DR. KATHRYN SIKES, CHAIR

DR. CARROLL VAN WEST

It is not lost on me that without the sacrifice and determination of my ancestors that I would not be here. I am the fruit of their perseverance. This thesis is dedicated to all those who came before me.

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The light still shines…

ABSTRACT

Knoxville College is a Historically Black College or University (HBCU) founded in 1875 by the United Presbyterian Church for the education of freedmen. Scholars have written about Knoxville College and other HBCUs often studying their history and impact on African American education. A neglected area of the study of HBCUs is their landscapes. Imbued with meaning, these landscapes often reflect the goals or religious ideology of the white missionaries who founded them. The Knoxville College landscape consists of buildings erected using student labor received through industrial education. These buildings constructed by students became physical statements of their self-worth and aspirations to be seen as equals in a society governed by white supremacy. As students lived and worked at Knoxville College, they transformed the landscape to meet their needs and claimed it as a space to form a community with each other without the judgment of the white Presbyterian college administrators.

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INTRODUCTION

"Be it much or little, all that I am, I owe to Knoxville College."[1]

- Ella Earls Cotton, student of Knoxville College

Ella Earls Cotton's quote sums up the experience of many Knoxville College students grateful for the impact the Historically Black College and University (HBCU) had on their lives.[2] For many it changed the trajectory of their lives as the common alternative was to turn to agricultural or domestic work. There is no denying that HBCUs such as Knoxville College changed the landscape of African American life and education. As early as 1837 when the Institute for Colored Youth, now known as Cheyney University of Pennsylvania, founded by Quaker philanthropist Richard Humphreys, opened its doors African Americans have had the opportunity to embrace education.

Founded at a time when the majority of African Americans were held in bondage on Southern plantations and farms where it was against the law for them to learn to read or write, HBCUs have filled a void in African American life. These institutions quickly became beacons of light, encouraging African Americans to learn. White northern

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[1] Ella Earls Cotton, *A Spark for My People: The Sociological Autobiography of a Negro Teacher.*, [1st ed.] (New York, New York: Exposition Press, 1954), 166, http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.$b114079. Cotton was a student at Knoxville College who graduated and taught in the Wilcox County, Alabama mission schools. Her husband later became the first African American President of Knoxville College.

[2] Edith Green, *Higher Education Act of 1965*, *20 U.S.C.: Education*, 1965, sec. 322. Section 322 of this act defines HBCUs as "any historically Black college or university that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of Black Americans, and that is accredited by a nationally recognized accrediting agency or association" (139). The 1980 Amendment to the National Historic Preservation Act uses this legal definition as well.

missionaries such as those that started Knoxville College saw it as God's will to help the masses of African Americans learn and adjust to life as freedmen and women.

Between the years of 1837 and 1880, fifty-two HBCUs opened their doors to educate African Americans. These institutions slowly became a network of colleges with shared goals and aspirations that would collaborate with each other in coming years. As African Americans entered these spaces, they sought to make a portion of them their own. By practicing the African American tradition of placemaking, students claimed space on the landscape for themselves, transforming those spaces into areas where they could unapologetically be themselves.

It is within this context that this thesis explores the cultural landscape of Knoxville College. Opening on December 16, 1875, it was a realization of the greatest educational goal of the United Presbyterian Church. Founded by the Freedman's Board of Missions of the United Presbyterian Church, Knoxville College was East Tennessee's first HBCU. The college would go on to educate thousands of African Americans, changing the landscape of both Knoxville and African American education.

Like most early HBCUs, Knoxville College initially taught a liberal arts education with students studying the classics as well as learning to speak Latin. Bowing to the pressures of the status quo, the college soon moved to an industrial education for the purposes of educating African American students for the careers they believed were best for them given their place in society. This industrial education required students to take active roles in the development of the college's campus. Students worked on the campus farm, designed campus buildings, and assisted in the construction of those buildings.

While constructing the built environment to follow the guidelines of the United Presbyterian Church, students were also modifying that environment and inserting their own meanings and understandings into it. Although the college campus was a segregated, racialized landscape, it grew to become a valuable part of the African American identity of the students as well as local African Americans in Knoxville. Through an examination of available College records, yearbooks, newspapers, and the physical campus itself, this research will explore the competing functions of the landscape of Knoxville College, and how that landscape is an interconnected environment where the architecture and topography do not function in isolation but work in synchronization with the religious ideology of the Presbyterian Church and the ambitions of the African American students. In addition, this paper will explore how HBCU landscapes such as this one are worthy of exploration both architecturally and archaeologically for those reasons.

Researching the cultural landscape of Knoxville College raised many questions. Among the questions that have driven the research are: How and why did the white leadership of the United Presbyterian Church come to support and invest in the education of formerly enslaved individuals? What influenced Knoxville College to make the switch from a predominately liberal arts education to a predominately industrial education? How did the ideology of the Presbyterian Church compete on the landscape with the ambitions of the African American students? How did the African American students transform the landscape to fit their needs? How did the African American students resist Presbyterian ideology and paternalism? Did the placement of buildings on the Knoxville College campus resemble plantation landscapes? How is the design of the landscape

representative of the racial status quo? How did the campus of Knoxville College change over time?

Each of these questions contributes to a greater understanding of the Knoxville College landscape. While the history of the college is documented by historians Robert Booker and Dr. Cynthia Griggs Fleming, a landscape study of the college does not exist. This research advocates for exploring the campuses of HBCUs for their architecture and the potential of what archaeological excavations can reveal. To date, the number of HBCUs with student built architecture is unknown. The study of HBCU architecture has primarily focused on the campus of Tuskegee University due to its connection with Booker T. Washington. Only one archaeological excavation of an HBCU landscape has been conducted (by the National Park Service in 1960), however, because archaeologists were not interested in the college's years of occupation artifacts that fell into that period were left behind because they were not considered to be archaeologically significant.[3] This research argues that any archaeological features or artifacts associated with the early period of HBCU development are significant and potentially eligible for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Places under Criterion D because they are likely to yield new information of national historic significance given the limited body of knowledge of HBCUs and the low number of primary sources written from Knoxville College students'

[3] Paul A. Shackel, *Archaeology and Created Memory: Public History in a National Park*, 2002 edition (New York: Springer, 2000), 10. Archaeological excavations were conducted on the previous campus of Storer College which is now owned by National Park Service. Because they were looking for artifacts related to the mid nineteenth century gun industry that existed on the land they did not consider the artifacts related to the Storer College occupation to be significant.

point of view.[4] Additionally, any architecture associated with student labor should be recognized for its significance. African American history bears the burden of proving its importance to a public that has favored the history of affluent white men.[5] Moving forward, the importance of HBCU landscapes and what their study could contribute to the history of African American life in those spaces should be acknowledged.

This work will present the history of Knoxville College and the landscape that emerged and shaped by both the Presbyterians and the African American students. Chapter one discusses the history of the United Presbyterian denomination, how they came to be involved in African American education, and the establishment of Knoxville College. Chapter two explores the various influences on the curriculum of Knoxville College from philanthropies to debates among African American intellectuals. Chapter three covers the location and architecture of Knoxville College with special emphasis given to student built buildings. Chapter four looks at how all of these factors including Presbyterian ideology and the actions of the African American students came together to form a complex landscape worthy of archaeological study.

In African American life, HBCUs hold a place of reverence. They are considered sacred spaces with students and alumni having almost spiritual connections to those institutions. It was within the walls of these HBCUs that some African Americans first

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[4] For more on the National Register of Historic Places criteria see Jeff Joeckel, "How to Apply the National Register Criteria for Evaluation, National Register of Historic Places Bulletin (NRB 15)," December 16, 2001, https://www.nps.gov/nr/publications/bulletins/nrb15/.

[5] For more on the challenges of preserving the history of marginalized communities see Carroll Van West, "Assessing Significance and Integrity in the National Register Process: Questions of Race, Class, and Gender," in *Preservation of What, For Whom?: A Critical Look at Historical Significance*, ed. Michael A. Tomlan (Ithaca: National Council for Preservation Education, 1998).

learned to count, read, and write. The importance of HBCUs in our society is not lost on me as I am a graduate of an HBCU. Although segregation is no longer an issue, HBCUs are still relevant in a society where college students have to fight to have Confederate memorials removed from college campuses. Not only am I a graduate of an HBCU, but I have a personal connection with Knoxville College as both my father and my aunt attended and graduated from that institution. In many ways, the college is a part of me as I have vivid memories of my father, my aunt, and their friends reminiscing on college life. No matter how many experiences they had since they graduated, no matter the number of years passed, Knoxville College means so much to them, and therefore, it means so much to me.

CHAPTER ONE: ESTABLISHING A COLLEGE IN KNOXVILLE

"*It's a college and a college it shall be*."[1]

- Reverend J. W. Witherspoon, 1876

The founding of the United Presbyterian Church in 1858 followed the politics of the United States of those turbulent times. In 1858 Abraham Lincoln gave his "House Divided" speech in support of his U.S. Senate campaign, which warned against the failures of a government attempting to live "half enslaved and half free."[2] Violent clashes between the anti-enslavement forces of the North and the pro-enslavement forces of the South continued in what was called "Bloody Kansas." Out of this turmoil the United Presbyterian Church was formed and from its beginnings, its hatred of enslavement was evident and its desire to uplift African Americans began.

The United Presbyterian Church is the result of a merger of the Associated Churches and the Associated Reformed divisions of the Presbyterian denomination. This merger defined the tone of the church as it separated itself from those within the Presbyterian denomination that condoned enslavement declaring that they,

> were willing to sacrifice any amount of conscience, compromise the most sacred principles, and practice the most inexcusable ecclesiastical chicanery in the world. In the name of gospel peace, they denounced the incendiary character of those who preached the whole truth as God has

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[1] Statement by Reverend J. W. Witherspoon, Corresponding Secretary of the Presbyterian Board of Missions to Freedmen. Cynthia Griggs Fleming, "Knoxville College: A History and Some Recollections of the First Fifty Years, 1875-1925," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications* 58–59 (1986): 90.

[2] "'House Divided' Speech by Abraham Lincoln," accessed May 22, 2016, http://www.abrahamlincolnonline.org/lincoln/speeches/house.htm.

> given it in his word. That slavery is not a sin per se became almost a sacrament in their worship.[3]

As early as 1831, the Associate Church, the predecessor of the United Presbyterian Church, passed a church policy barring slaveholders from participating in communion.[4] This policy proved to be significant; many of the Southern congregations of the church responded by severing ties with the church. Furthermore, many of those members living in the South who supported the policy relocated to the North. This schism set the trend historically for the church as the majority of its congregations were in Pennsylvania, Illinois, and Ohio. The state of Pennsylvania had begun abolishing slavery as early as 1780 while both Illinois and Ohio were free states from their beginnings. Therefore, the United Presbyterian Church not only aligned itself with Northern abolitionists ideologically, but geographically as well.

Recognition of the evils of enslavement became one of the tenets of the United Presbyterian Church as it declared that enslavement was "a violation of the law of God, and contrary both to the letter and spirit of Christianity."[5] United Presbyterians used their anti-enslavement stance as a way to separate themselves from other Presbyterians by saying that other Presbyterians "loved slavery more than the church."[6] In addition, the

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[3] Joseph T. Cooper, W.W. Barr, and David R. Kerr, eds., *The Evangelical Repository and United Presbyterian Review* (Philadelphia, Pa.: W.S. Young, 1862), 7.

[4] Wallace N. Jamison, *The United Presbyterian Story: A Centennial Study, 1858 – 1958* (Pittsburgh: Geneva Press, 1958), 61.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Cooper, Barr, and Kerr, *The Evangelical Repository and United Presbyterian Review*, 8.

United Presbyterian Church inserted themselves into politics by writing Congress on the horrors on enslavement and on the punishments they thought were necessary for the Confederate forces after the war had ended. In many ways, this early abolitionist stance would go on to set the tone of the relationship between the congregants of the United Presbyterian Church and African Americans as they saw themselves assisting in the salvation of an oppressed people. Given these origins, the United Presbyterian Church would continue to advocate on behalf of African Americans for the next one hundred years.

With the outbreak of the Civil War, the United Presbyterian Church seized upon an opportunity to turn its stance on African Americans into work for the public good. In 1863, the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church established the Board of Missions to the Freedmen whose purpose was to provide help and education to African Americans in the South.[7] Missionary outreach was a major part of the United Presbyterian Church as they sent missionaries across the world to spread the benefits of their religion. Responding to a call for assistance from the United States Army,

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[7] Jamison, *The United Presbyterian Story: A Centennial Study, 1858 – 1958*, 62.

Presbyterian Missionaries then went into Union Army Contraband Camps and established schools.[8] This work was motivated by the United Presbyterian Church attempting to atone for enslavement. Their perceived obligation to assist in making life better for freedmen almost appears as if they were trying to assuage white guilty consciences.

By 1864, the Presbyterian Church had sent fifty-four teachers into contraband camps. An arrangement with the Union Army required the army to provide the teachers with food and shelter for as long as the contraband camps were in operation.[9] Later, the church worked alongside the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands, also known as the Freedmen's Bureau, to establish schools. The earliest locations of these schools were Goodrich's Landing, Louisiana, Vicksburg and Davis Bend, Mississippi, and Memphis, Nashville, and Knoxville, Tennessee.[10] Each of the groups sent into the contraband camps to teach African Americans consisted of a white ordained minister, a

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[8] For more on missionary experiences in contraband camps and camp schools see Lucy Chase, "Letter from Lucy Chase to Folks Back Home, January 15, 1863," in *Dear Ones At Home: Letters from Contraband Camps*, ed. Henry Lee Swint (Nashville, Tennessee: Vanderbilt University Press, 1966), 23. Lucy Chase was a white Quaker missionary serving in the Craney Island Contraband Camp in Virginia. Lucy's letters contain examples of the state of freedmen in camps and their desire to learn and participate in camp schools. Of her experience at camp and its school, Lucy recalled a moment with a formerly enslaved man. She stated, "Tonight a negro man lifted his hat to Sarah and said "Missuh, please Missuh, may I ask a favor of you, Miss-uh? " Sarah expected to be begged for clothing, but when she said, "Yes, " the man said, "Will you be so kind, Miss, as to make me a copy of a b c? " I just heard one of the women in the kitchen, say "You can make a hundred out of any number under the sun, over and over again. Two and two and two, ever so many twos, or any number you have a mind" (23).

[9] Jamison, *The United Presbyterian Story: A Centennial Study, 1858 – 1958*, 63.

[10] For more descriptions of life for Presbyterian missionaries in contraband camps see Margaret Lorimer McClenahan, "Early Missions to the Freedmen," in *Historical Sketch of the Freedman's Missions of the United Presbyterian Church, 1862-1904*, ed. Ralph W McGranahan (Knoxville, Tennessee: Knoxville College Printing Department, 1904). Of living at the Goodrich Landing Contraband Camp McClenahan states, "In the Assembly room, on the third floor of the building, a shell hole had been made during the bombardment of not less than fifteen feet square. In this and adjoining rooms eighteen of our party with Capt. Clubb's family, his clerks, and orderly, were sheltered. Hospital cots with bed clothing and a toilet set, consisting of one dingy, dented wash pan, were provided for us all" (20).

white male assistant to the minister, and four or five white female teachers.[11] The contraband camp schools were the start of the church's involvement in African American education that would survive for the next one hundred years. The stated mission of the United Presbyterian Church was clear. They were here to save freedmen, and they offered the best education that freedmen could have. Freedmen, on the other hand, did not want to be saved. They had their own desires and goals of education that they would enact when the opportunity presented itself.

In 1863, Reverend J. G. McKee established one of the earliest incarnations of Presbyterian freedmen's schools associated with contraband camps, the McKee School of Nashville, Tennessee which was the predecessor school to Knoxville College. McKee, a native of Ireland, immigrated to the United States and attended the Presbyterian Church's Xenia Theological Seminary in Ohio. At the time of his graduation, he became a minister in the Presbyterian Church and set his sights on missionary work.[12] Upon learning of the plight of freedmen and women in the South, McKee abandoned a mission trip to India to go to Nashville saying, "Why go to India to teach the heathen there, when there are millions of wretched heathens at our very doors?"[13] The Second United Presbyterian Synod, who was responding to an appeal from the Union Army for assistance with

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[11] Jamison, *The United Presbyterian Story: A Centennial Study*, 1858 - 1958, 62-63.

[12] Robert J. Booker, "Booker: McKee Paved the Route for Knoxville College," *The Knoxville News Sentinel*, September 25, 2007, sec. Opinion, http://www.knoxnews.com/opinion/columnists/booker-mckee-paved-the-route-for-knoxville-college-ep-412640764-360155741.html.

[13] James McNeal, "Biographical Sketch of Rev. Joseph G. McKee, The Pioneer Missionary to the Freedmen in Nashville, Tennessee," in *Historical Sketch of the Freedman's Missions of the United Presbyterian Church, 1862 - 1904* (Knoxville: Printing Dept., Knoxville College, 1904), 10.

freedmen who had been gathering around their camps, sent McKee to Nashville.[14] He, along with staff, opened what became known as the McKee School in 1863 at Nashville's First Baptist Colored Church. By locating his school at this already established African American institution, McKee was able to send the message that his school was legitimate and truly there to benefit African Americans. Nevertheless, some local African Americans were not happy with the placement of McKee's School in the First Baptist Colored Church. Daniel Wadkins, an African American teacher who also operated a school in Nashville and had once housed his school at the First Baptist Colored Church, protested the placement of McKee's school. This protest resulted in a fight between Wadkins and the minister of the First Baptist Colored Church, Nelson Merry.[15] This altercation combined with support from members of the church led to McKee being forced to hold his classes elsewhere.[16] What is not clear is if McKee intentionally sought to displace African American led schools or if he recognized the importance of African Americans in building and leading their own schools. What is clear is that McKee learned that African Americans recognized the importance of conducting their own schools and

[14] Inez Moore Parker, *The Rise and Decline of the Program of Education for Black Presbyterians of the United Presbyterian Church, U.S.A., 1865-1970* (San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1977), 225.

[15] Crystal A. deGregory, "Nashville's Clandestine Black Schools," *The New York Times Opinionator*, February 17, 2015, http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2015/02/17/nashvilles-clandestine-black-schools/.

[16] Crystal A. deGregory, "Raising a Nonviolent Army: Four Nashville Black Colleges and the Century Long Struggle for Civil Rights, 1830s-1930s" (Dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 2011), 19.

operated agency in an attempt to slow the tide of white Northern missionary leadership and influence on their children.[17]

McKee extensively influenced African American education in Tennessee through the Presbyterian mission. The first published history of African American schools in Nashville conducted in 1874 stated "The battle for the education of colored children by white missionaries from the North had already been won by [the] Rev. J[oseph] G. McKee, who had the honor of being first on the ground in Nashville, and of bearing the brunt of the opposition to the opening of colored schools."[18] Not only did McKee open a school for African Americans, but it was the only free school for African Americans in Nashville as all of the other schools required tuition. Because McKee's school was free, he was able to reach those who could not afford tuition-based schools. Due to the monetary support, stability, and resources of the United Presbyterian Church, McKee's Nashville school soon became one of the largest freedmen's schools enrolling seven hundred students in 1866.[19] His school taught subjects such as "grammar, reading,

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[17] Heather Andrea Williams, *Self-Taught: African American Education in Slavery and Freedom* (The University of North Carolina Press, 2007). Williams moves the historiography of African American education forward by centering freedmen and showing their agency. She argues that African Americans were leading the way in obtaining an education and not passively waiting on white assistance. She states, "For their part, white northerners were often shocked to find that former slaves were not passive, degraded human beings who simply sat awaiting enlightenment. White southerners, who had long contended with black resistance despite the myths they created to convince themselves of black acquiescence, were not so much surprised as infuriated when African Americans stepped forward to openly express claims for power" (42).

[18] H.S. Bennett, "Fisk University," in *A History of Colored Schools of Nashville, Tennessee*, ed. G.W. Hubbard (Nashville, Tennessee: Wheeler, Marshall, and Bruce, 1874), 21.

[19] deGregory, "Raising A Nonviolent Army: Four Nashville Black Colleges and the Century-Long Struggle for Civil Rights, 1830s-1930s," 35.

writing, arithmetic, history, geography, Greek classics, and also required chapel and religious services."[20]

At the same time McKee was establishing his school in Nashville, R.J. Creswell was establishing a school for freedmen in Knoxville. R.J. Creswell was a Presbyterian missionary who had been assigned to be the superintendent of the school. In the fall of 1864, this school officially became a part of the United Presbyterian Church's freedmen's mission in Knoxville giving the school more stability, monetary resources, and legitimacy. This school enrolled more than one hundred students and offered both day and night classes to the dismay of many local whites.[21]

The Creswell School had a complicated relationship with the white citizens of Knoxville. They branded Creswell a "radical hotheaded missionary with abolitionist credentials."[22] Although accepted by Knoxville's African American community, Creswell faced difficulties since local whites described him, his students and his student's parents as militant and violent.[23] Creswell's mere presence and efforts to educate African Americans clearly upset many whites in Knoxville, but many African Americans embraced Creswell's school and his rhetoric.

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[20] Bobby L. Lovett, *The African-American History of Nashville, Tn: 1780-1930 (p)* (Fayetteville: University of Arkansas Press, 1999), 134.

[21] Ralph W McGranahan, *Historical Sketch of the Freedman's Missions of the United Presbyterian Church, 1862-1904* ([Knoxville]: Printing Dept., Knoxville College, 1904), 22, http://books.google.com/books?id=CMAvAQAAMAAJ.

[22] Albin Kowalewski, "'To Be True to Ourselves': Freedpeople, School Building, and Community Politics in Appalachian Tennessee, 1865-1870" (Dissertation, University of Tennessee Knoxville, 2009), 105.

[23] Ibid., 106.

White opposition to these missions was statewide. McKee wrote about the opposition he faced from local whites in Nashville. He recalled a conversation he had with a local white woman who stated, “It’s a fine pass we have come to. The time was when the niggers carried the white children’s books and dinner and waited outside to bring them home. Now we (whites) have no schools and these yankees are opening free schools for niggers. I sometimes feel as if I could tear their hearts out.”[24] He also recalled stones being thrown at him and through the windows of the school. In Knoxville R.J. Creswell noted the resistance he felt from local whites and incidents of violence towards him. While on Gay Street in Knoxville, whites once accosted and ordered him to “close up his nigger school and go north.”[25] In addition, the school building was burned down in what Creswell believed was an intentional fire.[26] Both McKee’s and Creswell’s schools were constantly relocating and adjusting to the white resistance that they faced. United Presbyterians were well aware of the attitudes of Southern whites, and they viewed them as the enemy declaring that Southern people were motivated by their “desire to oppress the Negro, [their] settled hatred toward the whole race, and [their] passion for illicit power.”[27]

[24] McGranahan, *Historical Sketch of the Freedman’s Missions of the United Presbyterian Church*, 14.

[25] Cynthia Griggs Fleming, “Knoxville College: a History and some Recollections of the First Fifty Years, 1875-1925.” *East Tennessee Historical Society’s Publications* 58-59 (1986-87): 89.

[26] “R.J. Creswell to Genl. Fisk, 12 Dec. 1865, Knoxville, Tenn., AMA Mss., No. H8999b, Reel 2.” (American Missionary Association Manuscript, December 12, 1865), Amistad Research Center Tulane University.

[27] Cooper, Barr, and Kerr, *The Evangelical Repository and United Presbyterian Review*, 4.

Racial Climate in Knoxville During Reconstruction

The violence directed at Creswell and his school reflected the attitude of local whites in Knoxville during Reconstruction. Enslavement had not grown in Knoxville in the same manner as it had elsewhere in Tennessee where large scale plantations were more common. In fact, only 9% of the region's population was enslaved in 1860.[28] Most of Knoxville's enslaved community were domestic servants living in close quarters with those who claimed to own them. Although enslavement in Knoxville was different than other parts of Tennessee, Knoxville was still dependent upon enslaved labor from other areas to provide the cotton needed for Knoxville's factories. Not surprisingly, East Tennessee, including Knoxville, had remained majority pro-Union throughout the war. This stance was not because East Tennessean whites were interested in ending enslavement, but because they valued the Union more.[29] This pro-union position, however, did not mean that local whites were accepting of African Americans. Newspaper accounts from Knoxville during this period include headlines such as "That War of Races," "Don't Want Negro Votes," "The Negro Equality Question," and "The Negroes Must Leave Tennessee."[30] Prominent Knoxville citizens such as Confederate

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[28] John Cimprich, "Slavery's End in East Tennessee," *The East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications* 52 (1980): 78.

[29] Jason M. Yeatts, "'That We May Think Right, Vote Right, and Do Right': Knoxville's Black Community, 1865-1867," *The Journal of East Tennessee History* 82 (2010): 77.

[30] "That War of Races," *Knoxville Weekly Chronicle* (Knoxville, Tennessee), September 2, 1874; "Don't Want Negro Votes," *Knoxville Weekly Chronicle* (Knoxville, Tennessee), September 14, 1870; "The Negro Equality Question," *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig* (Knoxville, Tennessee), April 4, 1866; "The Negroes Must Leave Tennessee," *Brownlow's Knoxville Whig* (Knoxville, Tennessee), August 21, 1867.

supporter Ellen Renshaw House proclaimed, "Now we are slaves – slaves to the vilest race that ever disgraced humanity."[31]

During the Civil War, Knoxville spent time under both Confederate and Union occupation with most Knoxvillians in favor of the Union occupation because of the stability that it brought the region. After the war, when Confederate sympathizers returned to Knoxville, those who had remained pro-Union ostracized them. However, one thing both groups were able to unite under was the issue of race and their dislike of freedmen. An 1866 lynching of an African American man in downtown Knoxville signaled the reconciliation between the two groups and brought them together.[32] The growth of the African American population during and after the Civil War in part spurred the dislike of freedmen among local whites. With the presence of Union Army troops, enslaved African Americans claimed their independence and flocked to urban areas like Knoxville. According to historian Jason Yeatts, "In 1860, blacks numbered 752, or 20.3 percent of the city's population. By 1870, the black population had increased to 3,149, or 30.1 percent."[33] Between 1860 and 1880, the African American population of Knoxville quadrupled.[34] This urban migration created competition for jobs in an economy that was

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[31] William Bruce Wheeler, *Knoxville, Tennessee: A Mountain City in the New South*, 2nd edition (Knoxville: Univ Tennessee Press, 2005), 3.

[32] Yeatts, "'That We May Think Right, Vote Right, and Do Right': Knoxville's Black Community, 1865-1867," 76.

[33] Ibid., 82.

[34] Wheeler, *Knoxville, Tennessee*, 25.

already struggling to recover from the war. Whites perceived African American advancement to be a threat to their lives, and they often reacted with violence.

In 1865, the city of Knoxville began passing laws to restrict the advancement of African Americans in the city. One of these such laws prohibited African Americans from being vendors in the city's market leaving that space as a space only open to white vendors.[35] African Americans also faced discrimination from the city's police strictly because of their race. During this period, there were also incidents of racially motivated violence by local whites.

African American Education in Knoxville, Tennessee

African Americans were not only dealing with the effects of being free from enslavement, but they were also attempting to navigate life in a new, unfamiliar world. African Americans quickly turned to education as part of their strategy. They viewed literacy as a liberating force necessary for their advancement in society. In a speech given in Manassas, Virginia Frederick Douglass accurately described how most African Americans felt of education. He states, "Education means emancipation. It means light and liberty. It means the uplifting of the soul of man into the glorious light of truth, the light by which men can only be made free."[36] Most importantly, literacy provided African Americans with a power many never had before. Without an education, many of them felt that whites would still be able to take advantage of them and exploit their labor.

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[35] Yeatts, "'That We May Think Right, Vote Right, and Do Right': Knoxville's Black Community, 1865-1867," 84.

[36] Frederick Douglass, "Blessings of Liberty and Education | Teaching American History" (Speech, Manassas, Virginia, September 3, 1894), http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/blessings-of-liberty-and-education/.

Also, most telling for freedmen and women was that literacy had not only been denied to them as enslaved people, but also becoming literate before emancipation was something that they could be hurt or killed for. They recognized the importance of literacy as a tool for their advancement based on the violent reactions their literacy elicited from whites.

In Knoxville, African Americans established schools before the close of the Civil War. Laura Scott Cansler established the first of these schools, the Burnside School, in 1864. An African American woman named Henrietta Jones, Reverend George Washington LaVere, and Reverend Alfred E. Anderson opened schools in 1864. In addition, the Freedmen's Bureau was active in this region donating money for the purchase of land and buildings and teachers' salaries.[37] Not only was the establishment of schools an important part of institution building undertaken by freedmen, but it also represented their desire to be active agents in securing education for their people. School building represented African Americans seeking to direct their own lives.[38]

In many ways, African American aspirations for education helped to spur the influx of white northern missionaries into southern African American schools. Historian Heather Andrea Williams notes, "The social and political power with which former slaves invested literacy initiated an educational revolution in the American South as

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[37] Yeatts, "'That We May Think Right, Vote Right, and Do Right': Knoxville's Black Community, 1865-1867," 89–91.

[38] For more see James D. Anderson, *The Education of Blacks in the South, 1860-1935*, 1 edition (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1988), 5. Anderson argues that not only did African Americans emerge from enslavement with the desire to read and write, but they also had the "deep-seated desire to control and sustain schools for themselves and their children" (5). Anderson includes a quote from William Channing Gannett, a white teacher from the American Missionary Association which states, "What they desire is assistance without control" (5).

African Americans' persistent demand for teachers and schools ignited and fueled a movement of northern teachers into southern black communities."[39] Often the addition of whites into the movement for African American education created tension. African Americans sought to be in charge of their own public institutions as they were already in charge of their churches, and they faced the impending threat of northern whites thinking they knew what was better for African Americas than they did themselves. Although African Americans sought to control their own educational destiny, their reach was somewhat limited by not having the advantage of inherited wealth and having been deprived of the products of their labor for centuries. Many of them lacked education and some of those who were educated only had a rudimentary education. In building community institutions, African Americans also coped with the daily challenges of finding places to live, obtaining employment, and survival within a hostile environment in general. Whites, often in a paternalistic manner, noted the African American push for an education and they used that desire as a tool for their benefit to control African American education.[40]

The Freedmen's Board of Missions of the United Presbyterian Church (FBMUPC) was one of those northern missionary groups that invaded Knoxville with their white controlled and operated schools for African Americans. Not only did the United Presbyterians operate the Creswell School, but they also opened schools

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[39] Williams, *Self-Taught*, 30.

[40] Ibid., 42. Williams notes that "Some white northerners, then, believed that black people wanted education so badly that its provision could become a mechanism for controlling their behavior" (42).

throughout the East Tennessee region including in Maryville and Louisville in Blount County. The FBMUPC was a force to be reckoned with in African American education. Between 1865 and 1866, "the FBMUPC operated the majority of the city's black schools. In April 1866, it owned two buildings, operated five schools, and employed eight teachers, with a total enrollment of 300 students."[41] The resources of the FBMUPC far outnumbered resources available to local African American led schools in Knoxville. The United Presbyterian Church had about 55,000 members between 660 congregations donating money, time, and resources to conduct the missions to establish African American schools.[42] This money combined with money and resources from the United States Freedmen's Bureau allowed the FBMUPC to dominate African American schools in the Knoxville region.

This period was without a doubt one of the greatest periods of the transformation of African American education. Not only were African Americans actively building schools of their own, but what also emerged during this time is what has been named the Negro College Movement. During the period of Reconstruction (1865-1877), thirty-five African American colleges were developed in states as far north as Maryland to as far west as Arkansas. Of these thirty-five colleges, Northern missionaries and various religious denominations established twenty-three of them. Overall, seventy-nine societies were engaged in aiding the education of freedmen including missionary groups such as the American Missionary Society, the American Baptist Home Mission Society, the

[41] Yeatts, "'That We May Think Right, Vote Right, and Do Right': Knoxville's Black Community, 1865-1867," 90.

[42] Jamison, *The United Presbyterian Story: A Centennial Study, 1858 – 1958*, 58.

Methodist Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church of the USA, the United Presbyterian Church, and the African Methodist Episcopal Church.[43] What was guiding the creation of these colleges was "a sense of duty of a stronger social group to a weaker."[44] Although many of these institutions called themselves colleges, the truth of the matter is that they taught all grade levels due to the lack of education of African Americans of all ages. The primary objective of these schools was to produce teachers and ministers to aid in the social uplift of the African American race. It is within this context that Knoxville College was born.

The Founding of Knoxville College

Keeping with their new tradition of educating freedmen and women, the United Presbyterian Church set its sights on establishing a college. In 1872, the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church decided to discontinue its smaller educational missions and concentrate its efforts on one normal school.[45] Although one of the Presbyterians' most successful schools was the McKee School in Nashville, Knoxville was chosen as the location of the new school because of what the United Presbyterian Church saw as competition from the numerous African American secondary schools in Nashville including Fisk University, Roger Williams College, and Meharry Medical College, all schools associated with Northern missionary groups. In addition, R.J. Creswell's Knoxville school had been received favorably by local African

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[43] D.O.W. Holmes, "The Beginnings of the Negro College," *The Journal of Negro Education* 3, no. 2 (April 1934): 172.

[44] Ibid., 168.

[45] Robert J. Booker, *And There Was Light!: The 120 Year History of Knoxville College, Knoxville Tennessee, 1875-1995* (Virginia Beach, VA: Beck Cultural Exchange Center, 1994), 12.

Americans, and it was felt that this region could benefit from an institution of higher learning for African Americans. United Presbyterian Freedmen's Board members Dr. Witherspoon and Reverend James McNeal chose Longstreet's Hill in Knoxville as the location for the school. They also hired prominent architect A.C. Bruce to design the first building known as McKee Hall.[46]

McKee Hall, named for the Reverend Joseph G. McKee, was the first building on the Knoxville College campus. Designed by A.C. Bruce, the building was an impressive 194 feet in length built on the pinnacle of Longstreet's Hill. It is remarkable that the Presbyterians hired an architect like A.C. Bruce. Bruce was a rising popular architect who made his home in Knoxville after the conclusion of the Civil War. He designed numerous public structures in Knoxville and throughout Tennessee including an addition to the Tennessee School for the Deaf, the Hamilton County Court House, the Hamblen County Courthouse, and the Loudon County Courthouse.[47] McKee Hall was a four-story brick building built to accommodate 300 to 400 students. Its initial use was that of a chapel, classrooms, and offices for the college's teachers and administrators.[48] The front elevation of the building had a projected central bay with an arched recessed entry way with brick detailing. The projected central bay also rose above the roof line one story with a bell tower and a cupola featured on top. Each of the four corners of the building

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[46] Ibid. A. C. Bruce was well known for his architecturAL designs for public buildings. For a more detailed analysis on the significance of A. C. Bruce's work see Carroll Van West, Tennessee's Historic Landscapes: Travelers Guide, 1 edition (Knoxville: University Tennessee Press, 1995); James Patrick, Architecture in Tennessee, 1768-1897, 1 edition (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1981).

[47] Walter G. Cooper, *The Cotton States and International Exposition and South: Illustrated, Including the Official History of the Exposition* (Atlanta, Georgia: Illustrator Company, 1896), 219.

[48] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 12.

was home to a stone pinnacle with tall architectural spires. Detailed stonework followed the roofline of the building on all four sides. This structure was very much a representation of the ambitions that the United Presbyterian Church had for their first college.

FIRST COLLEGE BUILDING, DEDICATED IN 1876. BURNED IN 18[illegible].

Figure 1. McKee Hall.[49]

Ten years after the close of the Civil War and two years before the end of Reconstruction, Knoxville College officially opened. The opening of the college proved to be a significant event for the African American community of Knoxville.

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[49] United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A and Board of Mission to the Freedmen, *Album of Knoxville College and Other Missions among the Freedmen of the United Presbyterian Church.* (Knoxville: Knoxville College Printing Department, 1901), 7.

The September 5, 1876 edition of the *Knoxville Daily Tribune* described the building dedication as follows,

> Yesterday marked an epoch in the educational history of the colored people of East Tennessee, especially Knoxville, being the day set apart for the dedication of Centennial Hall (now known as McKee Hall) of the Knoxville College for Freedmen. Long before the hour designated, Main Street was lined on both sides for a considerable distance with carriages and other vehicles awaiting its arrival.[50]

One quote from a local African American stated,

> When Knoxville College, a three-story brick building was erected, the colored people of Knoxville were very proud of it; and though we had quite a vague conception of the scope of the word college, we knew it meant something higher than the elementary city schools and when asked what school we attended we somewhat proudly replied, "out to the college.[51]

The first president of the school was John Scouller McCulloch, a Presbyterian Reverend, and he immediately expressed doubts about the school after learning that he was appointed its president. He stated, "I did not know that a Freedmen's School had been advanced to the dignity of a college."[52] Prior to his assignment at Knoxville College by the Freedmen's Board of the United Presbyterian Church, McCulloch had been a Presbyterian Reverend in Peoria, Illinois and New York City, New York. Previously he had served as a Union Army Chaplain with the 77th Illinois Volunteers and had been a

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[50] Robert J. Booker, "The Story of Mechanicsville 1875 - 2008" (Knoxville Community Development Corporation, 2010), 10, w.kcdc.org/Libraries/Exec_Mngmnt_Documents/theStoryofMechanicsville.sflb.ashx.

[51] Cynthia Griggs Fleming, "Knoxville College: A History and Some Recollections of the First Fifty Years, 1875-1925," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications* 58/59 (January 1986): 91–92.

[52] McGranahan, *Historical Sketch of the Freedman's Missions of the United Presbyterian Church 1862-1904*, 25.

prisoner of war.[53] He brought with him to Knoxville College his wife and five children, including two sons, Paul and Ralph, who would go on to attend and graduate from Knoxville College.[54]

Early education at Knoxville College consisted of primary schooling and liberal arts courses. Many of the first students of Knoxville College had never received an education and were starting at the beginning. Because of this, Knoxville College educated people on a variety of educational levels as well as people of a variety of ages. Early subjects taught ranged from reading, language, arithmetic, geography, and writing to Latin, algebra, botany, astronomy, and Shakespeare.[55] In addition, students were required to attend chapel services weekly along with prayer meetings throughout the week. The Presbyterian leadership completely overruled any previous religion students may have had because they believed that their students were "ignorant and degraded, wild and foolish in their religious notions, [and] absurd and ridiculous in their religious performances."[56] Despite this students assimilated into Presbyterian religious doctrine and were steadfast in their quest to receive an education.

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[53] James Brown Scouller, *History of the Big Spring Presbytery of the United Presbyterian Church, and Its Territorial Predecessors, 1750-1879* (Patriot Publishing Company, 1879), 121.

[54] *Knoxville College Bulletin Catalogue Number for 1905-1906: Announcements for 1906-1907*, 4 3 (Knoxville, Tennessee: Knoxville College Printing Department, 1906), 49. Paul McCulloch was an 1888 graduate. Ralph McCulloch was an 1890 graduate.

[55] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College 1889 – 1900.* (Knoxville: Ogden Brothers and Company, 1889), 17–19.

[56] United Presbyterian Church of North America, *Minutes Of The General Assembly Of The United Presbyterian Church Of North America, Volumes 16-20...* (Pittsburgh: Stevenson and Foster, 1874), 207.

The first college level graduating class graduated from Knoxville College on May 17, 1883. The college's first two graduates were Sylvia Jemmell Mason and William Jackson Cansler. At the graduation ceremony, President McCulloch told the graduates, "The world is before you. You have depended largely upon your parents for counsel and support. Henceforth your purpose is to work your own way. Your education has been of little account if it has not taught you to rely upon your selves ... "[57] It is this self-reliance that is evident in the coming trend of industrial education for African American students.

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[57] Booker, "The Story of Mechanicsville 1875 - 2008," Milestones.

CHAPTER TWO: ESTABLISHING THE CURRICULUM OF AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGES

"In a certain way every slave plantation in the South was an industrial school. On these plantations young colored men and women were constantly being trained not only as farmers but as carpenters, blacksmiths, wheelwrights, brick masons, engineers, cooks, laundresses, sewing women and housekeepers."[1]

- Booker T. Washington "Industrial Education for the Negro"

"On one point, therefore, there can be no question -- no hesitation: unless we develop our full capabilities, we cannot survive. If we are to be trained grudgingly and suspiciously; trained not with reference to what we can be, but with sole reference to what somebody wants us to be … then my fellow teachers, we are going to fail and fail ignominiously in our attempt to raise the black race to its full humanity and with that failure falls the fairest and fullest dream of a great united humanity."[2]

- W. E. B. DuBois "The Hampton Idea"

At the time of its opening the purpose of Knoxville College was to train African American teachers and ministers. The *1889 Course Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College* notes that the college was there to "encourage the thorough education of many who wish to advance beyond the studies ordinarily taught in common schools."[3] While there was no standard African American primary education, most students entering the college would be seeking to advance beyond the basics of reading, writing, and arithmetic. A student of Knoxville College's lower level classes held in the Primary or Training School would be seeking to move beyond learning orthography,

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[1] Booker T. Washington, *Industrial Education for the Negro* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2013), http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/industrial-education-for-the-negro/.

[2] W. E. B Du Bois, *The Education of Black People: Ten Critiques, 1906-1960* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1973), 9–10.

[3] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College 1889 – 1900.*, 21.

reading from *Franklin's Fifth*, geography from *Swinton's Introduction*, and arithmetic from *Sheldon*.[4]

Like most of the African American colleges at that time, Knoxville College taught a traditional liberal arts education consisting of literature, languages, history, mathematics, and science. White northern missionaries often favored a liberal arts education because it was the same type of education being taught to whites. The leadership of Knoxville College believed that obtaining a liberal arts education would allow African American students to become more like them, adopt white middle class values and abandon an African American culture that supposedly hindered their growth and development. A liberal arts education allowed the most gifted African American students to further pursue graduate degrees provided they could find colleges that would admit them.

The *1890 Course Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College* reveals two course tracks for students: the Classical Course and the Scientific Course. A comparison of the two course tracks reveals similarities and differences. For example, the Scientific Course consisted of two courses in geometry, and courses on Caesar and Cicero's Orations and completion of the track resulted in receiving a Bachelor of Science degree. The Classical Course did not have those courses and instead offered courses on Anabasis, Memorabilia, Homer, and Demosthenes which resulted in a Bachelor of Arts

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[4] Ibid., 18.

degree. What both of these tracks had in common was that they required students to take Church History weekly.[5]

At this time there were no specific industrial education classes as each student basically had a work scholarship. They had work outside of class that otherwise the college would have had to hire someone to do. Their assignments consisted of working in the college's printing department or working in the college's small farm and garden. According to the *1889 Course Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College*, work in the farm and garden consisted of "fencing, manuring, cultivating the ground, gathering the crops, and tending the horses and cows" while work in the college's printing department consisted of writing and composing.[6] Female students also were required to take daily sewing lessons. Students also were expected to do the daily upkeep of campus buildings and spaces as well as cooking and cleaning in the campus kitchen and dining room.

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[5] Ibid., 20–21.

[6] Ibid., 26.

Table 1. 1890 Knoxville College Course Listing[7]

Scientific Course	Classical Course
FRESHMAN	FRESHMAN
- Caesar	- Trigonometry 1
- Cicero	- Trigonometry 2
- Geometry 1	- Virgil
- Geometry 2	- Anabasis
- Roman History	- Horace
- Greek History	- Memorabilia
SOPHOMORE	SOPHOMORE
- Trigonometry 1	- Analytical Geometry
- Trigonometry 2	- Roman History
- Virgil	- Homer
- Horace	- Astronomy
- French	- Greek History
- Milton and Shakespeare	- Demosthenes
JUNIOR	JUNIOR
- Analytical Geometry	- Chemistry
- Chemistry	- Botany
- Botany	- French
- Astronomy	- Natural Philosophy
- Natural Philosophy	- Geology
- Geology	- Milton and Shakespeare
SENIOR	SENIOR
- Mental Philosophy	- Mental Philosophy
- Political Economy	- Political Economy
- Zoology	- Zoology
- Moral Philosophy	- Moral Philosophy
- Logic	- Logic
- Science of Government	- Science of Government

A comparison with Fisk University in Nashville, Tennessee reveals that the liberal arts curriculum of both colleges were similar. Fisk University only had one course track, called the Collegiate Department, and students completing this track would receive a Bachelor of Arts degree.

[7] Ibid., 20–21.

Table 2. 1883 Fisk University Course Listing[8]

Fisk University Collegiate Department
FRESHMAN - Latin – Virgil's Aenid - Greek – Anabasis and Greek Testament - Mathematics – Algebra and Geometry - Latin – Cicero - Greek – Xenophone - Mathematics – Geometry, Trigonometry, and Surveying SOPHOMORE - Greek – Iliad - Mathematics – Conic Sections and Calculus - Rhetoric – Reed and Kellogg - French – Grammar, Exercises, and Translation - Latin – Horace and Roman History - Mathematics – Calculus - French – Translation and Study of French Literature - Physical Science – Botany JUNIOR - Latin – Livy and Tacitus - Physical Science – Physics - German – Grammar, Exercises and Translation - Greek – Demosthenes and Sophocles - Physical Science – Physiology and Hygiene and Astronomy - German – Worman SENIOR - Mental Science – Hopkins Outline Study of Man - English Literature – Shaw - Logic – McCosh - Physical Science – Chemistry with practice in Laboratory - Moral Science – Fairchild's Moral Philosophy - Constitutional Law - Political Economy - Physical Science – Zoology, Geology, Mineralogy

[8] Fisk University, *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Fisk University : Nashville, Tennessee, for the College Year 1883-4* (Nashville, Tennessee: Marshall & Bruce, stationers and printers, 1884), 17, http://archive.org/details/catalogueofoffici00fisk.

Likewise, a comparison with LeMoyne Normal Institute, currently known as LeMoyne Owen College, in Memphis, Tennessee, reveals that it too required its students to participate in light industrial work that consisted of sewing and kitchen work.[9] What the curricula being taught at these three African American colleges reveal is that the missionary societies that started these colleges all agreed that a liberal arts education was what was needed for their students. Studying classics from authors such as Demosthenes and Cicero would have exposed students to Roman and Greek philosophy and the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Studying poetry by Virgil and Horace would have made students well read. Learning to speak French or German would have prepared students to converse with people very different from them. Some argued, however, that learning these subjects did not prepare students for the reality of a Jim Crow world.

They believed that an industrial education would prepare African American students for their lives in the Jim Crow South. Knoxville College administrators in the 1880s began to add industrial coursework to its curriculum. In 1884, Knoxville College entered into an agreement with the University of Tennessee, which allowed it to receive federal land grant college funding even though it was a private religious college. Although such a transfer of public funds to a private college technically was against the law, the state took this step to comply with the federal Morrill Act of 1862 that stipulated that "no citizen of this state, otherwise qualified, shall be excluded from the privileges of

[9] LeMoyne Normal Institute, *LeMoyne Normal Institute, Memphis, Tennessee : 1883-84* (Memphis, Tennessee: S.C. Toof, printers and lithographers, 1884), 9.

said University, by reason of his race or color."[10] By entering into a partnership first with Fisk University and then Knoxville College, the state and the University of Tennessee protected themselves from having to enroll African American students at the state's flagship college while still receiving federal land grant funding.

Knoxville College's arrangement with the University of Tennessee ended a previous affiliation with Fisk. The Fisk University President objected, noting that "the University of Tennessee was seeking to spend less money upon black state appointees" by not having to cover their travel expenses to Fisk.[11] The University of Tennessee replied that "the newly established contract would place "negro appointees" from other sectors of the state on the same footing, as to the expenses of transportation, with the whites, and would make it practicable for our Faculty to exercise some controlling influence over the entrance examinations of the appointees."[12] The University of Tennessee also argued that there were other advantages to making Knoxville College the private African American college receiving land grant funding; both institutions were in Knoxville allowing the University of Tennessee to have better oversight of public expenditures.[13]

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[10] Samuel H. Shannon, "Land-Grant College Legislation and Black Tennesseans: A Case Study in the Politics of Education," *History of Education Quarterly* 22, no. 2 (Summer 1982): 140. The Morrill Act of 1862 was federal legislation passed by a Republic congress during the war and later resisted by white Tennesseans.

[11] Ibid., 142.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Ibid., 143.

In 1890, Congress passed a second Morrill Act in response to the lack of African American land grant colleges being started by states. The second Morrill Act stipulated that

> no money shall be paid out under this act to any State or Territory for the support and maintenance of a college where a distinction of race or color is made in the admission of students, but the establishment and maintenance of such colleges separately for white and colored students will be held to be in compliance with the provisions of this act if the funds received in such State or Territory be equitably divided as herein set forth."[14]

This new act was a federal acceptance of the white supremacist Southern way of life and allowing for the creation of colleges based on the separation of races. The second Morrill Act called for the University of Tennessee to enter into a second agreement with Knoxville College in 1891. The second agreement declared that

> Knoxville College would maintain the separate 'industrial department' of the University of Tennessee. The black institution would make provisions for the buildings and grounds. As with the first contract, the state university was responsible for providing teachers to administer the "industrial" program. It was also incumbent upon the state university to provide such equipment as would be essential for maintaining the program.[15]

Compliance with the second Morrill Act meant that Knoxville College had to refocus its curriculum into industrial education in order to receive the funding. This decision soon led to the alteration of the farming grounds and buildings needed for the industrial department. In order to accommodate the stipulations of the second Morrill Act, Knoxville College set aside twenty-two acres for farming and an industrial education

[14] Ibid.

[15] Ibid., 145.

building was constructed in 1892. The University of Tennessee provided the college with $600 for industrial program tuition for twelve students in 1891.[16]

Although Knoxville College was now a separate college, yet also a part of the University of Tennessee through its industrial department, the education being received by the African American students of Knoxville College and the white students of the University of Tennessee was as different as their positions in society. Historian Samuel Shannon states,

> While degree-granting programs in civil, electrical, and mechanical engineering were being introduced at the state university, Knoxville College students were taught manual training, domestic science and other courses deemed suitable for blacks. And while state university students had rebelled against the "manual labor" that accompanied "practical" agriculture, the Knoxville College students were expected to gain their "practical" knowledge by working upon the school farm.[17]

This agreement between the colleges would last until 1912 with the opening of the Tennessee Agricultural and Industrial State School for Negroes, now known as Tennessee State University.

The next factor driving Knoxville College to a more industrial education based curriculum was the educational philosophy of Booker T. Washington and his increasingly famous Tuskegee Institute in Alabama. Washington was a graduate of Virginia's Hampton University, arguably one of the first African American colleges that taught a primarily industrial education. He made their model of industrial education the

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[16] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College 1889 – 1900.*, 33.

[17] Shannon, "Land-Grant College Legislation and Black Tennesseans: A Case Study in the Politics of Education," 145.

centerpiece of Tuskegee Institute, where he was the college's first president. Washington's premise was simple. African American "schools teach everybody a little of almost everything, but, in my opinion, they teach very few children just what they ought to know in order to make their way successfully in life. They do not put into their hands the tools they are best fitted to use, and hence so many failures."[18] Washington was looking at the South as it was. African Americans were receiving liberal arts educations yet there were few careers rooted in these curricula that the white public saw as suitable for African Americans. According to Washington, colleges up until this point had "built up a barrier between the boy and the work he was fitted to do."[19]

What African Americans were "fitted to do" was work in service roles. Washington lamented

> "We could find numbers of them who could teach astronomy, theology, Latin or grammar, but almost none who could instruct in the making of clothing, something that has to be used by every one of us every day in the year. How often have I been discouraged as I have gone through the South, and into the homes of the people of my race, and have found women who could converse intelligently upon abstruse subjects, and yet could not tell how to improve the condition of the poorly cooked and still more poorly served bread and meat which they and their families were eating three times a day. It is discouraging to find a girl who can tell you the geographical location of any country on the globe and who does not know where to place the dishes upon a common dinner table. It is discouraging to find a woman who knows much about theoretical chemistry, and who cannot properly wash and iron a shirt."[20]

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[18] Booker T Washington, "The Industrial Education of the Negro," in *The Negro Problem: A Series of Articles by Representative American Negroes of Today*, ed. Booker T. Washington (New York: James Pott & Co., 1903), 1.

[19] Washington, *Industrial Education for the Negro*.

[20] Ibid.

For Washington, these careers of servitude were immediately attainable and would eventually lead to African Americans owning businesses as dairymen, wheelwrights, brick masons, or cooks and domestics and thus lead to economic independence and a thriving African American business class.

In 1895, Washington gave what is now known as his "Atlanta Compromise" speech. In that speech he preached to a predominantly white audience that African Americans needed to be comfortable where they were. For whites, this type of advocacy was right on time and it matched many of their sentiments perfectly. What the "Atlanta Compromise" speech also did was chastise African Americans for aspiring to higher positions after enslavement and pleaded with whites to remember how faithful African Americans had been to them in the past.[21] Washington's rhetoric satisfied Southern whites who did not want to see African Americans elevated to the same position as them. Whites both in the North and South soon designated Booker T. Washington as a race leader. He had the ear of significant people including Presidents William McKinley, Theodore Roosevelt, and William Howard Taft. By the turn of the 20th century, due to his success at Tuskegee whites designated Washington as an official spokesman for African American education. His influence was so extensive that whites interested in African American education turned to him first.

Many other African American educators disagreed with Booker T. Washington. His main opponent in the battle over African American education was Dr. W.E.B.

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[21] Booker T. Washington, "1895 Atlanta Compromise Speech," accessed March 11, 2016, http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/39/.

DuBois. With his relatively integrated upbringing in Great Barrington, Massachusetts, his liberal arts education received at Fisk University and the University of Berlin, and the fact that he was the first African American to receive a doctorate degree from Harvard University, DuBois did not subscribe to Washington's accommodationist tone and instead called for an educated class of African Americans who were not being taught to be subservient. DuBois was rightly suspicious of the strong emphasis that whites put on African Americans needing and receiving industrial education. DuBois believed that the type and quality of African American education should not be limited by racial prejudices. He strongly believed in liberal arts education arguing "the milking of cows is a worthy industry, but it is not a cultural study upon which any honest college can base its bachelor's degree," yet colleges were doing just that.[22]

DuBois was an outspoken opponent of industrial education. At a speech given at Hampton Institute in 1906 DuBois stated,

> Unless we develop our full capabilities, we cannot survive. If we are to be trained grudgingly and suspiciously; trained not with reference to what we can be, but with sole reference to what somebody wants us to be; if instead of following the methods pointed out by the accumulated wisdom of the world for the development of full human power, we simply are trying to follow the line of least resistance and teach black men only such things and by such methods as are momentarily popular, then my fellow teachers, we are going to fail and fail ignominiously in our attempt to raise the black race to its full humanity.[23]

For DuBois, African Americans needed to be powerful in order to challenge white supremacy, and they could not do so if they received a second-class education. DuBois

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[22] Du Bois, *The Education of Black People*, 28.

[23] Ibid., 9–10.

also noted the influence that funding had on schools accepting industrial education. At a speech given in 1908 at his alma mater Fisk University DuBois stated, "Dr. Merrill [President of Fisk] thought that through [Booker T.] Washington's influence some help might come from monied interests to Fisk University; and to lure this philanthropy he proposed to make certain changes [the addition of industrial education classes] in the Fisk curriculum."[24] With Fisk's embrace of industrial education for funding, DuBois had every right to be concerned about the combination of white philanthropic money and African American educational interests. While both DuBois and Washington's educational plans had their merits, there existed an even stronger advocate of industrial education in the form of white philanthropies.

What DuBois was leery of Washington fully embraced and in many ways his embrace was led by monetary gain for African American education. In the early 20th century philanthropies such as the Slater Fund and the General Education Board were providing much needed funding to African American colleges. Specifically, the Slater Fund was willing to provide funding to African American colleges under the stipulation that they must teach industrial education. In an 1895 pamphlet titled *Difficulties, Complications, and Limitations Connected with the Education of The Negro,* trustees of the Slater Fund stated,

> Whatever may be our speculative opinions as to the progress and development of which the negro may be ultimately capable, there can hardly be a well-grounded opposition to the opinion that the hope for the race, in the South, is to be found, not so much in the high courses of university instruction, or in schools of Technology, as in handicraft instruction…The general instruction heretofore

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[24] Ibid., 17.

> given in the schools, it is feared, has been too exclusively intellectual, too little of that kind that produces intelligent and skilled workmen, and therefore not thoroughly adapted to racial development, nor to fitting for the practical duties of life.[25]

This telling quote reveals the complex relationship between early African American colleges who were dependant on philanthropies for funding and the principles that guided those philanthropies. With the end of enslavement, the South was in dire need of a manual labor workforce. If this workforce were to become college educated, they might have felt that manual labor was beneath them. African Americans who received too much education may have also been quicker to challenge the racial status quo of the time. Philanthropies of the time like the Slater Fund wanted to produce good workmen and domestics, not African American men and women who would challenge racism. The Slater Fund was determined to control African Americans by their labor even if they aspired to higher education.

Even more telling is that the Slater Fund only provided funding to African American colleges where industrial education was a part of the curriculum. In many ways, the Slater Fund was only funding schools that supported African American subjugation. Powerful white men were choosing the education standards for an entire race of people based off of their own prejudices and white supremacist ideals. In fact, J.L.M. Curry, prominent Slater Fund agent, was a former slaveholder and congressman in the antebellum South. White supremacist control of the curriculum at African American colleges hearkened back to the days of enslavement when laws and white slaveholders

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[25] J. L. M. Curry, *Difficulties, Complications, and Limitations, Connected With the Education, of the Negro* (Baltimore: The Trustees of the John F. Slater Fund, 1895), 22.

forbade the enslaved to learn to read or write. Now, many years after the end of enslavement the Slater Fund still restrained African Americans from learning subjects that would lead to their racial uplift instead favoring that they learn subjects attached to manual labor.

Because of its addition of industrial education, Knoxville College became a willing recepient of funding from the Slater Fund. An examination of records reveals that Knoxville College received money from the Slater Fund from 1907 to 1915 and possibly later. The money received accounted for a small percentage of the college's operating budget. The money was spent on the partial salary of the head of the Nurse Training Department at the Knoxville College Eliza B. Wallace Hospital.

Table 3. Slater Funds Received by Knoxville College by Year[26]

Slater Funds Received by Knoxville College by Year	
1907 – 1908	$300
1908 – 1909	$300
1909 – 1910	$300
1910 – 1911	$500
1911 – 1912	$500
1912 – 1913	$500
1913 - 1914	$750
1914 – 1915	$750

[26] John F. Slater Fund for the Education of Freedmen, *Proceedings of the Trustees of the John F. Slater Fund for the Education of Freedmen* (New York: The John F. Slater Fund, 1909); John F. Slater Fund, *Proceedings of the Trustees of the John F. Slater Fund for the Education of Freedmen* (Baltimore, 1900).

Compared to other African American colleges the amount of money received by Knoxville College was minor. Other African American colleges such as Hampton Institute and Tuskegee University received $10,000, and sometimes more, from 1898 to 1915 and possibly longer. In 1908, the year Fisk opened an industrial education department and received $5,000 to put towards purchasing equipment and the industrial department teacher's salaries. What the accountings of the Slater Fund reveal is that if the money were going directly toward agricultural work, colleges would receive more funds. More revealing is that from 1887 to 1915 colleges associated with Booker T. Washington, Hampton and Tuskegee, were receiving the most funds. In fact they were receiving 50% or more funding than any other colleges. These percentages reveal the complicated yet troubling relationship between those advocating for industrial education and the money they received from the Slater Fund for essentially advocating for African American oppression.

Industrial Education at Knoxville College

Between 1889 and 1891, industrial education courses began appearing at Knoxville College. The leadership of Knoxville College had grown annoyed with what they saw as criticism of their liberal arts curriculum. Administrators noted, "There is a mistaken notion that has in the past made the mission work the butt of ridicule….that a false pedagogy prevailed, cramming the students with Greek and Latin for which they are not fitted."[27] By 1891, Knoxville College's Industrial Department had its own course

[27] Cynthia Griggs Fleming, "Knoxville College: A History and Some Recollections of the First Fifty Years, 1875 - 1925," *East Tennessee Historical Society's Publications* 58/59 (1986): 22.

tracks separate from the Classical and Scientific Tracks. The Industrial Department consisted of two tracks, the Agricultural Track and the Mechanical Track. Courses taught on the Agricultural Track included Agriculture. Courses taught on the Mechanical Track included Mechanical Drawing, Lettering, and Shop Work.[28]

The *1891 Course Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College* detailed the importance of the Industrial and Agricultural and Mechanical Departments. Of the Industrial Department the catalog states, “The sentiment is inculcated that no one is superior to doing necessary work. Grades are given throughout this department. The grade in house-work, sewing, or farm and shop work will count as much in the general standing of the student as the grade in language or mathematics.”[29] Knoxville College made it known that they viewed industrial classes as equivalent to traditional liberal arts classes. There was to be no differentiation between the two.

In a section of the *1892 Course Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College* titled “Prospects,” Knoxville College outlined its prospects for its Industrial Education Department. It states, “The enlargement of the Industrial Department, by the addition of a large building for machinery and shop work, induces the hope that the usefulness of the College will be greatly increased. Students will be prepared in new lines of handicraft for the activities of life.”[30]

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[28] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College 1889 – 1900*, 22.

[29] Ibid., 32.

[30] Ibid., 41.

The *1893 Course Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College* gave even more attention to the Industrial Department. The purpose given for the agricultural department was "to create such a love for farm life that young men will not be too ready to leave the country to go into the overcrowded cities."[31] This stance played directly into the South's need for manual labor. This rhetoric was also popular in newspapers of the time advocating for African Americans to stay tied to the land and avoid urban areas and specifically the North. The Practical Agriculture class taught "the history of agriculture, discussion of soils, the management of manures, rotation of crops etc." while the Horticulture class taught "the history of useful garden plants and fruit trees, their management, manner of propagation, and also their enemies and remedies." [32] The Livestock and Dairying class included learning, "the principles of stock breeding, management of domestic animals, and the analysis and care of milk."[33] The catalog admitted that students in these courses were working a minimum of ten hours per week in their trade outside of class.

Despite the many debates regarding the appropriateness and necessity of industrial education, Knoxville College's industrial education department thrived. The college's second president, Ralph McGranahan, declared "The greatest value of the Industrial Department, perhaps is not so much the teaching of trades as the instilling of healthful ideas about work. The entire South needs to learn the lesson that work is

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[31] Ibid., 38.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid., 39.

honorable. There is no way of teaching it so effectually as making it a feature of college training."[34] In 1892, upon the completion of the construction of the Industrial Building engraved above the main entrance was the quote, "All Science Points Toward God."[35] The science taught in this building was industrial science that consisted of brick masonry, boiler making, blacksmithing, sewing, carpentering, printing, baking, cooking, small engine repair, and electrical work among other trades. These were trades that kept African Americans in positions of servitude, that were pleasing to whites, and did little to challenge the racial status quo.

The effects of the industrial education taught to students at Knoxville College are still visible on the landscape of Knoxville today. Brick masonry proved to be the most profitable trade students participated in for the school. From roughly 1891 through 1931 students assisted in the construction of every structure erected on campus through either brick making, bricklaying, building design, carpentry, or other construction-related tasks. These structures consisted of dormitories, the president's house, brick walkways, and classroom buildings. Students who participated in this work received discounted tuition, and during school breaks they had the option to continue their work for small pay. President Ralph McGranahan estimated that in the summer of 1903 students made almost one million bricks.[36] The sale of bricks to the public quickly became a revenue stream for

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[34] McGranahan, *Historical Sketch of the Freedman's Missions of the United Presbyterian Church, 1862-1904*, 40.

[35] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 17.

[36] McGranahan, *Historical Sketch of the Freedman's Missions of the United Presbyterian Church, 1862-1904*, 40.

the college and proved to its leaders that industrial education was valuable. From 1890 – 1899 the average price per one-thousand brick was $5.56.[37]

Brick making at Knoxville College consisted of making hand-molded bricks, which at the time was considered labor intensive because there was machinery available to mold bricks.[38] Students worked in the Knoxville College brickyard primarily during the summer months. Students would hand mold bricks out of clay excavated from the ground and dry them in a kiln. An analysis of the bricks made by Knoxville College students reveals that they are covered with fingerprints and finger impressions. In addition, they are uniform in size each being 4 inches in width and 8 inches in length. Bricks made by Knoxville College students were often used in the construction of other United Presbyterian mission schools and churches.

Industrial education had also taught students how to design buildings. In 1910, Knoxville College students designed and built the Negro Hall building for the Appalachian Exposition taking place in Knoxville. In attendance at the exposition was none other than Booker T. Washington, who no doubt visited the Negro Hall and saw the fruits of the industrial education that he advocated on display. Students not only assisted with the construction of campus buildings and the Negro Hall of the Appalachian

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[37] "Table II. - Average Yearly Actual and Relative Prices of Commodities, 1890 to 1910; Monthly Actual and Relative Prices, January to December, 1910, and Base Prices (Average for 1890-1899)," in *Bulletin of the Bureau of Labor: Wholesale Prices, 1890 - 1910.*, 93 (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1911), 450.

[38] R. B. Morrison and J. A. Reep, *Brickmakers' Manual* (Indianapolis: T. A. Randall & Co., n.d.), 41.

Exposition, but they also assisted in building homes throughout the Mechanicsville neighborhood in which the college is situated.

Figure 2. Negro Building at Knoxville's Appalachian Exposition.[39]

Another industrial department money maker for the school was broom making, carried out by male students only. The wholesale price of brooms during this period averaged $2.00 per dozen. If students worked on this trade at a broom making factory they could expect to make an average of $1.00 to $1.75 a day if they were white.[40] Because Knoxville College was dependent upon funding from the United Presbyterian Church any opportunity to make additional money for the school was welcomed.

[39] James E. Thompson, "Negro Building," *East Tennessee Historical Society*, October 2, 2013, http://www.easttnhistory.org/exhibits/first-fair-its-kind.

[40] "Schedule N. Sundries. Bristles, Brushes, Brooms, and Feather Dusters.," in *Reports of the Committees of the Senate of the United States for the Second Session of the Fifty-Third Congress 1893-1894* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1895), 27.

With the passage of time the Knoxville College farm grew to the size of seventy-eight acres on campus with another sixty-three acre farm, known as the Jane Henry Farm, off campus in Blount County, Tennessee. Students primarily worked at the Jane Henry Farm during the summer months when classes were not being held.[41] Students could earn enough money from their industrial work throughout the summer to pay their tuition in the fall, with Ralph McGranahan, the college's second President, noting "if he is in earnest he can make his own way entirely by working in the industrial departments during vacation and as he may be able during the school year… A large number are doing this. Hundreds of dollars are paid out every term for student labor."[42]

The campus farm was also useful because the produce grown on the farm and the dairy products produced were in turn used to feed the students and faculty. The produce and dairy products in excess were sold to the citizens of Knoxville for profit. In fact, the citizens of Knoxville were so thankful for the student made products that they donated $1,000 to the school to construct a building specifically for agriculture in 1905.[43] Yet again, industrial education became more entrenched in the landscape of Knoxville College.

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[41] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 54.

[42] McGranahan, *Historical Sketch of the Freedman's Missions of the United Presbyterian Church, 1862-1904*, 40.

[43] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 54.

CHAPTER THREE: THE LOCATION AND ARCHITECTURE OF KNOXVILLE COLLEGE

"The boys who have had any part in its construction have reason to feel an unusual degree of pride in this labor of their hands. The boys who toiled and perspired under the burning sun of last summer know better than anyone can tell them what it means to make brick, and every time they look upon the chapel can well say that it represents some of their toil and sweat."[1]

- Harry C. Cansler, Foreman, Knoxville College Blacksmithing Department

Scholars have long noted that sites of African American neighborhoods and institutions were on marginalized land.[2] The site of Knoxville College is no different. The Freedmen's Board of the United Presbyterian Church purchased Knoxville College's original 5.63 acres for $3,500.[3] The Freedmen's Board described the location as "piece of ground on the west side of the city, containing 5 63/100 acres, one mile from the market square, just outside the city limits, on a beautiful elevation, commanding a magnificent view of the city and surrounding country."[4] What they did not add to their meeting notes was that the land was locally known as Longstreet's Hill.

Longstreet's Hill is named for General James Longstreet of the Confederate Army. It was on this site that Longstreet and his men camped as they engaged in the

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[1] H. C. Cansler, "Industrial Department," *The Aurora*, March 1914, Vol XXVIII no. 8 edition, 7.

[2] For more detail see Kenrick Ian Grandison, "Beyond Buildings: Landscape as Cultural History in Constructing the Historical Significance of Place," in *Preservation of What? For Whom? A Critical Look at Historical Significance*, ed. Michael A. Tomlan (Ithaca: The National Council of Preservation Education, 1997), 159–68.

[3] *Minutes Of The General Assembly Of The United Presbyterian Church Of North America, Volumes 16-20...*, 69.

[4] Ibid.

Battle of Fort Sanders in an attempt to capture Knoxville in November of 1863.[5] Longstreet's battle against General Burnside of the Union Army was not victorious, but this event nonetheless changed the landscape. It is fraught with symbolism that the Freedmen's Board purchased land for the college on which a battle had occurred to secure the freedom of its students. This landscape had once been a site of oppression, but it transformed into a landscape of liberation.

Early descriptions of Longstreet's Hill describe the state of the landscape at the time of its purchase. Dr. Witherspoon and Reverend James McNeal, members of the Freedmen's Board of Missions of the United Presbyterian Church and the men who chose the site of the college, noted that when they visited the location, it was covered in trenches and foxholes, evidence of the military occupation that occurred there.[6] Another early description of the landscape comes from the college's first president, John Scouller McCulloch. He exclaimed, "What a wilderness the college grounds appeared!"[7] According to Knoxville College historian, Robert Booker, "All of what is now known as Mechanicsville was then sedge fields and woods. Where Knoxville College now stands was thickly wooded."[8] An 1886 Map of Knoxville created by Beck and Pauli Lithographers shows the college's two buildings at the time, McKee Hall, and the McKee

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[5] McGranahan, *Historical Sketch of the Freedman's Missions of the United Presbyterian Church, 1862-1904*, 24.

[6] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 12.

[7] John Scouller McCulloch, "The John Scouller McCulloch Papers," 1890 1875, Knoxville College Archives.

[8] Booker, "The Story of Mechanicsville 1875 - 2008," 3.

Hall Dormitory, surrounded by trees. At the time of its creation, Knoxville College was outside of the city limits of Knoxville. It was only one and a half miles from the University of Tennessee-Knoxville and two miles to downtown Knoxville. Both the University of Tennessee and Knoxville College sat on prominent hills overlooking the city.

In the early days, Knoxville College's thickly wooded location was accessible only by Clinton Road, presently known as College Street. The college essentially became the heart of the Mechanicsville neighborhood with its prominent elevation guaranteeing that citizens in the city of Knoxville could view it from any location. Unlike other African American colleges constructed during this period, Knoxville College did not offer its faculty and students a sense of seclusion.[9] In 1881 when the city of Knoxville went about paving roads, Clinton Road was intentionally skipped. According to Knoxville College President John Scouller McCulloch, "the foreman on the job remarked that 'There were only niggers and carpetbaggers on that road' and moved to another site."[10] The town and gown relationship between Knoxville College and the city of Knoxville continued to experience tension in the coming years even as Knoxville College students began to leave their fingerprints on the landscape of the city that rejected them at every opportunity.

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[9] Kenrick Ian Grandison, "Negotiated Space: The Black College Campus as a Cultural Record of Postbellum America," *American Quarterly* 51, no. 3 (1999): 551. Grandison argues that HBCUs often are built with an inward orientation, positioning the backsides of buildings to the public and the entrances of buildings to the inner campus. He also notes that most campus entrances are "backways" meaning they are often concealed and unnoticeable unlike white colleges with grand entrances. Grandison argues this was done to prevent these college campuses from appearing boastful about African American education.

[10] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 25.

Industrial Education and Student Built Buildings

The industrial education taught to students led to them assisting in campus construction and repairs. In fact, many took on these trades as a way to lower their tuition. When the campus experienced hardships due to fires destroying McKee Hall, Elnathan Hall, and the college heating plant, school leadership took it upon themselves to have students involved in reconstructing those buildings.[11] Furthermore, students also worked as foremen on these jobs leading their fellow students. Over the course of time, students helped construct several buildings including McKee Hall #2, McCulloch Hall, Elnathan Hall #2, and McMillan Chapel. Other construction projects completed during the early period of the campus include the greenhouse, brick walkways, the barn, the dairy building, and the heating plant building.[12] All of the structures were constructed using student labor and student made brick. None of the latter structures are still visible on the landscape.

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[11] Ibid., 29. President McCulloch viewed Knoxville College using student labor and materials as a cost savings measure.

[12] Knoxville College referred to this as "recent improvements" in *The Aurora* which details the work done by students. For more see Albert Cleage and Louise Austin, "College Notes," *The Aurora*, October 15, 1903, XVIII no. 3 edition, 5.

McKee Hall #2 (1896)

February 15, 1894, the college suffered a tremendous loss when the original McKee Hall and its attached co-ed dormitory went up in flames. McKee Hall had been the college's backbone, providing space for its first classrooms, dormitories, chapel, and teacher living spaces. *The Knoxville Journal* described the fire as "disastrous fire," and "a spectacle of grandeur" and the losses estimated at $45,000.[13] The cause of the fire was under speculation. Some assumed that outside forces had intentionally started the fire while others blamed male students who had allegedly snuck into the attached dormitory's attic to smoke cigarettes, which was against the rules. The Industrial Building, the original Elnathan Hall, faculty cottages, stable, and barn remained after the fire.[14]

While the fire altered the landscape, it paved the way for students to use their industrial education to participate in the rebuilding process. Because McKee Hall was insured, the college had the funding it needed to reconstruct the structure, and administrators decided that student labor would be used to do so. This was one of the first instances of student involvement in the construction of campus buildings.

Completed in 1896 in the same location on the campus, the new structure favored the original McKee Hall in its architectural style, but it was not as elaborate, and it was much smaller. Gone were the architectural flourishes, pinnacled corners with spires, and detailed stonework along with the attached dormitory. Rebuilt as a two-story building

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[13] "Disastrous Fire: The Knoxville Colored College Chapel Building Burned," *The Knoxville Journal*, February 16, 1894.

[14] Ibid.

with an attic and basement, it featured the same arched recessed entryway with a projected center bay and bell tower, but no cupola with spire atop. Its location on Longstreet's Hill still gave it a commanding, yet much more modest presence. At a size of one hundred and nineteen feet in length by seventy-five feet in width it was seventy-five feet smaller than the original McKee Hall.[15]

Figure 3. McKee Hall #2 about 1896.[16]

Its primary use after the fire was classrooms, office and faculty living spaces. The structure's back extension found use as a gymnasium and a chapel, known as the Presnell Chapel. According to a 1903 Sanborn Map, the structure was aligned around a grand entryway and central hall. On each side of the hall were individual rooms with stairs near

[15] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College 1889 – 1900.*, 30.

[16] Ibid., 1.

the north and south entrances. The north, south and west rooflines also contained dormer windows. Included around the roofline is brick detailing and each of the second story windows include an arched transom. The first-floor windows have square transoms, and all of the windows have stone lintels. The east façade of the structure features the entryway with transom windows organized in groups of four. On each end of the structure are gables containing three windows with a centered arched window. This space was more than likely used as attic space. The attention to detail of this building exemplifies the great amount of labor that students put into its construction very early in the college's use of using student laborers.

There is evidence that the building received a series of renovations throughout the years, the most recent being 1983. At some point, the dormer windows on the west façade roofline were removed. In addition, drop ceilings and modern lighting were also added. Exterior evidence also reveals that some of the original windows on the basement level of the south façade were bricked in during a renovation. Also, a brick wall was added creating a wall around the south façade's basement level entry. Added during the 1960s the brick detailing in this wall matches brickwork crosses found in the 1960s addition to the college's Giffen Memorial Gymnasium. From 1978 until 1983 the building sat vacant after the structure was declared unsafe. After renovations in 1983, the building once again housed the President's Office, Financial Aid, and Records departments among other offices. The building has not been used consistently since 2013 when it was condemned by the city of Knoxville due to a portion of the west façade second story wall collapsing.

Elnathan Hall – Constructed 1893. Destroyed by fire 1896. Rebuilt 1898.

In 1893, the first exclusively women's dormitory was built. The dormitory was named Elnathan Hall, which means "whom God gave."[17] Positioned to the north of McKee Hall, this building also sat directly in front of McDill Hall. It was one hundred and twenty-four feet in length by forty feet in width. The original Elnathan Hall contained dormitory space for ninety women in double rooms and included the college's kitchen, dining hall, bakery, and laundry.

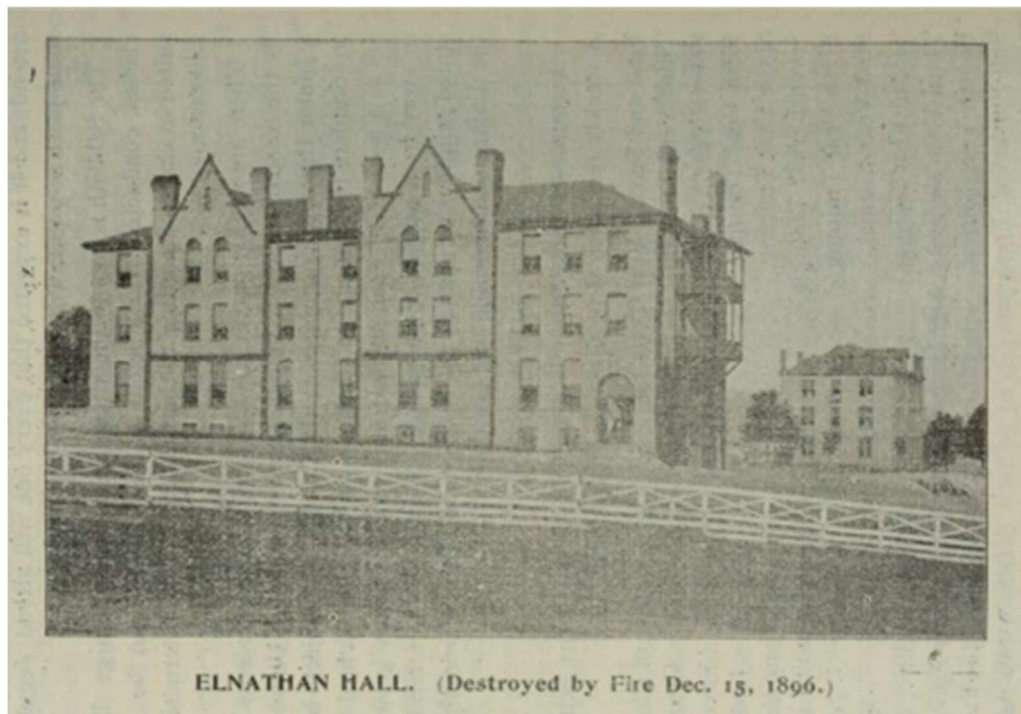
ELNATHAN HALL. (Destroyed by Fire Dec. 15, 1896.)

Figure 4. 1896 photo of Elnathan Hall. McDill Hall is in the rear.[18]

[17] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 27.

[18] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College 1889 – 1900.*, 14.

Embers falling through a fireplace grate caused this building to be lost to fire on December 5, 1896. With the loss of the original Elnathan Hall to fire, the dormitory was rebuilt in the exact location as the first. A letter from college President John McCulloch to Rev. John Witherspoon of the Freedmen's Board of Missions revealed that a former Knoxville College student, Frank K. Thompson submitted the architectural design for the new building.[19] David Getaz, a prominent Knoxville architect, and contractor responsible for building the Knox County Courthouse and the Knoxville Market House was the head contractor on the job. Ultimately, the construction of the building was overseen by Abrams Construction Company and aided by student labor and student made brick.[20] The new Elnathan Hall was dedicated on February 1, 1898.

Elnathan #2 mimics the original Elnathan Hall in style, although it was built much smaller. Rebuilt at a size of ninety feet long, by forty feet wide, it is thirty-four feet smaller than the original building. Once rebuilt, Elnathan could only accommodate sixty women in double rooms.[21] In both instances of fire destroying buildings, Knoxville College rebuilt those building much smaller. Elnathan Hall #2 is a three-story brick building with a full basement and rear first story extension. It has a second story arched recessed entryway that mimics the detailed brickwork entryway of McKee Hall #2. It is

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[19] McCulloch, "The John Scouller McCulloch Papers."

[20] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 34 and "Swiss Settlers, Knoxville | Entries | Tennessee Encyclopedia," accessed May 2, 2016, http://tennesseeencyclopedia.net/entry.php?rec=1288.

[21] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College 1889 – 1900.*, 7.

evident that the brick detailing students created for McKee Hall #2 was again used on Elnathan #2 to have the structures complement each other.

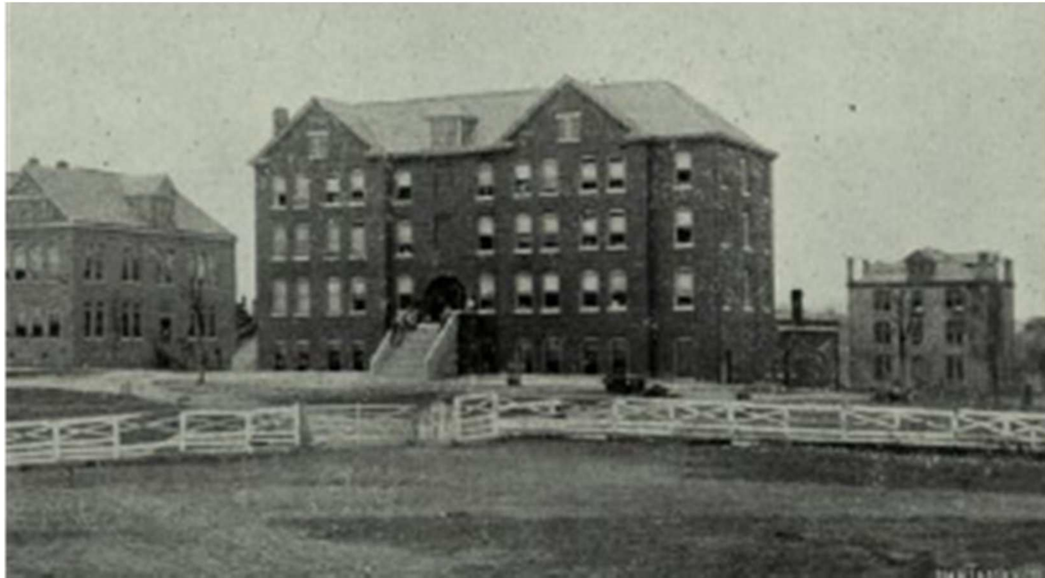

Figure 5. Elnathan Hall #2 1898. McDill Hall is visible in rear. McKee Hall is visible to the left.[22]

Figure 6. Brick detailing around McKee Hall entryway.

[22] Ibid., 33.

Figure 7. Brick detailing around Elnathan Hall entryway.

The recessed bay of the building featured a dormer window while the two projected bays featured a combination of hipped and gabled rooflines with a single window. On each side of the roof was a chimney. The building contained sixty sleeping and study rooms and a kitchen and dining room for two hundred. Although the dining room was in the basement, it contained an exterior entry way that allowed for male students to enter the dining hall without having to travel through the female student's dormitory space.

The structure underwent a series of renovations throughout the years. By 1905, an addition was added to Elnathan Hall to expand the structure so that it could accommodate a total of ninety women. At the request of Knoxville College's second President Dr. Ralph McGranahan a two-story wooden wrap around porch was added to the south façade of the building so that the female students could have a proper place to sit outside. This is an example of gendered architecture on campus that was absent from the co-ed

McKee Hall dormitory and the later McCulloch Hall dormitory for men. That McGranahan saw this as a necessity for female students speaks to how he sought to address their femininity. All of these renovations were conducted by Knoxville College students.[23]

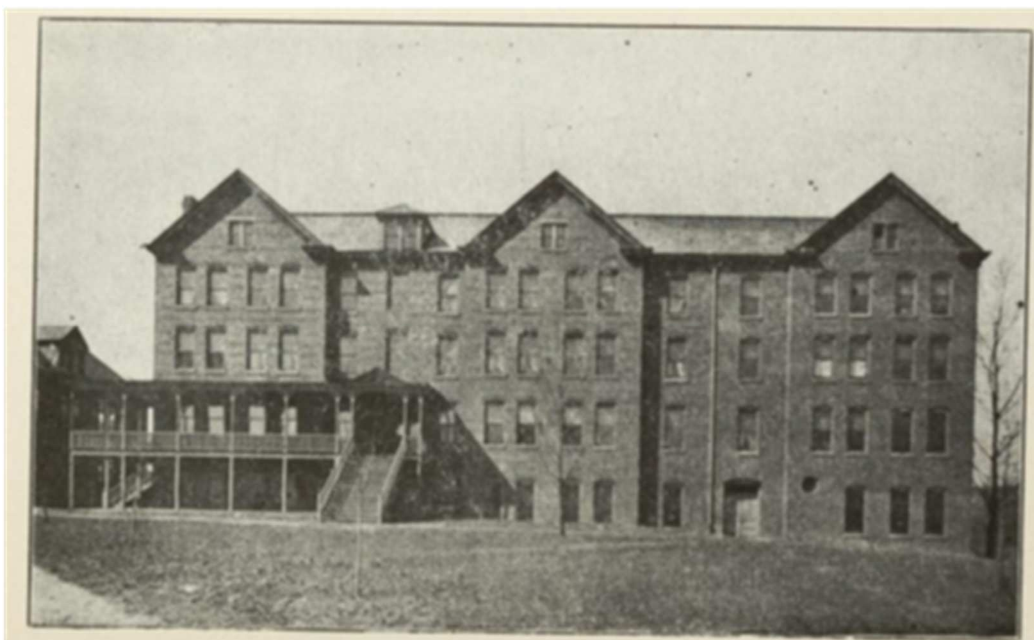

Figure 8. Elnathan Hall in 1907 with wrap around porch and addition.[24]

In later years, the three middle bays of the building were painted white, and renovations were done to bring the building into the modern age. The wrap around porch was removed, and brick and concrete porch were added. With the construction of two new dormitories in 1958, Elnathan Hall was no longer used as a woman's dormitory. It was subsequently used for office space and later not used at all. It has since been

[23] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 49–51.

[24] *Knoxville College Bulletin Catalogue Number for 1905-1906: Announcements for 1906-1907*, 9.

condemned by the city of Knoxville. Elnathan Hall #2 still stands on the Knoxville College landscape and is also featured on the National Register of Historic Places.

McCulloch Hall – Constructed 1894. Demolished about 1960.

Erected in 1894, and named after the college's first President John Scouller McCulloch, McCulloch Hall was the first exclusively men's dormitory on campus.[25] It was built immediately after the original McKee Hall, and the McKee Hall Dormitory burned with funds raised by the Knoxville College Glee Club. Much like the Fisk Jubilee Singers, the Knoxville College Glee Club traveled and sang for audiences to raise money for the construction of McCulloch Hall. They raised $1,500 towards the construction of the dormitory.[26]

Positioned on the landscape to the south of McKee Hall, this building combined with McKee Hall and Elnathan Hall were the first three buildings seen from the campus entry road until 1910. Student made bricks and student labor aided in the construction of this building. McCulloch Hall was a three-story building with two two-story prominent bay windows on the front of the building. This building also featured a center gable window with a hipped roof. The building was in the shape of an L with the front being ninety feet in length and the rear being seventy-five feet in length. It contained fifty-five

[25] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 29.

[26] Robert J. Booker, "KC Glee Club, Quartet Raised Money for School," *The Knoxville News Sentinel*, June 7, 2005.

rooms.[27] The electrical, carpentry and steam heating were all completed with student labor. In order to build McCulloch Hall, the president's 1876 cottage was demolished.

Unlike Elnathan Hall, McCulloch Hall housed the male students that were responsible for its construction. Participating in the construction of this building would have given the students a sense of pride and a sense of responsibility toward the upkeep of the building. Booker T. Washington noted how after the completion of a building at Tuskegee that "when a new student has been led into the temptation of marring the looks of some building by leadpencil marks or by the cuts of a jack-knife, I have heard an old student remind him: 'Don't do that. That is our building. I helped put it up.'"[28] These students may have also had some ability to affect their own housing or building design by participating in its construction.

By 1960 McCulloch Hall was a dormitory for women. In 1962 a newer dormitory for men also named McCulloch Hall was built. The original McCulloch Hall was subsequently demolished.

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[27] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College 1889 – 1900.*, 30.

[28] Booker T. Washington, *Up From Slavery* (Garden City, New York: Doubleday, 1963), 65.

Figure 9. McCulloch Hall 1895.[29]

Overview of Other Campus Buildings through 1930

McDill Hall (1887) and Wallace Hall (1891)

McDill Hall was built in 1887 and used as an orphanage for young African American girls. Eliza Wallace, lady principal of Knoxville College, was inspired to open an orphanage after touring the homes of African Americans in the city. The home was open to both orphans and children of working mothers. In a letter written to churches across the country, she remarked,

> Each child has a piece of cornbread in its hands, and although it is quite cold, three or four of the little ones are almost naked – nothing on but a cotton slip. The

[29] The Junior Class of Knoxville College, *The 1925 Knoxunior*, 1925th ed. (Knoxville, Tennessee: Knoxville College Printing Department, 1925), 15.

> mother is a field hand, neither can read not write, knows nothing about housework, sewing, or any other womanly accomplishment…There are many homes better than the one we visited, but many more are much worse.[30]

With letters like these, Wallace pulled at the heartstrings of churches and friends who in turn donated funds for the construction of McDill Hall and later Wallace Hall.

McDill Hall originally had no name and was later named after Miss Maggie McDill, who had been a caretaker for the girls in the orphanage. McDill Hall was a three-story brick building that contained classrooms, sleeping quarters, a small dining hall, and a kitchen. This was the third building built on campus after the original McKee Hall and the McKee Hall Dormitory. Positioned on the campus landscape behind McKee Hall and to the north, McDill Hall's location was far from the main campus buildings and not aligned on the main campus road.[31] The site of McDill Hall on the college landscape was very intentional as the college purchased ten acres explicitly for the purpose of locating McDill Hall where it once stood.[32]

The November 15, 1900, issue of *The Aurora* notes that McDill Hall was home to thirty-six girls.[33] Despite the number of occupants, it was a simple three-story brick structure with an attic and a wooden porch that allowed entry directly to the second floor. Centered on each side of the roof were dormer windows. There were also eight chimneys

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[30] Eliza Wallace, "Eliza Wallace to Churches and Friends," Letter, (March 6, 1882), Knoxville College Archive.

[31] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College 1889 – 1900.*, 26.

[32] Robert J. Booker, "Aurora Always Special to KC Friends, Alumni," *The Knoxville News Sentinel*, March 20, 2007.

[33] John Brice and Alice DeJarnette, "College Notes," *The Aurora*, November 1, 1900, XV no. 2 edition, 7.

on the roof, four on each corner of the building and four positioned around the middle of the roof, but they failed to prevent the building from being prone to bouts with no heat. Filled beyond capacity, McDill Hall's modest spaces would become so crowded that children would have to sleep in the attic.[34]

In 1941, the first African American President of Knoxville College John Adams Cotton began a campaign to renovate McDill Hall. At fifty-four years old McDill Hall was the oldest building on campus at the time. At the time, McDill Hall was a home for college teachers having ceased operation as an orphanage twenty years earlier. President Cotton embarked on a campaign seeking $4,000 for renovations to return the building to its first use, teaching girls how to be homemakers. Of the endeavor, President Cotton remarked, "We intend to start a course that will not only teach girls to cook, but both boys and girls to plan a home, manage it and run it economically. We'll even teach them how to court and get married."[35] Demolished during the mid-twentieth century, McDill Hall no longer stands on the Knoxville College landscape.

Constructed in 1891, Wallace Hall was the companion to McDill Hall. It was built to house orphaned young African American boys and named after Eliza Wallace, lady principal of Knoxville College. Wallace Hall was nearly identical to McDill Hall with the

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[34] John Brice and Alice DeJarnette, "College Notes," *The Aurora*, January 15, 1901, XV no. 7 edition, 6.

[35] "Knoxville College Set for 5-Year Plan with Courtin' Course; Funds Solicited," *The Knoxville News Sentinel*, March 23, 1941, sec. Want Ads.

same floor plan. It featured the same second story porch entryway, the same dormer windows, and the same eight chimneys.

Throughout the years, this building had many uses. Housed in the basement of this building was the college bakery where students worked baking bread as part of their industrial education for the subsistence of the college's students.[36] By October 15, 1902, the building was undergoing renovations to turn it into a home for the female teachers having only operated as an orphanage for eleven years and by November 15, 1902, teachers had moved into the building.[37] In later years, Wallace Hall was also home to the college literary societies and used as a women's dormitory through the 1950's.

Wallace Hall still stands on the Knoxville College landscape and is one of the campus buildings featured on the National Register of Historic Places. It is currently the oldest campus building. It most recently underwent a limited renovation in 2005 which included adding a new roof and updating the interior.

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[36] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 55.

[37] "A Page to Parents," *The Aurora*, October 15, 1902, Vol XVII no. 1 edition, 3 and C. C. Moore, Louise Austin, and Althea Lillison, "College Notes," *The Aurora*, November 15, 1902, Vol XVII no. 2 edition, 4..

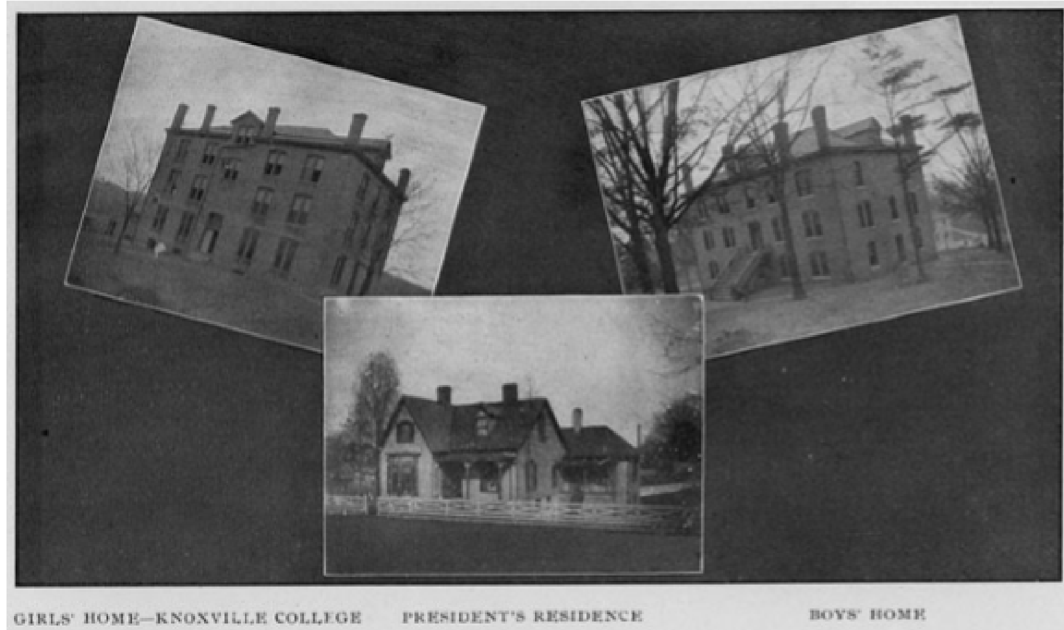

Figure 10. McDill Hall identified as Girls Home and Wallace Hall identified as Boys Home.

Industrial Building (1892)

The Industrial Building was the first building on campus constructed exclusively for classroom use. Before its construction, all classes still met in McKee Hall. The Freedmen's Board donated the $5,000 for the construction of this two-story brick building.[38] The building was a symmetrical square with federal style detailing. It featured a federal style door as well as dormer windows on the hipped roof. It was sixty-one by forty feet in length and width, two stories high, with a one-story extension that was thirty by fifty-feet in width and length.[39] Within this building, students were taught the industrial trades of brickmaking and bricklaying, carpentry, blacksmithing, and printing,

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[38] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 51.

[39] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College 1889 – 1900.*, 7.

among others. This building also housed the campus dynamo machine that provided electricity to the entire campus. Located on the second internal campus road, this building was not visible from the campus entry. In 1903, the Industrial Building was expanded to accommodate new courses in blacksmithing and wheelwrighting. Students built an extension on the rear of the building and remodeled the inside to add more classroom space.[40] This building was lost to fire in 1954.

Figure 11. Industrial Building about 1896.[41]

Agricultural Building (1905)

Built in 1905 with funds requested by President Dr. Ralph McGranahan and donated by Knoxville locals, the Agricultural Building was a one story building with a

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[40] Cleage and Austin, "College Notes," 4.

[41] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College 1889 – 1900.*, 1.

porch and a hipped roof. Local citizens donated a portion of the funds to construct this building because they were impressed by the work of the college's agriculture department.[42] Like brickmaking, the output of the agriculture department had become profitable to the college as they sold the surplus farm produce and dairy products to the public. This would have been met with Booker T. Washington's approval as the students would have learned not only how to grow produce, but how to participate in the sale of produce. This building functioned as classroom space for the agriculture department and also for the industrial department. A 1925 photo shows a group of male students holding brooms made in a broom making class standing in front of the Agricultural Building. This building no longer stands on the Knoxville College landscape.

Agricultural Building—Gift of Citizens of Knoxville.

Figure 12. Agricultural Building.[43]

[42] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 51; "A Valued Testimony," *The Aurora*, February 1, 1904, Vol XVIII no. 7 edition, 4 . "A Valued Testimony" is a statement written by Second President Dr. McGranahan detailing how he asked Knoxville citizens for money for the building and how they donated.

[43] *Knoxville College Bulletin Catalogue Number for 1905-1906: Announcements for 1906-1907*, 9.

Eliza Wallace Hospital (1907) and Contagious Wing (1915)

Eliza Wallace Hospital was built in 1907 and expanded in 1915 to add a contagious wing. It was built using funds that Eliza B. Wallace left to Knoxville College upon her death. The hospital functioned as a training center for student nurses and was the most modern hospital for African Americans to practice. The hospital was in operation from 1907 through 1926. It was a two story structure built of student made brick and labor. The hospital had a hipped roof with a dormer window on the front elevation and four parallel chimneys on the left and right sides of the roof. This structure had a large front porch with four Ionic columns as supports. The Contagious Wing of the hospital was of similar construction style. It differed in that it had a two story sitting porch that ran the width of the building on its front elevation. *The Aurora* documents the student construction on the contagious wing noting, both of these buildings were positioned to be accessible directly from College Street without having to enter the college's campus. This was done because the hospital was a public space. After the closure of the hospital, part of the building became Knoxalia Hall, a dormitory for female students while the other half became the college infirmary.[44] With the construction of new dormitories in the late 1950's, this building was demolished.

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[44] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 54.

Figure 13. Eliza B. Wallace Hospital and Contagious Wing. Later Knoxalia Hall.[45]

Carnegie Library (1909)

Constructed in 1909, the Carnegie Library was the college's first official library. It was built wholly of student labor and in terms of style, it was like no other building on campus. It was a two-story brick building with four Doric columns framing its portico. Leading to the portico was a series of stone steps that became a popular location for taking photographs. Over the building's French doors and etched in stone was the name "Carnegie." This building was constructed using funds donated by the Carnegie Foundation. At the time of its construction, it was the first building seen upon turning into the campus. It was also visible from Knoxville College Drive. This building was torn

[45] The Junior Class of Knoxville College, *The 1925 Knoxunior*, 14.

down in the early 1960s to make way for the Alumni Memorial Library completed in 1966 and constructed in the spot where this building once stood.[46]

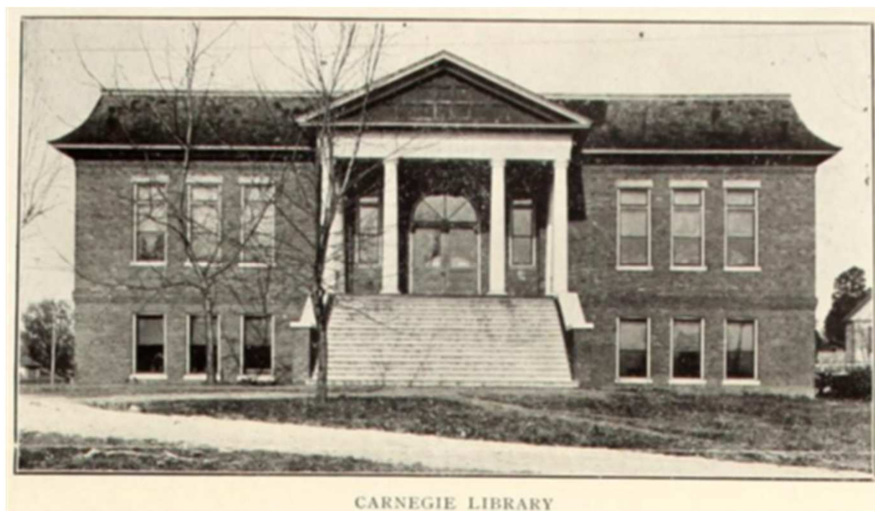

Figure 14. Carnegie Library 1913.[47]

McMillan Chapel (1913)

McMillan Chapel was built as the college's first permanent chapel and named for W.H. McMillan, chairman of the Freedman's Board of Missions of the Presbyterian Church. From its very creation it served as both the college chapel and home to Knoxville's First United Presbyterian Church. Designed by William Thomas Jones, a former Knoxville College student, the Chapel is located at the immediate entry of the campus and to the east of the Carnegie Library. The position of McMillan Chapel on the college landscape is interesting and intentional. In order to accommodate the building in

[46] Ibid., 66.

[47] *Knoxville College Bulletin Catalogue Number for 1905-1906: Announcements for 1906-1907*, 72.

that space, the steps leading to the front sidewalk are unusually steep. By constructing the chapel at the very entry of the campus drive the administrators were sending the message that this was a religious school. McMillan Chapel is another building on the campus built with student labor and student made bricks. In fact, Young D. Bryant, a 1910 graduate of Knoxville College oversaw the brickwork done on the building.[48] This is the second instance where a Knoxville College graduate designed a campus building and the first instance where a graduate supervised the construction of a building on campus using the education received while a student at the college. This exemplifies the connections that alumni maintained with the school. By coming to work for the school upon graduating and mentoring students, these alumni were creating community. In 1954, an addition was added to the west façade of the building to accommodate church classes. In 2013, a program commemorating the 100th year of the building was held. It has sat vacant since that time.

Figure 15. McMillan Chapel 1914. The President's House is visible in the rear.[49]

[48] Ibid., 56.

[49] *Knoxville College Bulletin Catalogue Number for 1913-1914: Announcements for 1914-1915*, 7.

Giffen Memorial Gymnasium (1927) and Athletic Field (1922)

As the times changed so too did the curriculum offered at the college. In 1922 third President of Knoxville College Dr. J. Kelley Giffen invited the student body behind McDill Hall to make an announcement and declared that the landscape of the college would be changing as he sought to erect an athletic field for the football team. Giffen stated, "we are sure that everybody interested in Knoxville College will rejoice over the prospects for a new athletic field… dumping ground, old fences, underbrush, hog pens, etc. will be removed in making the proposed field. There is no reason why the rear of our campus should not be as beautiful as the front."[50] Further altering the landscape of the college was the construction of the Giffen Memorial Gymnasium completed in 1927 and named after the college's third president. This was the college's first official gymnasium, as all other gym spaces were classroom space. This building was constructed using funds raised by college alumni and by students who canvassed Knoxville for donations.[51] The construction of the gymnasium required the removal of the dairy barn, cow pens, and silo further removing industrial education from the landscape. This was the death knell to industrial education at Knoxville College.

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[50] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 79.

[51] Ibid., 85.

Figure 16. Giffen Memorial Gymnasium and athletic field.[52]

[52] The Junior Class of Knoxville College, *The 1932 Knoxunior*, 1932nd ed. (Knoxville, Tennessee: Knoxville College Printing Department, 1932), 79.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPE OF KNOXVILLE COLLEGE

"The new school for Freedmen flourished. Pupils began to arrive from elementary schools at a distance, so that it was not long before college subjects were being taught on the upper floors, while ex-slaves on the first floor were learning to read the Bible and to write their own names. I can still see old Uncle Billy Broadnax using his meatskewer alternately as a toothpick and a pointer for his letters."[1]

- Anna French Johnson, student of Knoxville College

Presbyterian Influences on the Built Landscape

Knoxville College's built landscape is one that is reflective of Presbyterian ideology and Christianity. Religious symbolism informed the choices made in constructing and orientating its buildings on the landscape. The layout of the campus is oriented to face east. For Christians, the cardinal direction of East is important because it is the direction from which Christ will return. Also, the sun rises in the east. With the buildings oriented east, they would always receive the first light of the day casting out any darkness. For Presbyterians, light is an important part of their beliefs. It is one of the first things that God created in the Bible. The book of Genesis chapter one verse three states "And God said let there be light, and there was light." The motto given by the United Presbyterian Church to Knoxville College was "Let There Be Light." For Christians, light is a metaphor for God, and from within the light, one can find salvation and righteousness.

[1] Anna French Johnson, "Excerpts from the Autobiography of Anna French Johnson," *Knox County Tennessee Genealogy and History*, accessed May 30, 2016, http://knoxcotn.org/old_site/biographies/johnson.html. Anna French Johnson was one of the first white students at Knoxville College. Her autobiography contains details about the construction of the college, the teachers, the students, and the John Scouller McCulloch family.

The theme of light removing darkness is also heavily seen in the college's Presbyterian ideology. The college's first President John Scouller McCulloch is described by Knoxville College historian Robert Booker as a "missionary who felt that black people had to be taken by the hand and led out of evil, darkness, and ignorance. He knew he had been sent by God and the Board to do just that."[2] McCulloch did indeed believe that African Americans were superstitious in their religious beliefs and that this caused them to live in "darkness". He spoke several times against the superstitious traditions of African Americans. In many ways, this stereotype of African Americans lent itself to the way in which he governed the college. The college set forth strict rules from its beginnings regarding the role that Christianity would play in the education of the African American students. From the start, all students were required to attend daily chapel devotions in addition to a weekly Bible studies class. Students also were required to attend church and Sabbath school every Sunday. Included on the list of items that each student must bring along to the college was the Bible.

The college was obsessed with the salvation of its students. Dormitory matrons were in place as persons who supplied the place of Christian mothers to the students.[3] The college sought to ensure parents that "the religious life of the student is carefully provided for."[4] Knoxville College also restricted activities on the Sabbath. The college

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[2] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 45.

[3] Knoxville College, *Knoxville College Bulletin Catalogue Number for 1911- 12: Announcements for 1912-1913*, (Knoxville, Tennessee: Printing Dept., Knoxville College, 1906), 12.

[4] *Knoxville College Bulletin Catalogue Number for 1905-1906: Announcements for 1906-1907*, 12.

catalogues note that students could not leave the campus or arrive at the campus on the Sabbath. Furthermore, while the college regularly accepted visitors who wanted to take tours, they received no visitors on the Sabbath under any exceptions.

Anyone who worked at the college had to abide by a strict adherence to Presbyterian ideology and Christianity. The college's first three presidents were all white, Presbyterian ministers. Later presidents all had connections with the Presbyterian Church. When the second President Ralph McGranahan discovered that one of the doctors at the college's medical school was not a Christian he immediately sought to remove him from his post. He stated, "I made an enquiry last spring into Randall's position on religious matters. He is a blaspheming Ingersolite."[5]

The design and construction of every building on campus had to meet Presbyterian religious and moral standards. For example, the early built environment of Knoxville College is divided by gender. Using McKee Hall #2 as the center of the campus, the north side of the campus housed females in Elnathan Hall and McDill Hall and the south side of the campus housed males in McCulloch Hall and Wallace Hall. The separation of sexes did not stop there. In fact, the sexes were also separated within the classrooms. According to Booker, "Very little fraternization between males and females was allowed. During chapel services males sat on one side of the room and females sat on

[5] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 40. An "Ingersolite" was a term used for followers of Robert G. Ingersoll who is known as "the great agnostic." For more see Robert Green Ingersoll, *Why I Am An Agnostic* (CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 1890).

the other."[6] Because of this separation a male student once recalled the joy in walking into chapel beside a girl before being split into separate sides of the room. He stated,

> It must be confessed that the climax comes when our music teacher plays a lively march on the piano and the boys and girls march down the middle aisle two by two, separating at the front, the boys going one way and the girls another. Fortunately, the aisle is somewhat narrow, and as we march, we can feel the touch of each other's elbow; this is an experience which most of us look forward to with keen interest.[7]

The 1889 course catalogue provides a dress code for female students. Female students were required to wear "two calico dresses, one satine or gingham for wear during the warm months of September and May; two woolen dresses, and two long sleeved aprons." Directions were that each of the dresses must be perfectly plain, with no drapery and without trimming other than the fabric itself. Furthermore, female students would need "two work dresses, two dark skirts, plain unbleached underwear, and common sense shoes and corsets." The catalogue specifically stipulates that "Light and fancy clothing should not be brought. If brought, it will be taken charge of until the student leaves."[8] By 1896, corsets were no longer required for women and by 1898, the dress code required oxford caps and matron approval for any dress brought from home and not purchased from or made while at the college. It is not until 1905 that male

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[6] Booker, *And There Was Light! The 120 Year History of Knoxville College. Knoxville, Tennessee 1875-1995*, 17.

[7] John Erick, "Every Day Life in Knoxville College," *The Aurora*, December 1, 1899, XIV no. 3 edition, 6.

[8] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College 1889 – 1900.*, 23.

students are required to have a uniform. They were required to have a military uniform consisting of jacket, dark trousers, blouse, and cap.[9]

Special attention provided for the well-being of female students on campus, but little attention provided to males. The 1889 course catalogue states, "Parents and guardians may place their daughters and wards under our care with the assurance that they will be as safe as the most faithful oversight can render them."[10] There is no mention made for the safety and welfare of male students. With the opening of the college's medical department, President John Scouller McCulloch became curious "about how boys and girls got along dissecting together without offense to delicacy."[11]

The Presbyterian leadership of the school was very concerned with the moral state of all of their students, but especially of the female students. Their overt paternalism caused them to treat the adult students like children. College leadership and teachers dictated everything from which students they should be friends with to how loud they should speak. One female student recalled,

> I remember one time I was sitting near the window (in the library) and some girls were playing tennis, but they didn't count it right. And I forgot where I was, I was there reading in the library. I hollered out that window and said, uh, it's thirty love. Miss Kirk was the librarian and she came over to me and I felt like I was about that big. I said oh, you don't know how sorry I am, I forgot where I was. And then she kind of smiled and said I want to talk to you when you get through reading. So that day she talked to me about being loud ... Young ladies are

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[9] *Knoxville College Bulletin Catalogue Number for 1905-1906: Announcements for 1906-1907*, 11.

[10] *Catalogue of the Officers and Students of Knoxville College 1889 – 1900.*, 22.

[11] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 36.

> supposed to carry themselves in a certain way, and you just don't holler across the campus, or a room, or out a window.[12]

Comparison to Agricultural Plantation Landscapes

Because HBCUs were born out of segregation and discriminatory practices, they have racialized landscapes. These types of landscapes support the racial status quo reflective of when they were built. It is apparent that although the Presbyterians sought to help African Americans, that they still did not view them as equals. The college leadership attempted to oversee and control the behavior of their students as much as they could. With the construction of Elnathan Hall to the immediate north of McKee Hall and McCulloch Hall to the immediate south, it can be inferred that the leadership of the college wanted to keep students close. However, this may not have been the only reasoning behind the placement of the structures. One cannot overlook the pattern of settlement that existed during the construction of the structures. Although the college was constructed ten years after the start of emancipation, plantation landscapes were still very much present and influential due to the lingering legacy of enslavement and the emerging legacy of tenant farming or sharecropping.[13] Even though there were several post-emancipation African American towns and communities that existed around the

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[12] Cynthia Griggs Fleming, "The Effect of Higher Education on Black Tennesseeans after the Civil War," *Phylon* 44, no. 3 (1983): 213.

[13] Charles E. Orser and Annette M. Nekola, "Plantation Settlement from Slavery to Tenancy: An Example from a Piedmont Plantation in South Carolina," in *The Archaeology of Slavery and Plantation Life*, ed. Theresa A. Singleton, Reprint edition (Walnut Creek, CA: Routledge, 1985), 69. Geographer Merle Prunty stated "The plantation continued to exist after 1865 as a discrete physical unit with a distinctive spatial form." For more see Merle Prunty, "The Renaissance of the Southern Plantation," *The Geographical Review* 45, no. 4 (October 1955): 460.

settlement of Knoxville College, Presbyterian leadership would not have followed those settlement patterns because they were not creating an African American dominated landscape.

Historical archaeologist Whitney Battle Baptiste categorizes plantation landscapes according to what she has developed as the functional plantation model. This model has four characteristics: (1) the plantation proper consisting of the plantation as a whole, (2) the captive African domestic sphere which is "the center for life, culture, tradition, and humanity" (3) the labor sphere consisting of workspaces and agricultural lands, and (4) the wilderness consisting of spaces African Americans used to "regroup, to escape, and to hide."[14] Using Battle-Baptiste's methodology it is clear that the Knoxville College landscape fits three of her characteristics that it was a self-sustaining area, it contained a labor sphere, and it possibly contained places for students to regroup that are still unknown.

Using the geography and landscapes of plantations as an example, more similarities between the Knoxville College landscape and the landscapes of plantations are evident.[15] Much like a plantation, Knoxville College was a paternalistic, patriarchal landscape. In his 1901 essay "The Home of the Slave," W.E.B. DuBois describes three

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[14] Whitney Battle-Baptiste, *Black Feminist Archaeology* (Walnut Creek, Calif: Routledge, 2011), 85–90.

[15] Dr. Audrey Horning, "Worlds in Motion: Native Landscapes and Colonial Identities in the Early Modern Atlantic," September 28, 2015, Murfreesboro, Tennessee. In a lecture on comparing the landscape of early Jamestown, Virginia settlement geography with Powhatan geography I was prompted to think in comparative terms of HBCUs and it occurred to me that Knoxville College and agricultural plantation landscapes are similar.

types of slave housing. One of these types is the patriarchal group that called for slave dwellings to be near the house of the master.[16] Architectural historian Michael Strutt noted, "In Tennessee slaveholders appear to have wanted their domestics close at hand and were not concerned that their small houses were very near their own dwellings. Most recorded slave houses sit within one hundred feet of the mansion, with many as close as twenty feet."[17] By positioning Elnathan Hall and McCulloch Hall to the immediate north and south of McKee Hall, the college's administrators kept their students close and within view denoting their importance on the landscape. The positioning of the two orphanages, McDill Hall and Wallace Hall, behind the central row of structures, exemplifies that these children were not of the same importance to Knoxville College as the college level students. These students were not a true part of the mission of the college and, therefore, remained in the background both figuratively and physically.

A comparison of the Knoxville College landscape to other colleges reveals that Knoxville College lacks a quadrangle found at most colleges. A review of sixteen HBCU landscapes created between 1854 and 1876 shows similar patterns of settlement, usually around a quadrangle. In fact, HBCUs such as Barber-Scotia College, an HBCU founded by the Presbyterian Church USA in 1865, is positioned around a quadrangle. Likewise, Morehouse College an HBCU founded in 1867 by the American Baptist Home Society is

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[16] W.E.B. DuBois, "The Home of the Slave," *in Cabin, Quarter, Plantation: Architecture and Landscapes of North American Slavery*, ed. Clifton Ellis and Rebecca Ginsburg (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 19.

[17] Michael Strutt, "Slave Housing in Antebellum Tennessee," *in Cabin, Quarter, Plantation: Architecture and Landscapes of North American Slavery*, ed. Clifton Ellis and Rebecca Ginsburg (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 226.

also positioned around a quadrangle. A comparison with Morristown College, an HBCU founded in 1881 reveals a similar pattern of settlement. Both colleges sat on hills, and both had commanding administrative buildings at the pinnacles of those hills. In later years, Knoxville College purchased Morristown College and the college became known as Knoxville College at Morristown.

Knoxville College occupies a unique position on the landscape. Jonathan Caulson in his text *University Planning and Architecture: A Search for Perfection* outlines the landscapes of colleges. One of these landscapes is the "Picturesque Nature" landscape. This landscape followed the teachings of landscape architect Frederick Law Olmstead and called for "an irregular and picturesque layout of buildings and walkways that follow the contour of the land."[18] This landscape also called for colleges to be located overseeing lakes or perched on elevated hilltops because of the thought that physical settings had an impact on behavior.[19] Knoxville College very much fits this classification because of its location on a Longstreet's Hill with McKee Hall positioned at the highest point of the hill. The campus is also abundant with walkways and internal roads that weave around the campus following the natural topography of the land.

The positioning of Elnathan Hall and McCulloch Hall also permitted college administrators a level of surveillance.[20] From the teacher apartments located in McKee

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[18] Jonathan Caulson, *University Planning and Architecture: A Search for Perfection*, (London: Routledge, 2010,) 13.

[19] Ibid.

[20] For more see John Michael Vlach, *Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993); Michel Foucault, *Discipline & Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, 2nd ed. (New York, New York: Random House, 2012). Vlach argues that

Hall, teachers could observe students from their own bedrooms if they wished. This type of surveillance meant that African American students were constantly aware that someone was watching even their most subtle actions as they walked around campus and that they faced punishment for unacceptable behavior. An article in the March 20, 1902 edition of the college newspaper, *The Aurora,* stated, “These bright days woo all from their rooms and it becomes necessary to heed the arrangements for boys and girls to stay on their own sides of the campus,” so students were well aware that their actions were watched.[21]

The notion of surveillance was also prominent on plantations as some slaveholders and overseers positioned slave housing on the landscape so that they could observe the enslaved at all times.[22] One of the most well-known paintings displaying this type of landscape is that of Mulberry Plantation in Moncks Corner, South Carolina.

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on some agricultural plantations that slave housing was positioned close to the “big house” in order for the enslaved to be watched. Foucault argues that surveillance can be used as a tool to modify the behavior of those being watched.

[21] D. F. White and Louise Ware, “College Notes,” *The Aurora*, March 20, 1902, Vol XVI no. 11 edition, 5.

[22] For more on plantation surveillance see Mark P. Leone and Silas D. Hurry, “Seeing: The Power of Town Planning in the Chesapeake,” *Historical Archaeology* 32, no. 4 (1998): 34–62; Mark P. Leone, James Harmon, and Jessica L. Neuwirth, “Perspectice and Surveillance in Eighteenth- Century Maryland Gardens, Including William Paca’s Garden on Wye Island,” *Historical Archaeology* 39, no. 4 (2005): 138–58.

Figure 17. Mulberry Plantation in 1800 by Thomas Coram[23]

This painting displays the sight lines from the plantation big house to the slave dwellings. Standing on the porch of the plantation big house is someone depicted as the overseer. Here, the overseer is watching the slave dwellings and observing the actions of the enslaved.

The observation of students was significant to Knoxville College because the work that they were undertaking was in its infancy. College administrators needed to be able to ensure that the behavior of their students was becoming of the people, white people, that they were attempting to make them. President McGranahan noted on several

[23] Thomas Coram, Painting of Mulberry Plantation, 1900. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mulberry_Plantation_(Moncks_Corner,_South_Carolina)#/media/File:View_of_Mulberry_House_and_Street.PNG

occasions that he was trying to instill white values into this students. McGranahan recalled a conversation he once had,

> I asked the hostess what she knew about our work, and it was the occasion of a most enthusiastic eulogy among the workers: "You've got white principles in those negroes. How did you ever get white principles in them? Everybody says they would as soon work for them or deal with them as with white people. How did you ever do it?" And so the heaven works until the best intelligence and the best heart of the South is in sympathy with the Church in its great work.[24]

Knoxville College administrators knew that how outsiders viewed the college was imperative for its survival. Through the landscape, they communicated to the public an image of the order provided through religious and industrial instruction. Here there were none of the unstable, disorderly, criminal African American people found in the newspaper headlines. To dispel stereotypes held by whites of African Americans, the Presbyterians called for a strict behavior code distinctly rooted in African American stereotypes of the period. The Presbyterians noted how upon the arrival of students "They seemed to know no other way than to strike or kick or stab when an insult was received, and it was considerable time before they could understand the necessity of self restraint, and the manliness of other methods of settlement."[25] Students not abiding by the rules were whipped, denied food other than bread and water, and often expelled. Not only was the college concerned with observing their students and how the white public observed their students, but they were also concerned with how their students observed themselves.

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[24] McGranahan, *Historical Sketch of the Freedman's Missions of the United Presbyterian Church, 1862-1904*, 46.

[25] Ibid., 32.

The college's first president John Scouller McCulloch forbade students from attending legal hangings because he was concerned that witnessing such an event damaged how students felt about themselves as African American people.[26]

Workspaces

With the introduction of industrial education, the landscape of Knoxville College changed from one of primarily learning to one of primarily work. The previous absence of agricultural fields, pigs, cows, barns, and a brickyard indicated that this was an actual liberal arts college dedicated to the educational enrichment of freed men and women. With one of the best views in the city, the landscape appeared to be a picturesque one of relaxation and relief. It was a view not available to some of the most prominent white families in Knoxville. With its new identity of industrial education, the college shifted its land resources to reflect this. By 1908, the college campus consisted of seventy-five acres of which only ten acres were not for industrial education. Also, the college also owned a ninety-acre farm in Blount County, Tennessee a few miles away from the college. In total, one hundred sixty-five acres of the college were dedicated to workspaces.

In the 1908 Knoxville College Bulletin Catalogue, detailed descriptions of the colleges workspaces are given. The college notes that it has "two commodious barns, providing stables for horses and cows, hay and feed storage room, and machinery hall." The catalogue also describes the college's greenhouse as "a well apportioned greenhouse, hot water heated, contains about 1600 square feet of usable surface which is utilized for

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[26] Booker, *And There Was Light! The 120 Year History of Knoxville College. Knoxville, Tennessee 1875-1995*, 19.

raising winter vegetables and flowers."[27] By 1915, the college erected a new modern dairy barn designed to accommodate twenty-four cows. The dairy barn included "the latest improvements, among which are cement floor, sanitary iron stations, manure carrier, milk room, two large silos, and a large feeding shed."[28]

There were also workspaces on campus dedicated to other trades. Within the Industrial Building was the printing department consisting of a steam power press to print internal college booklets as well as outside work. The college also had a blacksmithing and wheelwrighting shop within the mechanical hall. The college described the work being done here as students making vehicles of all kids as well as general repair work for the community. The college had three rooms dedicated to this work. Other campus workspaces included the carpentry workshop and the brickyard. The specific locations of these two workspaces are unclear.

A review of the 1917 Sanborn Map of Knoxville College reveals that all campus workspaces were at the rear of the college behind the second internal road. This indicates a clear separation between living spaces and workspaces. A visit to the college in 1917 would have revealed the locations of the various barns and outbuildings, greenhouse, creamery, corn silos, brickyard and more. Because of their location near each other, they shared a relationship of work on the landscape.

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[27] *Knoxville College Bulletin Catalogue Number for 1905-1906: Announcements for 1906-1907*, 8.

[28] Ibid., 42.

These workspaces were necessary to the sustainability of the college, and their present absence from the landscape represents the change over time in African American education. Without these workspaces on the landscape, Knoxville College appears as any other college, not a college that subscribed to the industrial education mandates of Booker T. Washington and the Slater Fund. These workspaces represented the experience of industrial education taught at HBCUs.

The Performance of Superiority

The Presbyterian leadership at the school never shied away from reminding students of their place. In 1915, professional vocalist Madam Emma Azalia Hackley music teacher to singers such as Marion Anderson and Roland Hayes, visited the school for a performance. In the dining hall, Hackley, an African American woman, was forbidden from sitting at a table with the college's president, Ralph McGranahan, and the college's white faculty members because of her race. This understandably upset students who held Hackley in high regard and viewed her as just as significant as their college leadership. Students threatened to protest, but this was soon quelled by President McGranahan, who "informed them that if they did he would withhold the new uniforms he had ordered for the baseball team."[29] The protest stopped, and Hackley remained seated with the African American students. If Hackley sat at the table with McGranahan and the faculty, she would have been seen as a social equal. McGranahan clearly used items that the students wanted against them because he had the power to do so. Historian

[29] Griggs Fleming, "The Effect of Higher Education on Black Tennesseeans after the Civil War," 215.

Stephen Berrey would classify McGranhan's actions as a "performance of superiority".[30] Following Berrey's theory, the students had in turn performed wrongly by not displaying their oppression, threatening to strike, and not deferring to McGranahan's first demand that Hackley not sit with the whites.

That McGranahan would not step outside of the confines of Jim Crow rules and customs in his own college cafeteria for an invited guest is telling. Although the idea of having a meal with Hackley greatly disturbed him, he was not above having his students serve him meals. There are numerous instances in *The Aurora* that document the students of the domestic science department donning their appropriate servants wardrobe and once a week serving dinner to the college's leaders and faculty.[31] Even more telling of the superior disposition of President McGranahan is that his predecessor President McCulloch was known for having African Americans join him at his dining hall table.[32]

Throughout the college's records are more instances of its administrators acting superior strictly due to race. A review of newspapers printed in Knoxville reveals that in the college's early days Knoxville College only submitted notices about campus events and lectures to white newspapers such as the *Knoxville Daily Chronicle*. Information on

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[30] For more see Stephen A. Berrey, *The Jim Crow Routine: Everyday Performances of Race, Civil Rights, and Segregation in Mississippi* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015).

[31] D. F. White and Louise Ware, "College Notes," *The Aurora*, February 1, 1902, Vol XVI no. 8 edition, 5.

[32] "A Noble Life," *The Aurora*, April 1910, Vol XXIV no. 7 edition.

events at Knoxville College was rarely seen in Knoxville's African American newspapers such as *The East Tennessee News*.

The college leadership also asserted their superiority by denying African Americans the chance to teach at the school. The first African American member of the faculty was added only after the college received years of criticism for not having any African American teachers. According to college historian Robert Booker, "On July 31, 1895, he (McCulloch) expressed concern about rumblings in the community that there were no black teachers in the college."[33] Although President McCulloch was concerned, this was not something that had happened by coincidence. The Presbyterian leadership of the school made the conscious decision to exclude African Americans from the faculty. According to historian Cynthia Griggs Fleming, "The Presbyterians were one of the earliest denominations to recommend that white teachers in their smaller graded schools be replaced by blacks, but the denomination did not permit a black educator to join the Knoxville College faculty."[34] The thought was evidently that while African Americans made good primary school teachers at African American schools, they still were not good enough to teach at even the primary school level at Knoxville College.

President McCulloch also expressed concern about not being invited to preach at local African American Presbyterian churches.[35] In expressing his disappointment, he

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[33] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 42.

[34] Cynthia Griggs Fleming, "The Development of Black Education in Tennessee, 1865-1920" (Dissertation, Duke University, 1977), 149.

[35] Booker, *And There Was Light!*, 44.

failed to address his white privilege and realize that church was the most sacred institution of African American life.[36] That African Americans did not want McCulloch, a white male, to preach at their churches may be evidence of them protecting their church services from white gaze and judgement. Although McCulloch was working at an institution dedicated to helping African Americans, he was still someone whose privilege was a threat to the church. If they operated in a manner that McCulloch did not agree with, he could report them to the Presbyterian Synod and cause unnecessary problems.

The African American Student Created Landscape

African American students moved throughout the Knoxville College landscape knowing that if they were not receptive to the rules of the college that they faced punishment. Unlike most African Americans living under Jim Crow, the students at Knoxville College received no reprieve when they made it to their private spaces such as dormitories.[37] Jim Crow customs followed them into their bedrooms where their actions

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[36] For a more detailed discussion on the importance of the church in African American life see William E. Montgomery, *Under Their Own Vine and Fig Tree: The African-American Church in the South, 1865--1900*, Reprint edition (Baton Rouge: LSU Press, 1994) and Carroll Van West, "Sacred Spaces of Faith, Community, and Resistance: Rural African American Churches in Jim Crow Tennessee," in *We Shall Independent Be: African American Place Making and the Struggle to Claim Space in the United States*, ed. Angel David Nieves and Leslie M. Alexander (Boulder, Colorado: The University Press of Colorado, 2008. Montgomery provides a detailed analysis and social history of the African American church in the South. West describes the African American church as "the most sacred, and oftentimes secular, spaces of African American institutional building in the Jim Crow South" (441).

[37] bell hooks, *Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics* (Boston, MA: South End Press, 1990), 42. hooks argues that the home is where one would become human again. She states, "Historically, African American people believed that the construction of a homeplace, however fragile and tenuous (the slave hut, the wooden shack), had a radical political dimension. Despite the brutal reality of racial apartheid and domination, one's homeplace was the one site where one could freely resist" (42).

were watched over by the dormitory mistress and their rooms subject to search at any time.[38]

One of the rules that students found most hindering to them as adults was the rule that forbade them from leaving campus without a chaperone. Leaving campus without a chaperone was a punishable offense. In fact, one student recalled the punishment of another student for doing so. She stated, "We were not even allowed to leave the campus and go to town without a matron. One girl in my class got caught off the campus without a matron, and Dr. McGranahan expelled her. He sent her home just for that."[39] By not allowing African American students to leave campus, college leadership was not giving them the opportunity to visit nearby majority African American spaces such as churches, beauty salons, and barbershops, or benevolent lodges. Furthermore, there were no entirely African American campus spaces for students to assert their identities. In order to get these spaces, students would have to modify the landscape to fit their needs.

The most lasting changes to the landscape by students were the buildings they constructed. Although the design of the buildings was chosen by the college's leadership students inevitably shaped the buildings they constructed. Because these were not modest buildings, they represented more than learning spaces and sleeping spaces to the students. The buildings acted as physical manifestations of the uplift of the African American race.

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[38] *Knoxville College Bulletin Catalogue Number for 1911-1912: Announcements for 1911-1912*, 15. The college catalog notes that dormitory rooms were subject to search at any time and that students would be held responsible for any disorder that was found.

[39] Griggs Fleming, "The Development of Black Education in Tennessee, 1865-1920," 177.

They represented progress, educational attainment, and self-worth. They were trophies that the students used as tools to communicate to the public that they were worthy of equality and respect no matter their race. These structures fought the stereotypes that the best graduates Knoxville College had to offer were waiters and domestics who could speak Latin while they served.[40] This landscape constructed by students was not limited to the campus. It extended to homes built by students on College Street and Brandau Street and buildings at Chilhowee Park, and Clinton and Deaderick Streets. Beyond this, the African American student created landscape extended to the Knoxville spaces constructed with student made brick and student felled timber. Student produced construction materials also went to the school missions of the United Presbyterian Church in places such as Chase City, Virginia and Wilcox County, Alabama. Not only that but the teachers in these missions schools were all Knoxville College graduates and inevitably spread what they learned at the college and its benefits to their students to get them attend the college as well.

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[40] "Knoxville and Her Opportunities," *The Daily Chronicle*, April 17, 1881. This article stated "One of the most promising graduates is head waiter in a boarding house, and has a very fair knowledge of Greek and Latin, which doubtless enables him to handle the hash in a style pleasing to the classic taste of boarders."

Figure 18. 1805 Brandau Street in Knoxville, Tennessee is shown in a 1912 photo with student laborers and a 2016 photo.[41]

Due to Presbyterian ideology, the African American student created landscape would have been elusive and vague to anyone outside of their group. They were not knowingly attempting to exclude anyone, but they needed their own space to form community and assert their identities. Knoxville College yearbook photographs show student gathering places on the landscape. Students often took group photos on a bench on the main lawn, sitting in the grass of the main lawn, and on the steps of the Carnegie Library. What is interesting about these spaces is that they are open areas in clear view of college leadership.[42] A close analysis of the *1925 Knoxunior* and the *1928 Knoxunior* yearbooks reveals that sections of the yearbook with collages of student photos all depict the students outdoors. The African American student landscape was not within the

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[41] *Knoxville College Bulletin Catalogue Number for 1911-1912: Announcements for 1912-1913*, 13.

[42] Battle-Baptiste, *Black Feminist Archaeology*, 87. Baptiste describes these types of spaces as "hidden in plain *site"* (87). Furthermore, she argues that the importance of these spaces is the socialization that took place in these spaces noting that the socialization was "often characterized as meaningless exchange to outsiders, but was essential to Black cultural production" (87).

buildings that they helped construct, it was in the outdoor spaces where they could see the buildings they constructed and be seen by leadership, but not heard.

That the students claimed the outdoor space as their own is not surprising. Claiming space is intrinsic to the African American experience. According to historian Angel David Nieves, "Black people across time and location have sought to create space in American society in a way that both reflected their community ethics and asserted their right to exist in a society that rejected their equality and citizenship."[43] The students took what administrators saw as a manicured lawn and imbued it with meaning transforming the outdoor space into a space that worked for them.

For African Americans, outdoor spaces have always been essential to life. Several historians have examined how African Americans used yard spaces as sites of resistance, expression, or as an extension of their living areas.[44] These outdoor spaces at Knoxville College were reflective of the students needs to have spaces that were just their own for socialization. Although the students built the buildings that they lived and learned in, it was important for students to remove themselves from these spaces because those spaces were governed by Presbyterian ideology. Following Baptiste's black feminist approach to

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[43] Angel David Nieves, "Introduction: Cultural Landscapes of Resistance and Self-Determination for the Race: Interdisciplinary Approaches to a Socio-Spatial Race History," in *We Shall Independent Be: African American Place-Making and the Struggle to Claim Space in the United States*, ed. Angel David Nieves and Leslie M. Alexander (Boulder, Colorado: The University Press of Colorado, 2008), 5.

[44] For more on African American modification of the landscape see Vlach, *Back of the Big House*. Vlach argues that landscapes are a cultural construction, a reactive expression, and "a response to plans enacted by white landowners" (1).

understanding the landscape it is apparent that for the students of Knoxville College that the yard became the place for "spiritual and cultural expression."[45]

Outdoor spaces became a haven for students as they attempted to navigate the racial and paternalistic dynamics that thrived on the campus. When students entered classrooms, they were immediately put on display. The college welcomed visitors daily with the exception of Sabbath Day visits. These visitors, the majority of them white and from civic groups, philanthropies, and Presbyterian churches observed the students in their workspaces and living spaces when appropriate. Women from the United Presbyterian Church's Board of Women who had donated money for the construction of McDill and Elnathan Hall were eager to visit these spaces and see the fruits of their donations. A January 1, 1902, campus visit organized by the college for the public required the students to demonstrate their trades.[46] There were also visits by groups such as the Colored Farmers Convention and faculty from Berea College. A May 1, 1902, visit by the Ogden Party, a group described as sixty-five of New York's most prominent citizens who were touring the South, saw students put on display with the domestic science department serving them drinks, products grown and items made by the industrial department explained by students, and the choir regaling the audience with song.[47] With

[45] Battle-Baptiste, *Black Feminist Archaeology*, 96.

[46] "Winter Term Opening," *The Aurora*, January 1, 1902, Vol XVI no. 6 edition, 4.

[47] "Visit of the Ogden Party," *The Aurora*, May 1, 1902, Vol XVI no. 13 edition, 5.

racial performances such as this occurring in interior spaces, it is evident to see why the students preferred the outdoor spaces they created.

Due to the lack of available yearbooks depicting life for students before 1920, it is difficult to determine where these students might have gathered on the landscape. With the constant changes to the curriculum and landscape during the college's early years students could have found solace in numerous places. In determing these spaces it is important to consider what students might have left behind.

What the material record could reveal is the location and extent of student gathering places on the landscape, most notably places not recorded in yearbook photos and places not in open view. Artifact concentrations could provide researchers with greater information on how students used and moved throughout the campus. Within those artifact concentrations could be the answer to how the African American students used outdoor spaces as well as resisted Presbyterian ideology.

Archaeological Recommendations

Due to its rich history, the landscape of Knoxville College is an ideal site to conduct archaeological excavations. Throughout the years, archaeology of the African Diaspora has primarily focused on the poorest African American communities such as the enslaved and tenant farmers.[48] More archaeology should be conducted on landscapes

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[48] Archaeologist Theresa Singleton calls for changes in African Diaspora archaeology that addresses more than those of the lowest socioeconomic levels. For more see Theresa A. Singleton, ed., *"I, Too, Am America": Archaeological Studies of African-American Life* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1999), 4.

belonging to the African American middle class or its historic equivalent, such as those who owned land, operated businesses, or who could afford to attend college. By moving towards an archaeology of the African Diaspora that is more inclusive of all ranges of that experience, archaeologists have the opportunity to move "away from oppression toward resistance, and away from passivity toward agency."[49]

Archaeological investigations of Knoxville College are likely to encounter complex and fragmented evidence reflecting buildings from different eras, gaps in the landscape where historic buildings once stood, and a landscape that shows change over time.[50] The property was once private farmland owned by the University of Tennessee President Charles Coffin and lived on by members of his family and three enslaved individuals prior to the Civil War. Later the land was occupied by General Longstreet's Confederate soldiers during the Civil War and then owned by the Charles Seymour family who sold the land to the Freedmen's Board of the United Presbyterian Church in 1875. In fact, part of the land once belonging to the college and now owned by the City of Knoxville was the location of Civil War era Camp Van Dorn, a Confederate camp where many soldiers died. The site where McMillan Chapel and the President's House currently stands was home to Frances Hodgson Burnett, author of *The Secret Garden,*

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[49] Jodi A. Barnes, "Introduction: The Materiality of Freedom: Archaeologies of Post Emancipation Life," in *The Materiality of Freedom: Archaeologies of Postemancipation Life*, ed. Jodi A. Barnes (Columbia, S.C: University of South Carolina Press, 2011), 4.

[50] Anna Vermer Andrzejewski and Allison Rachleff, "The Significance of Fragmentary Landscapes in Cultural Landscape Preservation," in *Preservation of What? For Whom? A Critical Look at Historical Significance*, ed. Michael A. Tomlan (Ithaca: The National Council of Preservation Education, 1997), 181.

from 1865 to 1868. Also, various other small farms were purchased in later years including the Payne Place property in 1904 all home to different owners and families.

Recognizing the significant history of the land, the University of Tennessee Archaeological Research Laboratory conducted ground penetrating radar and global positioning systems (GPS) analysis in 2007 to locate long lost Civil War graves in the area of Camp Van Dorn.[51] Also, amateurs have conducted archaeological excavations on the rear of the campus searching for Civil War relics and graves. While these efforts have concentrated on the Civil War era of the landscape archaeological efforts should also consider Reconstruction and later eras of the site. Before other amateurs take to the land and destroy valuable history that cannot be recovered, a detailed archaeological excavation should happen. Without this excavation, looting has the potential to result in the loss of historic information on the campus. Removing artifacts from the ground without recording where they were or what other artifacts were nearby ruins all possibility of what could have been learned. Furthermore, Knoxville College administrators should attempt to avoid ground disturbing activities without proper archaeological survey and monitoring.

The materiality of the Knoxville College site is complex. Under the surface are likely to exist many features (changes in the soil indicating human activity) and artifacts relating to life at the site dating back to the 1830's or perhaps earlier, prior to the creation of the HBCU campus. The following recommendations for future archaeological research

[51] "A Civil War Site Discovered?," accessed May 9, 2016, http://www.knoxnews.com/news/local/a-civil-war-site-discovered-ep-413235820-360314411.html.

focus upon the occupation of the land during its phase of ownership by Knoxville College. What could be uncovered is the materiality of middle class African American students attempting to assert their cultural identities in a landscape governed by Presbyterians who wanted them to be anything but their authentic African American selves. Excavations seeking to investigate these issues should be placed within the oldest portion of the campus listed on the National Register of Historic Places, and occupied beginning in 1875. This area has the best archaeological potential for features and artifact concentrations associated with student life. Artifact concentrations associated with the students are important because they may reveal how students responded to the landscape as well as Presbyterian ideology. Of most importance is identifying locations on the landscape where students gathered and whether the artifacts found in those spaces indicate a resistance to Presbyterian ideology, leadership and rules.

This potential archaeological excavation should focus on how African American students lived, worked, and experienced the Knoxville College landscape. The excavation should have research objectives such as the following:

1. An understanding of the site's stratigraphy, including plowzone features identifying the locations of agricultural fields on the landscape.
2. Archaeo-botanical analysis (the examination of seeds, fossilized pollen, and other plant remains preserved in soil) to determine what was grown in the agricultural fields by student workers.
3. Identification of features and high volume artifact concentrations associated with student populations, workspaces, gathering spaces, and student resistance.

4. An understanding of the chronology of the landscape including occupation periods and destruction of nonextant buildings and workspaces including McCulloch Hall, the President's Cottage, the greenhouse, the agricultural building, and the brick kiln.
5. An understanding of building techniques used by students to construct student built buildings.

These research objectives work in concert to enhance what is already supposedly known about the site. Uncovering foundations of nonextant buildings will allow for spatial relationships to be determined. An important aspect of spatial relationships would allow for understanding if the President's Cottage and McCulloch Hall existed on the landscape at the same time. Likewise, determining the positioning of other nonextant buildings will allow us to see how students moved throughout the landscape. High concentrations of nails and window glass, as well as driplines (features formed from water running off rooflines), may indicate the positioning of nonextant buildings on the landscape. Additionally, the presence of recovered nails may indicate the destruction of buildings with a razed building having a high prevalence of bent nails.[52] Also, postholes and postmolds related to the extensive fencing on the landscape and particularly the fencing by the President's Cottage may be excavated to determine the terminus post

[52] Charles H. Faulkner, "Moved Buildings: A Hidden Factor in the Archaeology of the Built Environment," *Historical Archaeology* 38, no. 2 (2004): 58. Faulkner further states that unmodified nails could accumulate if a building deteriorates in place or is burned.

quem (TPQ) date of the fencing to determine if it was possibly built by students during the industrial education era of the school.

Research conducted by archaeologist Charles Faulkner studies the construction of buildings through archaeological features left behind by temporary construction aids such as derricks and scaffolding. Faulkner uses this information to determine building techniques and technology and also asserts that devices such as derricks and scaffolding have possible ethnic affiliations.[53] Because buildings existing on the Knoxville College landscape were built by students, understanding the technology and techniques used to construct these spaces can also indicate the amount of student labor as well as the workplace demands for student laborers. Faulkner also notes that the prevalence of African American bricklayers and their work in Knoxville may lead archaeologists to be able to differentiate African American brick building techniques from those of European contractors and other ethnic tradepersons.[54] Using Faulkner's theory, it may be possible to compare archaeological features found around Knoxville College buildings to other buildings and homes in the area known to be built by student laborers.

Artifact concentrations near the college's dormitories may also indicate how students used those outside spaces. For example, if sewing needles, buttons, or straight pins are found near the south side of Elnathan Hall where the two-story porch was it could inferred that female students used that space to sew. In her research on the Phyllis

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[53] Charles H. Faulkner, "The Archaeology of Temporary Construction Devices on Historic Building Sites in the Southeast," *Historical Archaeology* 42, no. 2 (2008): 88.

[54] Ibid., 99.

Wheatley Home for Girls Archaeologist Anna Agbe Davies noted that artifact concentrations were higher on the rear of the home and attributed the lack of artifacts and features in the yard of the front of the home to the fact that the home matron wanted to keep up appearances and therefore kept the front of the home clean.[55] This may also be the situation with Elnathan Hall. Agbe Davies research further notes the connections between respectability politics and behavior indicating that archaeology "provides a means to identify the material manifestations of these challenges and also how material culture was used to negotiate this terrain."[56]

Artifacts recovered near McCulloch Hall, and Elnathan Hall have the ability to provide researchers with an understanding of the material life of students. Although the college had strict rules about appearance and what items students could have on campus, there is no doubt that students broke the rules to assert their identities. Artifact concentrations containing items related to improving appearances such as costume jewelry, cosmetic refuse, perfume bottles or fancy buttons and clothing accoutrements may indicate that female students required to wear uniforms often altered their uniforms to their liking. There is evidence that some female students altered the heels of their shoes to make them higher to stand out from the other female students.[57]

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[55] Anna Agbe Davies, "Reaching for Freedom, Seizing Responsibility: Archaeology at the Phyllis Wheatley Home for Girls, Chicago," in *The Materiality of Freedom: Archaeologies of Post Emancipation Life* (Columbia, S.C: University of South Carolina Press, 2011), 76.

[56] Ibid., 77.

[57] Griggs Fleming, "The Effect of Higher Education on Black Tennesseeans after the Civil War," 213. In an oral history, 1916 graduate of Knoxville College Ardelle Arter recalled how female students from Chicago would have rubber added to the heels of their shoes to make the heels taller.

Archaeology can also assist in addressing silences in the documentary record. While the college operated orphanages for boys and girls in Wallace and McDill Halls until 1921 what is unknown is the quality of life in these spaces. Archaeological features and artifact deposits can determine if the children of these orphanages played in the yard space around the structures. Evidence of toys such as marbles or porcelain dolls would indicate that children had access to toys in this environment. Remnants of hair barrettes may indicate that female children had the opportunity to wear bows in their hair. Artifact assemblages gathered from around Wallace Hall related to its child occupants could be compared to artifacts assemblages gathered from the President's Cottage site because President John McCulloch brought his young children to live there. A comparison between artifacts related to childhood at this location, and the orphanages could be compared to determine the similarities or differences in quality of life for children based on race and class on this landscape.

Missing from the documentary record is information on what students did on Saturdays which were essentially their only free days. For example, artifact concentrations containing items such as fishing hooks may indicate that male students used their spare time to fish in the nearby creek. With movement off of campus severely restricted and students more than likely using outdoor spaces as gathering spots, high artifact concentrations in certain areas may identify gathering spaces and their use. Artifact concentrations containing refuse related to smoking or dipping tobacco or even glass alcohol bottle fragments may indicate that students used these spaces to resist the campus rules of no smoking and no drinking alcohol. The locations of these spaces

should also be studied to determine lines of sight from these spaces to McKee Hall and other areas where students could be seen by college leaders.

Artifact assemblages may also provide evidence of the presence of former enslaved African Americans who lived on the site before it was a college campus. Likewise, there may still exist artifacts related to the Civil War era of the site as well as artifacts related to occupations of the site by families such as the Hodgson Burnett family. Any artifacts recovered should be properly interpreted and housed within the college's collections.

What could be potentially uncovered through archaeological excavations at Knoxville College can change the histories of the college and all of its inhabitants. Because so much time has passed, it is impossible to interview early students and ask about their experiences. What they have left behind archaeologically may be able to provide insight on how they navigated Presbyterian ideology as well as their own stance in a landscape governed by white supremacy. It is important to correct silences in the documentary record such as these if at all possible. There is clear value in further determining what life was like on the campus for African American students.

CONCLUSION

"In every graduate who has gone before you, whether a freedman or sharecropper, doctor or lawyer, scientist or government leader… the light still shines. From the faded parchment of my mother's 1936 diploma … the light still shines. In a country that elected our first black president … the light still shines. Here we are, 135 years after Knoxville College was founded, and despite all the challenges … the light still shines."[1]

- Ingrid Saunders Jones

By 1919, Knoxville College, its administrators, and its students were changing. In July 1919, the Knoxville chapter of the NAACP was founded. Among those who established the chapter were Knoxville College teachers and administrators.[2] One month later before the start of the fall semester on August 29, 1919, Bertie Lindsey, a white woman, was murdered by an African American man. The events of Red Summer had found a home in Knoxville with a mob of whites attacking the local jail in search of the alleged culprit, freeing prisoners, and vandalizing the African American section of the city. As African Americans armed themselves to fight back, news of African Americans seeking to kill whites spread. Clashes between African Americans, local whites, and the National Guard culminated in what is known as the Knoxville Race Riot of 1919 with

[1] Ingrid Saunders Jones, "The Light Still Shines: To Live a Life of True and Personal Freedom One Has to Be Fearless" (Speech, Knoxville College Spring Convocation, Knoxville, Tennessee, May 8, 2010).

[2] Matthew Lakin, "Celebration & Chaos: Knoxville's 1910-19 Decade Begins with Expo, Ends with Race Riot," *Knoxville News Sentinel*, February 26, 2012, http://www.knoxnews.com/news/local/celebration--chaos-knoxvilles-1910-19-decade-begins-with-expo-ends-with-race-riot-ep-361139696-357179451.html.

African Americans held hostage in their neighborhoods, an undetermined amount of people killed or assaulted and the bodies of the dead dumped in the local river.[3]

This type of overt resistance by African Americans caught the white residents of Knoxville off guard. For years, Knoxville had promoted itself as a city that suffered from no tension between the races.[4] The 1919 riot quickly reminded the white citizens of Knoxville what the African Americans had known all along, that there was racial tension in the city. As citizens attempted to come to terms with the drastic events of that August night, Knoxville College's third President J. Kelley Giffen praised Knoxville College students for their restraint during the riot, but their restraint was beginning to wane.[5]

The 1920s ushered in an era of intellectual growth, artistry, and free thinking among African Americans. Known as the Harlem Renaissance, this era and its participants Langston Hughes, Zora Neale Hurston, and Countee Cullen among others challenged African Americans to become racially conscious. It was during this era that Marcus Garvey called for Pan-Africanism and that Alain Locke, the architect of the Harlem Renaissance, coined the term of the New Negro. Locke described the New Negro

[3] Matthew Lakin, "'A Dark Night': The Knoxville Race Riot of 1919," *The Journal of East Tennessee History*, no. 72 (2000): 2–29.

[4] Mark Banker, *Appalachians All: East Tennesseans and the Elusive History of an American Region* (Knoxville, Tennessee: The University of Tennessee Press, 2010), 105–6.

[5] *The Aurora*, October 1919, Vol XXXIV no. 1 edition.

as someone who "slipped from under the tyranny of social intimidation and implied inferiority."[6]

This new attitude manifested itself on the campus of Knoxville College as many students began questioning the strict rules put forth by their Presbyterian administrators. Students received warnings against breaking the rules and attempting to assert their personhood. In the February 15, 1902, edition of *The Aurora*, students were presented with the cautionary tale of a student who college administrators expelled. It stated, "The young man who came to KC with a cigar in his mouth and visited a saloon the first day, struck too fast a gait and is now in other climes where he will have more liberty."[7] This student broke three of the most known rules on the campus. First, he left campus. Second, he visited a saloon and possibly imbibed in liquor. Third, he smoked. He was not the type of student that college leadership expected, so they removed him as quickly as possible.

The possibility of being whipped, only fed bread or water, or expelled compelled African American students not to break the rules. Many of their parents had given their last to provide for them to attend school and if they were to get kicked out because they wanted to assert themselves as people their parents would have been disappointed. If the students stayed within the boundaries of their oppression and enjoyed white paternalism, they would be fine because this is what school leadership expected of them.

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[6] Alain Locke, "The New Negro," in *The New Negro*, ed. Alain Locke (Simon and Schuster, 2014), 4.

[7] D. F. White and Louise Ware, "College Notes," *The Aurora*, February 15, 1902, Vol XVI no. 9 edition, 5.

Many students would go on to have tense encounters with the school leadership. In one example recalled by a past student, a male student named Lucious Watkins resented the control school leadership attempted to exert over his life. "In 1913 when Mr. Watkins started to develop a serious friendship with a young woman who Knoxville College President, Dr. McGranahan, judged unsuitable, he called Watkins into his office and criticized the girl. Watkins became so angry that he picked up a chair and threatened McGranahan with it. He was promptly expelled from school."[8] In this instance, Watkins stepped out of the role of African American student and into a role that was no longer following the customs of Jim Crow. Watkins actions were not a part of the performance of oppression expected of him, but his actions were those that threatened the dominance, power, and the performance of superiority of the white McGranahan.

As the college entered the decade of the 1920s, the college age student body of Knoxville College tripled.[9] The number of new students led to more clashes with administrators as students began to resent their treatment. As these feelings continued to grow, students began to see their administrators protest against events that they thought were wrong. In June of 1921, English professor J. L. Carey petitioned the mayor of Knoxville to protect African Americans from the Ku Klux Klan that was growing in the area. Although the mayor declined to assist, Knoxville College students saw one of their

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[8] Griggs Fleming, "The Effect of Higher Education on Black Tennesseeans after the Civil War," 214.

[9] "Along the Color Line," *The Crisis*, June 1930. This article in *The Crisis* discussed the growth of African American colleges. Knoxville College grew from 64 to 204 college aged students while Fisk grew from 287 to 531 students.

only African American professors protest and speak against a situation that he viewed unfavorably and they no doubt found inspiration in his actions.[10]

By 1925 the student body of Knoxville College reached its breaking point. For a month, male students, who asked female students not to participate, sat out of classes and refused to abide by the campus rules.[11] They were calling for change in the era of the New Negro. They demanded an open campus, fewer restrictions on the movement of students, and a student council. Although students were rightly upset, the strike remained fairly peaceful. Negotiations to settle the strike between students and administrators began one night at 7:00 pm and lasted well past 2:00 am the next morning. The result was that both sides compromised. The students won fewer restrictions on their movement, unchaperoned contact with members of the opposite sex, and the right to create a student council. Administrators, however, still punished the students who participated in the strike by giving them unexcused absences for the days of class they missed which negatively affected their grades.[12]

The most successful result of the strike was the creation of a student council. By having a student council, students would be able to participate in their own governance. Historian Cynthia Griggs-Fleming notes that the establishment of a student council was

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[10] A. N. P., "Negroes Protest Against Ku Klux Klan in Knoxville, Tenn.," *The Bystander*, June 23, 1921, Vol. XXVI No. 51 edition.

[11] Griggs Fleming, "Knoxville College," 106.

[12] Ibid., 106–7.

one of the central demands of most campus strikes during this decade.[13] That students at other African American colleges such as Fisk, Hampton, Livingstone, Howard, Shaw, and Wilberforce among others were demanding accountability in their own education illustrates that these students were no longer the students of the previous decades passively attending classes and not questioning authority.

Not only was the student body changing, but the landscape was changing as well. The 1920s decade saw the gradual elimination of industrial education as the college demolished its barns, chicken coops, and pig stables in the name of progress. Under the leadership of President J. Kelley Giffen, spaces assigned for student labor were transformed into areas for student enjoyment like athletic fields and a gymnasium. Much like its past, the landscape was continuously evolving to meet the needs of the present.

By eliminating those workspaces, Giffen essentially altered both the curriculum and the landscape of the college. Without the college farm, animals, and outbuildings, Knoxville College no longer reflected the mandate of industrial education. Its landscape looked like that of any other liberal arts college. The construction of the gymnasium was effectively the last time that students would participate in building construction and even then the work that they did was limited. Additionally, industrial education courses began to be removed from the curriculum. For forty years, Knoxville College had treated its students as laborers and its teachers as forepersons. It had taught them skills that would

[13] Ibid., 108.

enable them to go into the world, find jobs acceptable for their class and race, and maintain the status quo.

With the elimination of industrial education students had the opportunity just to be students again. By 1931, Knoxville College had eliminated all grade levels other than the college level. It was no longer an orphanage for young children or a high school for secondary students. For the first time in its history, if you wished to be enrolled you would have to be a college-aged student having already completed high school. This was a turning point for the college as it moved to legitimize itself among the best liberal arts colleges for African Americans. The landscape was changing, and while it appeared that college leadership had led the way, it was the students.

The Significance of HBCUs

Historically Black Colleges and Universities changed the landscape of African American education in this country by meeting a need rooted in the desire of the formerly enslaved to learn. Barred from attending any school or college of choice due to race, African Americans had no choice but to attend schools or colleges constructed especially for their use. With the aid of various religious denominations and philanthropies, the goal of receiving an education was attainable. Learning to read and write was one of the only ways the formerly enslaved knew how to adjust to the emancipated world. Learning would bring real freedom and education was the door to progress. Much like their ancestors who embraced the emancipated world, the African American college students of the 1920s embraced the world of the New Negro and forced their white college administrators to attempt to accept it.

What remains of Knoxville College is a landscape whose story is still being written. The archaeological potential to uncover what lies beneath the surface has the ability to alter what is known about the school. The voices of those earliest students are missing from the documentary record, but they may exist in the material record.

Above ground rest the artifacts of industrial education in the forms of buildings that dot the landscape. Forever sealed into the bricks of McKee Hall, and Elnathan Hall are the fingerprints of the student workers who spent their days hand molding bricks. Each fingerprint is unique and tells a different story of the student's sacrifice to be at college often the first and only family member to ever attend. Within the decaying plaster lath walls of Elnathan Hall are the remnants of dreams of female students who longed to be more than domestics and teachers, but faced limited career prospects due to their race.

In May of 2015 Knoxville College closed its doors to students for the first time in its one hundred and forty-five year history due to financial issues. For one hundred forty-five years, Knoxville College educated primarily African American students and contributed significantly to their lives and the uplift of the African American race. Although the college means so much to so many, a lack of funds has caused it to fall into a state of total neglect and disrepair. Knox Heritage, a historic preservation organization in Knoxville, Tennessee, has repeatedly featured Knoxville College on its Fragile Fifteen listing of buildings or locations that will soon cease to exist. The 2015 Fragile Fifteen listing for Knoxville College states, "The situation at Knoxville College has continued to dramatically deteriorate and several campus buildings are either condemned or suffering from a lack of maintenance. The school is mired in debt, and the very survival of the

historic campus is in doubt."[14] Today, many of the college's earliest buildings sit boarded up with chains on the doors and signs posted proclaiming that the buildings are condemned. McKee Hall #2 is missing a portion of its back wall that has left the second story open to the elements. A third-floor exterior door of Elnathan Hall proudly stands open revealing lath on the ceiling and walls devoid of any of its original plaster. The detailed brickwork on all of the buildings is crumbling, glass is missing from windows not boarded, and the grass is some places is more than three feet high. A quick glance into the gymnasium's windows reveals rusting workout equipment, fallen ceiling tiles, discarded books, and chalkboards that have not seen use in years. The once proud institution is nothing more than a mere shadow of itself as redevelopment or demolition loom in the near future.

With the loss of East Tennessee's first Historically Black College and University comes the loss of a campus built by students who labored to construct the buildings in which they lived and learned, who labored making bricks, milking cows, and growing produce to be sold to support their school, and who sought to prove their worth to a racist society that wished to hold them back due to the color of their skin. Also lost will be the legacy of the United Presbyterian Church, who during Reconstruction dared to do what few others were doing in educating African Americans. Gone will be the lasting effects of industrial education and perhaps some of the last remaining HBCU campus buildings designed and constructed by students.

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[14] "The Fragile Fifteen: Knoxville College Historic District," *Knox Heritage*, n.d., http://knoxheritage.org/news/knox-heritage-announces-2015-fragile-fifteen/.

With the passage of time, the number of HBCUs will get smaller and smaller. At one point there were as many as one hundred and thirty-five. Of the thirty-one closed HBCUs, eight have closed in the last thirty years with the most recent other than Knoxville College being St. Paul's College, which closed in 2013 after one hundred and twenty-five years. Because these were landscapes born of segregation there will never be more created. With each HBCU that closes and is subsequently demolished or redeveloped, historians, historic preservationists, and historical archaeologists lose the opportunity to study these cultural landscapes. For so long the significance and cultural value of these landscapes have been overlooked. It is time to correct that narrative and study these landscapes for the contributions they gave not only to African American education but also to African American life.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:

KNOWN BUILDINGS CONSTRUCTED BY KNOXVILLE COLLEGE STUDENTS

BUILDING NAME	YEAR BUILT/DEMOLISHED	NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
McKee Hall #2	1896	Y
McCulloch Hall	1894/1960	
Elnathan Hall #2	1898	Y
Industrial Building	1894/1954	
Agricultural Building	1905/Unknown	
Eliza B. Wallace Hospital	1907/Late 1950s	
Contagious Wing	1915/Late 1950s	
President's House	1889	Y
Carnegie Library	1909/Early 1960s	
McMillan Chapel	1913	Y
Giffen Memorial Gym	1927	Y
Home at 1805 Brandau	1910	
Home at 1005 College St	1906/Unknown	Y
Home at 1009 College St	1906/Unknown	Y
J.H. Michael Home on Brandau St	1910	
Unidentified Home on Brandau St	1910	
Building at corner of Clinton and Deaderick Streets	1910	
Negro Building at Appalachian Exposition	1905/Unknown	