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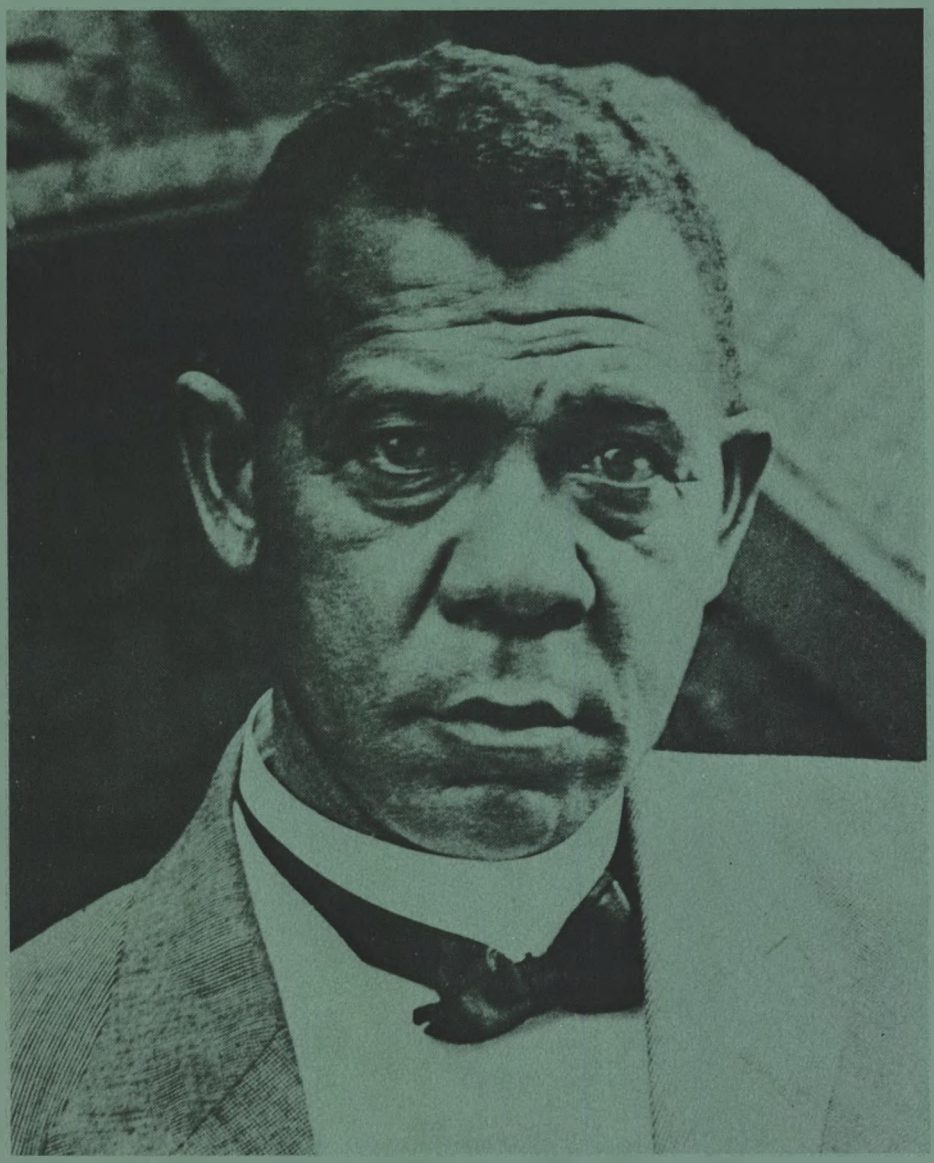
BOOKER T. WASHINGTON NATIONAL MONUMENT

AN ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY



RETURN TO MUSEUM BRANCH rec'd 12/8/69

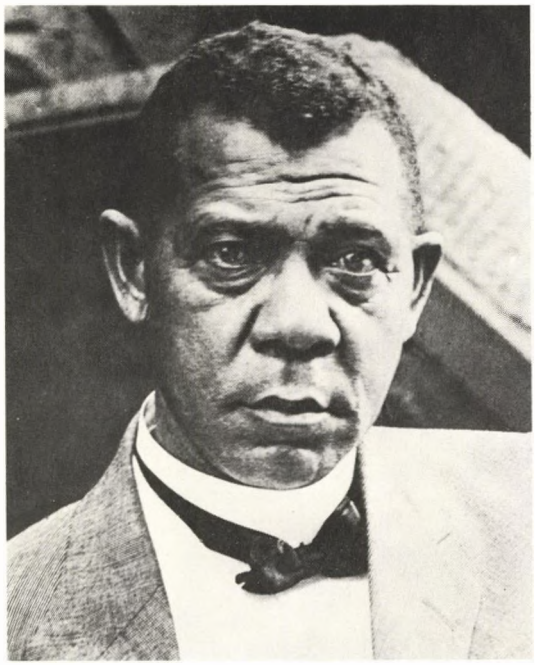
JUNE 18, 1969

BOOKER T. WASHINGTON NATIONAL MONUMENT

AN ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY

BY

BARRY MACKINTOSH



DIVISION OF HISTORY

OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY
AND
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

JUNE 18, 1969

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

RETURN TO MUSEUM BRANCH

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FOREWORD

This paper has been prepared to meet the needs outlined in RSP BOWA H-5. It provides a history of the property on which Booker T. Washington was born, from the time of his birth to the present.

It will be noted that fully half of this history is devoted to the story of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial and Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation, private organizations existing at Washington's birthplace for over a decade prior to the establishment of the national monument. The reasons for this rather extensive treatment are twofold: not only were the Birthplace Memorial and the National Monument Foundation directly responsible for the creation of Booker T. Washington National Monument, but to this day a significant portion of the public fails to differentiate the Park Service's administration of the area from that of its predecessors. Under the circumstances, it is well to become fully aware of the nature and activities of these organizations and of their prime mover, Mr. Sidney J. Phillips.

I am indebted to a number of individuals for the existence of this history--first, to Mr. Edwin C. Bearss, for encouraging me to undertake it in the first place. Messrs. Chester L. Brooks and Albert Sidney Wright discovered and preserved the discarded files of the Birthplace Memorial and the National Monument Foundation when the Service took possession of Washington's birthplace; Mr. James J. Kirkwood transformed

them from a state of total chaos into some semblance of order. Without these files, our knowledge of the monument's forerunners would be minimal. The recollections of Messrs. Peter and Grover Robertson were vital for the story of the birthplace during the early part of this century, and Chester Brooks provided me with much insight into the problems and important accomplishments of his administration. Finally, Sidney Wright and Mrs. Louise H. Aydlett were of continual assistance in view of their lengthy tenures at the monument. In the unhappy event that they and their considerable knowledge of the past should leave, it is hoped that this history will transmit a part of their knowledge to the future administrators of Booker T. Washington National Monument, for whom it was chiefly written.

Barry Mackintosh

Booker T. Washington National Monument
June 18, 1969

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I. INTRODUCTION

> I was born a slave on a plantation in Franklin County, Virginia...in a typical log cabin, about fourteen by sixteen feet square. In this cabin I lived with my mother and a brother and sister till after the Civil War, when we were all declared free.

So Booker T. Washington began his noted autobiography, Up From Slavery.[1] Writing almost forty years afterward, he went on to recall what he could of the nine years he had spent in slavery on this small Piedmont tobacco plantation near the back-country post office of Hales Ford. Here he carried on such tasks as were capable of being performed by a young slave boy: carrying water to the men in the fields, taking corn to the mill to be ground, fanning the flies from the table at the "big house," and carrying his mistress's books to school--the school he was forbidden to enter.

From his mother and from others, Booker learned of the great conflict then ensuing between the section for which his owner's sons fought and the side whose victory would mean the long-awaited day of liberation for his people. Finally the hour for which his mother had prayed came:

> Some man who seemed to be a stranger (a United States officer, I presume) made a little speech and then read a rather long paper--the Emancipation Proclamation, I think. After the reading we were told that we were all free, and could go when and where we pleased.[2]

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[1] (New York, 1901), pp. 1-2.

[2] Ibid., pp. 20-21.

From these inauspicious beginnings as a plantation slave, Booker T. Washington struggled to acquire an education at Malden, West Virginia, and at Hampton Institute, went on to establish Tuskegee Institute in Alabama, and rose to international renown as an educator and Negro leader. The last thirty-four years of his life, including his years of fame and influence, were spent at Tuskegee, the scene of his great life's work. Only once did he return to his Franklin County birthplace, on a one-day visit forty-three years after he had left. Yet it was this latter site, practically devoid of any historic remains, which the United States Government authorized to be set aside as Booker T. Washington National Monument on the centennial of Washington's birth.

How this came to pass, and how this addition to the National Park System has been administered, developed, and interpreted, will be related in the remainder of this history.

II. THE PLANTATION: 1850-1865

The plantation on which Booker T. Washington was born was then owned by one James Burroughs, a native of Bedford County, Virginia. In 1850 Burroughs had purchased 177 acres on Gills Creek in Franklin County from his brother Thomas for $1,640. Four years later, Thomas sold James an additional thirty acres for $225, creating the 207 acre plantation on which Washington was born on April 5, 1856.[3]

James Burroughs and his wife Elizabeth had a total of fourteen children, ten of whom were probably still living with their parents when James bought the Franklin County property in 1850.[4] Accommodating this sizeable brood was a small and very plain story-and-a-half log house with an ell to the rear. A house had been built on the property by Asa Dillon, a previous owner, between 1818 and 1826;[5] whether the house the Burroughs occupied was this one is not known.

To the southeast of this so-called "big house" stood the rude log hut in which, according to best available information, Booker T.

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[3]Deed Book 21, p. 465; Deed Book 23, pp. 394-95, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

[4]Barry Mackintosh, "The Burroughs Family: Owners of Booker T. Washington," p. 16, in "The Burroughs Plantation: Background Studies" (National Park Service, 1969).

[5]Deed Book 11, p. 486, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

Washington was born.[6] In Up From Slavery, Washington described the cabin as he remembered it:

> The cabin was not only our living-place, but was also used as the kitchen for the plantation. My mother was the plantation cook. The cabin was without glass windows; it had only openings in the side which let in the light, and also the cold, chilly air of winter. There was a door to the cabin--that is, something that was called a door--but the uncertain hinges by which it was hung, and the large cracks in it, to say nothing of the fact that it was too small, made the room a very uncomfortable one. In addition to these openings there was, in the lower right-hand corner of the room, the "cat-hole,"--a contrivance which almost every mansion or cabin in Virginia possessed during the ante-bellum period. The "cat-hole" was a square opening, about seven by eight inches, provided for the purpose of letting the cat pass in and out of the house at will during the night. In the case of our particular cabin I could never understand the necessity for this convenience, since there were at least a half-dozen other places in the cabin that would have accommodated the cats. There was no wooden floor in our cabin, the naked earth being used as a floor. In the centre of the earthen floor there was a large, deep opening covered with boards, which was used as a place in which to store sweet potatoes during the winter.[7]

Another cabin stood at the southwest corner of the Burroughs house--a site which, as will be seen, later became the focus of considerable attention in the area's development. Further Burroughs buildings included a horse barn, a cow barn, two corn cribs, two other cabins, at least two tobacco barns, a blacksmith shed, and perhaps other minor structures. As in the case of the house, no evidence is available to indicate whether these various buildings were constructed during the

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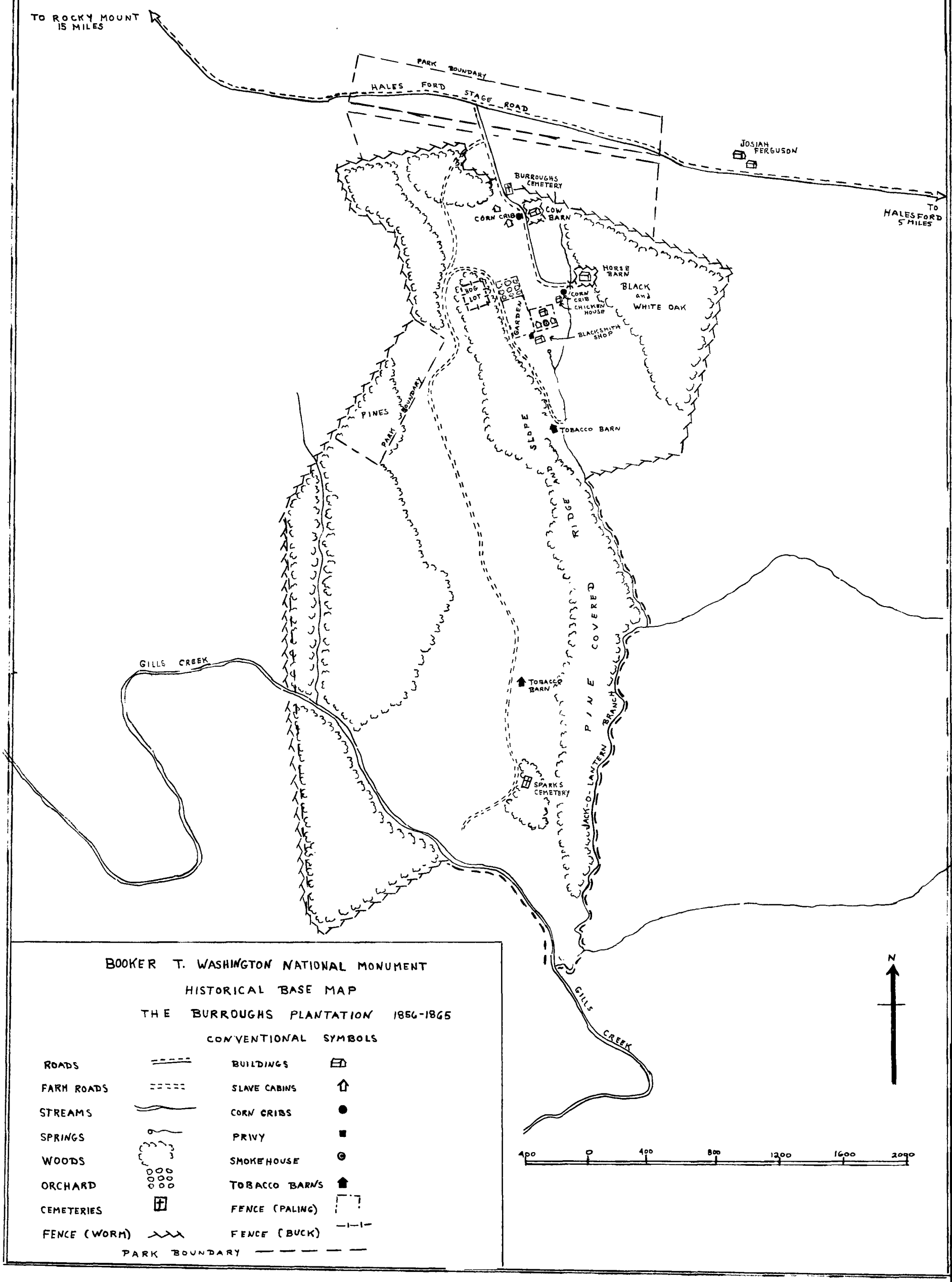
[6]See James J. Kirkwood and Chester L. Brooks, "Reconstruction of Slave Cabin, Booker T. Washington National Monument," Historic Structures Report, June 1959 (H30).

[7]Pp. 3-4.



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Burroughs occupancy or earlier.

In addition to Booker, there were nine other slaves on the Burroughs plantation in 1861. Two of these were adult male fieldhands, and the rest women and children. There was no overseer, and the Burroughs sons performed the plantation tasks along with their slaves. The money crop was tobacco, with corn, wheat, oats, flax, and garden vegetables raised for home consumption.

In 1861 James Burroughs died and was buried on the property. By the terms of his will Elizabeth inherited his estate.[8] That year also marked the beginning of hostilities between the North and the South, in which five of the Burroughs sons became engaged and in which two of them died. In 1863 the body of Billie Burroughs was returned to the plantation and buried beside the remains of his father. These were difficult years for the whites, who were deprived of the presence of their young men at home and who were forced to do without many of their accustomed luxuries. The times were relatively less difficult for the slaves, who were not accustomed to luxuries anyway and whose sufferings were tempered by the hope that they might soon be free.

The hope proved well founded. Soon after Appomattox, the Burroughs slaves were told that they could go "when and where" they wished. Among

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[8]Will Book 12, p. 121, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

the first to leave were Booker's mother Jane and her three children; Jane's husband provided a wagon to transport them to his home in Malden at some time during the summer of 1865. We know much less about the fate of the other slaves freed from the Burroughs' possession, but there is no evidence to indicate that any of them remained with their former owners.[9]

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[9]See Mackintosh, "The Burroughs Family," pp. 20-23.

III. THE FARM: 1865-1945

A. 1865-1893

The emancipation of the slaves, together with the lack of available sons to work the land, made it impossible for Elizabeth Burroughs to continue operation of her farm following the war. She and her six younger unmarried children may have remained on the property for a few more years, but by 1870 all members of the Burroughs family had left. In that year Elizabeth was living with a married daughter a few miles away.

In 1878, Elizabeth initiated a suit to sell the land and divide the proceeds among herself and her children during her lifetime. On August 7 of that year she stated that she had been forced to rent the land for a number of years, during which time it had greatly deteriorated in value. The farm was sold to one Robert T. Cook in 1885; he was to pay $1000 for it, but he defaulted in payment and apparently left the state. While efforts were being made to locate Cook, Thomas Robertson Burroughs, a son, was appointed receiver to take charge of the land and rent it out.

At the September 1891 term of the Bedford Circuit Court, Thomas Burroughs stated that he had been unable to rent the land, but that a John D. Robertson had on November 24, 1890, offered to purchase it for $900. Burroughs asserted that the land was deserted and "gone greatly to ruin." He had made a conditional sale subject to court approval,

whereupon Robertson had paid him $300 in cash and executed to him bonds with good personal security for the balance. The court confirmed the sale, and appointed Burroughs receiver to collect the balance.

In 1893, John Robertson, his wife Martha, and their family moved onto the property. Robertson became owner of the former Burroughs plantation by commissioner's deed on November 7, 1894.[10]

B. 1894-1945

1. Physical developments. Considering the general neglect of the property during most of the years between the war and the sale of the land to Robertson, it is likely that Robertson acquired it with few alterations or improvements from the way the Burroughs had left it before 1870. There had been little change, but many of the buildings had deteriorated to the point where they had to be removed. This was true of the horse and cow barns, the corn cribs, two tobacco barns, and the old slave quarters. Of the cabin to the southeast of the house, which Thomas Burroughs described to Robertson as the birthplace of Booker T. Washington, only the stone chimney and the remains of a potato hole were left in 1893.[11]

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[10] Chancery File 2902, Bedford County Courthouse, Bedford, Va.; Deed Book 45, p. 204, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

[11] Interviews with Grover and Peter Robertson, December 1964.

Burroughs told Robertson that this cabin had been in such poor condition after Washington's birth that the slave family moved into the cabin at the southwest corner of the house.[12] This cabin--with a wooden floor--was still standing when the Robertsons acquired the property, and was occupied for several years by Martha Robertson's mother. The rest of the time it was used for storage, until its rotten state necessitated its removal around 1922.[13]

The Robertsons made a number of improvements to their property, including the construction of two new stock barns to replace the ones they had torn down and five tobacco barns. To the old log house they added board siding and a front porch with a gabled roof. In 1927 John Robertson died; the family of his son Tony occupied the former Burroughs house and continued to farm the land. Peter Robertson, another son, built a two-room frame house directly to the northwest of the old homestead in 1932 for his widowed mother.

During the early Robertson years, a third burial took place in the plot occupied by James and Billie Burroughs. Blanche Burchette,[14] a young woman who lived in a cabin on the northwest part of the property

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[12]For full discussion, see Appendix B.

[13]Brooks and Kirkwood, "Reconstruction of Slave Cabin"; interview with Peter Robertson, February 21, 1969.

[14]Exact spelling unknown.

and who did the washing and ironing for Martha, had an illegitimate stillborn child who was interred in the cemetery sometime before 1907. The father was thought to be Lester Cook, syphilitic son of W. T. Cook, Robertson's neighbor to the northeast. This is the only other known burial in the Burroughs cemetery.[15]

2. Land exchange. On July 6, 1917, John Robertson and W. T. Cook made an exchange of land. Cook received about seven acres of the old Burroughs land on the east, and Robertson got roughly the same amount on the north, giving the former Burroughs property direct access to the Rocky Mount-Lynchburg Turnpike for the first time.[16]

3. Washington's visit. The most noteworthy event of the Robertson years on the property--at least from our viewpoint--was the first and only return of Booker T. Washington to his birthplace on September 26, 1908. He was met there by Silas C. Burroughs, a grandson of James and Elizabeth, and made a brief speech to a large crowd of people who had come from the vicinity. One account of the visit gave some description of the property at the time:

> Little of the old home now remains. The old dining room, built of squared logs, where young Washington began his first work as a slave, still stands.... Mr. Washington, in company with a number of old settlers, was able to locate the kitchen where Mr. Washington

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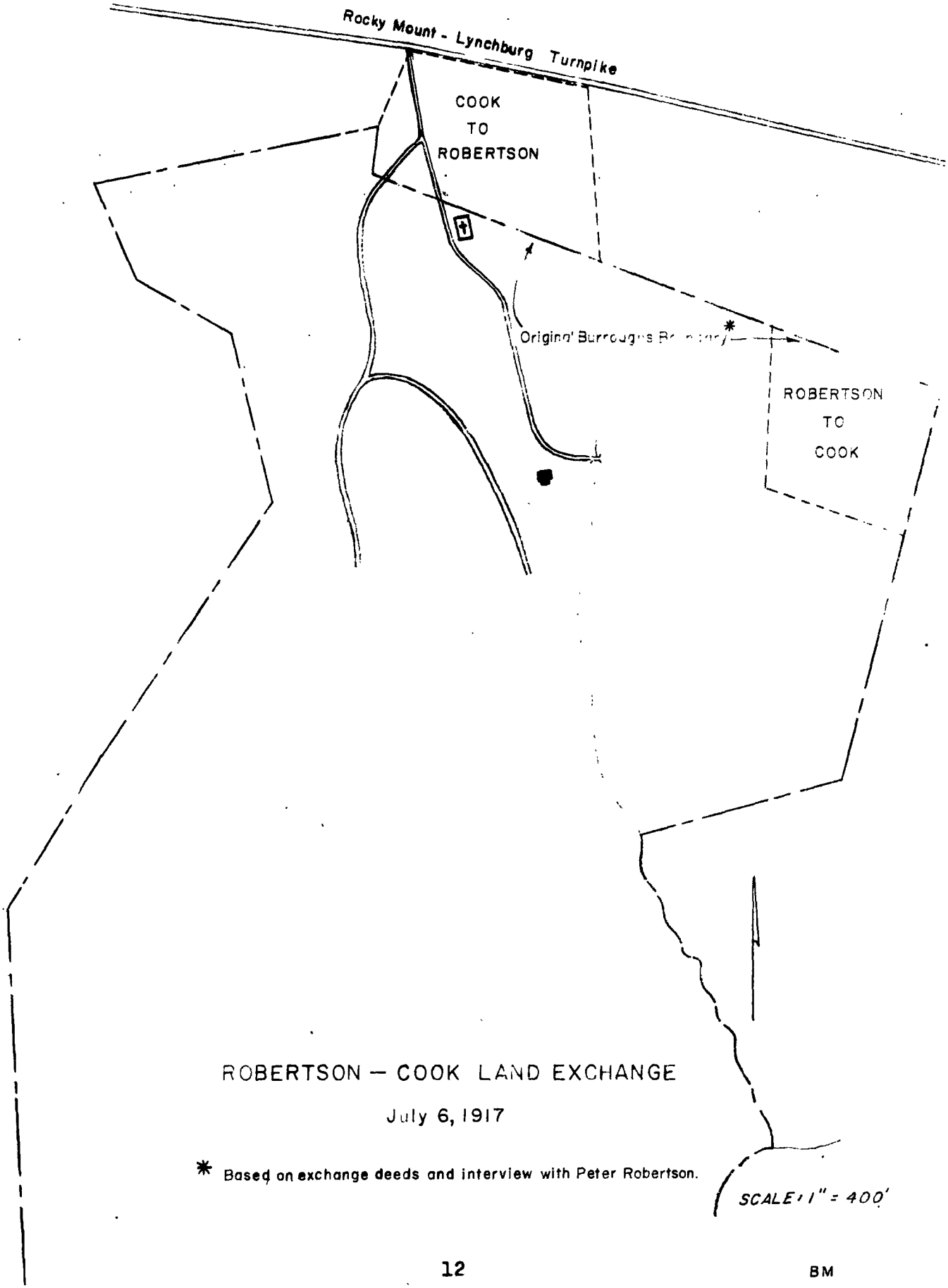
[15]Interview with Peter Robertson, February 21, 1969.

[16]Deed Book 65, pp. 595-96, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.; interview with Peter Robertson, February 21, 1969. See map, p. 12.



ROBERTSON — COOK LAND EXCHANGE

July 6, 1917

* Based on exchange deeds and interview with Peter Robertson.

BM

was born, and the old "Weave House" near where "Aunt Sophie," who was an older sister of Jane Burroughs, lived. The old spring is still there and the willow tree from which, Mr. Washington recalled, was cut the switch with which he received his first thrashing. One of the old settlers who was something of a wag, remarked that he had read in the newspaper that Mr. Washington was born in a house with a dirt floor. He said he didn't know if they could show him the house, but the floor was still there....

"I'm afraid I wouldn't know the place," said Mr. Washington. "Everything is changed. After all, the most remarkable changes that I notice" he continued laughingly, "is in the size of things. It seems incredible to me that the Ferguson place where I used to go as a boy is now only just across the road. The old dining room, too, is not nearly as large now as it used to be, or at least as it seemed to be once."[17]

Upon leaving, Washington picked a rose from a bush in front of the house and placed it on the grave of his former master, James Burroughs.[18]

4. Mitchell's visit. The next distinguished visitor to the former Burroughs plantation was Negro Congressman Arthur W. Mitchell, representing a Chicago district. Anne S. Joplin gave this account of the occasion:

On September 14, 1937, Congressman Mitchell came to Rocky Mount, Virginia, and addressed a large gathering assembled in front of the County Court House, on the subject of a memorial at the birthplace of the great Negro Educator, Booker T. Washington. The audience was most enthusiastic, and a large concourse of people, white and colored, accompanied the Congressman to the Burroughs home where Booker T. Washington was born. The sight [sic] of the old cabin was definitely located and an iron spike driven in the spot where the chimney stood. The thought now seems to be that it would be an appropriate place for an Industrial School for the colored race, to

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[17]Robert E. Park, "Tuskegee's Principal at His Old Home," The Tuskegee Student, October 3, 1908.

[18]"Washington Visits Old Home," Roanoke Times, September 27, 1908.

be named in honor of Booker T. Washington.[19]

The selection of Washington's birthplace cabin site on this occasion was made by "Uncle" Henry Swain, an elderly Negro who claimed to have been a boyhood playmate of Washington over seventy years earlier. By 1937, the only cabin remains still visible were those of the structure at the southwest corner of the Burroughs house. Even if Swain had ever been aware that this was not the site of the birthplace cabin, the excitement of the day evidently led him to identify it as such--it being far easier to locate a site with visible remains.

Miss Joplin's account of Mitchell's visit is contained in her W.P.A. report on the Burroughs home which, being dated November 8, 1937, was probably inspired by this visit. Her report described the house as it was then, with the modifications made by the Robertsons. According to her, it was in "not very good condition" at the time.[20]

5. Sale of the property. When Martha Robertson died on November 20, 1943, her children inherited the farm. Tony continued his occupancy, but in 1945 Jacob, the oldest son, expressed a desire to sell the property and divide the proceeds among the heirs. The others decided to

---

[19]"Old Burroughs Home, Birthplace of Booker T. Washington," Works Progress Administration of Virginia Historical Inventory, November 8, 1937, p. 3.

[20]Plate I shows the photograph made for this report, the earliest available picture of the Burroughs house.

go along with him to avoid "any trouble,"[21] and by court order, a public auction was advertised to be held on the property on October 6, 1945.

News of the impending sale of Booker T. Washington's birthplace received wide circulation in Negro circles. An editorial in the Norfolk Journal and Guide discussed this development:

> This occasion will present a great opportunity to our race to secure ownership of the birthplace of a great American and to dedicate it to a use suitably perpetuating the memory of a revered leader and educator.... One proposal would be this: for the Negro Organization Society [a Hampton group], perhaps in cooperation with others, to purchase the farm and then get the state of Virginia to establish and operate thereon a first-class trade, technical and agricultural school,[22]

Word of the auction reached Tuskegee, Alabama, where it was picked up by Washington's daughter, Portia Washington Pittman. She later described her reaction:

> I had never seen the place of his birth. I had always wanted to see it. It had intrigued me. However, I think I called the matter to the attention of the president of Tuskegee Institute and he said, "We have no funds to look after that." Then I immediately contacted my good friend, Mr. S. J. Phillips, who was also my neighbor, and I said, "Mr. Phillips, something has to be done about this birthplace. I hate to see it pass into the hands of strangers. I have never seen it. I want to go there."
>
> Mr. Phillips said, "Leave it to me, Mrs. Pittman."[23]

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[21] Interview with Peter Robertson, March 15, 1969.

[22] September 29, 1945.

[23] Hearing before the Subcommittee on Public Lands of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, House of Representatives, 84th Congress, 2nd Session, on H.R. 6904...to Provide for the Establishment of the Booker T. Washington National Monument, February 3, 1956 (Washington, 1956), p. 44.

The proposal of the Journal and Guide did not materialize. A number of local farmers bid on the old Burroughs property, but S. J. Phillips of Tuskegee was high bidder at $7,610. On October 15, 1945, he became owner by deed of the birthplace of Booker T. Washington.[24]

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[24]Deed Book 105, p. 163, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

IV. THE PRIVATE MEMORIAL: 1946-1957

A. Sidney J. Phillips

Sidney J. Phillips was born in Pike Road, Alabama, on May 7, 1901, the son of a farmer-minister. He graduated from Tuskegee Institute in 1932 with a degree in General Agriculture, and received a master's degree in soil chemistry from the University of Wisconsin the following year. During the thirties, he served as a farm demonstration agent for Alabama and Arkansas and as manager of the two thousand acre farm at Tuskegee Institute. In 1940 he organized the Booker T. Washington Sales Agency, an advertising and promotional firm, at Tuskegee, Alabama. Around this time he was first employed by the Nehi Corporation of Columbus, Georgia, to conduct a sales promotion campaign for Royal Crown Cola and other Nehi beverages among Negroes. During the Second World War, Nehi donated his services to the war effort to collect salvage and to work with the War Finance Division in promoting bond sales among those of his race. In 1943 Phillips was appointed Director of Public Relations for the National Baptist Convention, the nation's largest Negro body. This connection was also profitable to Nehi, since Phillips promoted its products at the annual conventions.

It was Nehi which provided the mortgage enabling Phillips to purchase the Robertson property in October of 1945.

B. Establishment of the Birthplace Memorial

Following his purchase of the property, Phillips wasted little time in displaying his impressive talents as a promoter. On January 31, 1946, he secured the incorporation of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial. The charter for this non-profit organization indicated its purposes:

> ...to establish a perpetual memorial in commemoration of the life and character of Booker T. Washington in helping the man farthest down and to that end, to erect and maintain shrines, monuments, and other similar markings at places connected with the life of Booker T. Washington, and in general, to collect and distribute historical facts and literature and momentos which would serve the general purpose of this corporation...and in particular to purchase, preserve and maintain the property located in Franklin County, Virginia, known as "The Burroughs Farm"...and to hold, manage, or dispose of such property...to the end that the said property may be forever set apart as a National Shrine, dedicated to the aims, ideals, and purposes for which Booker T. Washington lived and labored, that the Industrial Education and Interracial Good Will which Booker T. Washington envisioned and proclaimed with matchless eloquence may be preserved in the hearts of men everywhere and that this memorial may be an inspiration to encourage and refresh those who strive for its ultimate attainment.[25]

Sidney J. Phillips was president of the new organization. Less than two months later, Phillips succeeded in obtaining a Virginia appropriation of $15,000 for the Birthplace Memorial. The money was to be used

> ...for the erection of permanent buildings...and for promotion of the general purposes of the Memorial, the buildings so erected to be used for educational, health, agricultural, and home-making pro-

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[25]Charter Book B, p. 25, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

grams designed to develop Negro youths and adults in work efficiency, pride of race, good citizenship and interracial good will, to emphasize the need of cleanliness, thrift, honesty, loyalty, health standards, good living conditions and community cooperation, and, in general, to foster and promote the ideals and teachings of the late Booker T. Washington.[26]

On May 4, 1946, Phillips conveyed his property to the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial for the nominal one dollar, with provision that the Memorial would assume the indebtedness on the land.[27]

C. Physical Developments

1. Memorial driveway. The first use of the state appropriation was for construction of a two-lane driveway with circular turnaround at the end, leading from State Route 122 to the front of the Burroughs house. This was built by the Virginia Department of Highways in 1946 at a cost of $5,172.25. Two stone pillars framed the highway entrance.[28]

2. "Birthplace" Cabin Replica. The sole attempt by the Birthplace Memorial to recreate the historic scene existing during Washington's

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[26]General Appropriation for the Biennium 1946-1948, approved March 29, 1946, Acts and Joint Resolutions of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia, 1946 Session (Richmond, 1946), p. 893.

[27]Deed Book 106, p. 178, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

[28]Hearing on H.R. 6904, p. 30.

days on the property was the construction of a log cabin on the supposed site of Washington's birth. The authority for this determination of the birth cabin site was Henry Swain, the same individual who had identified the site in 1937 upon the visit of Congressman Mitchell. Once again, Swain pointed to the spot at the southwest corner of the old Burroughs house.

Using the photograph of the original cabin on this site which appeared in Washington's The Story of My Life and Work,[29] Richard B. Collins of Tuskegee Institute drew up plans for the replica in August of 1947. These plans were submitted by Virginia's Division of the Budget to the State Art Commission on January 2, 1948, and were approved with the request that all purlins be increased in size to between seven and nine inches and that the lower side of all wall logs be left round.

The finished product, completed in 1949 at an announced cost of $1500,[30] was at considerable variance both with the photograph on which it was based and with Washington's description of his birth cabin in Up From Slavery. It was built of round, bark-covered logs and mud-covered cement, with a neat plank door hanging evenly on its hinges, a tight interior, and glass windows. The cabin did have an earthen floor

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[29]See Plate II. In this book, the photograph did in fact appear over the caption "The House in Virginia Where Booker T. Washington Was Born." For further discussion, see Appendix B.

[30]The Southern Letter, Spring Quarter, 1949, p. 3.

with a potato hole, but no attempt was made to furnish the interior with historical accuracy: the walls were lined with framed quotations of Booker T. Washington, a picture of Washington, and a Virginia state flag.

The dedication ceremony for the replica took place on May 23, 1949, with Governor William M. Tuck the guest of honor. The Southern Letter, the newsletter published by the Birthplace Memorial, offered a glowing account of the festivities:

> The day was beautiful--the vast crowds interested and enthusiastic. High school bands from the cities of Roanoke and Salem added tone and color. School children of Franklin County raised their voices loud and clear in "O Booker T.," a song of praise and reverence;[31] the whirr of tractors, mowers, automobiles, bricklayers and radio mechanics at work, sewing and washing machines, typewriters and carpenters' saws and hammers mingled in a short industrial demonstration; and thousands of humble citizens rubbed shoulders with the great, as Governor Tuck proclaimed the birthplace of Booker T. Washington a National Shrine[32] to be added to the rich historical heritage of the Commonwealth of Virginia.[33]

As time went on, the fact that the "birthplace" cabin was a reconstruction was often overlooked in references to it by Phillips and other

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[31]This was sung at all public occasions at the Birthplace Memorial, and virtually elevated Washington to a godlike figure worthy of religious devotion. Sung to the tune of "Maryland, My Maryland," the first stanza is typical of the whole: "We tread the sacred soil with prayer / On which he walked ere freedom came / O sing with voices loud and clear / Of how he's reached the Hall of Fame / Booker T. your name we sing / Booker T. your praises ring / Let earth and heaven repeat the strain / Praise to him, all praise to him."

[32]The Birthplace Memorial gave this designation much publicity. The ability of a state governor to proclaim a "National Shrine" seems not to have been questioned.

[33]Spring Quarter, 1949, p. 1.

officials of the Memorial.

Beside the cabin was erected a wishing well with the Washington quotation, "Cast down your bucket where you are." Phillips claimed that this brought in an average of a thousand dollars a year.[34]

3. The Burroughs house. Rather than attempting to restore the clapboard-covered Burroughs house to its original condition, the Birthplace Memorial further altered the building, adding a wing on the east and a full-width front porch, and renovating the interior to serve as the organization's administrative headquarters and post office. The house was commonly bedecked with flags and bunting. Unfortunately, it was totally destroyed by fire on December 23, 1950, along with all its contents. The Memorial variously estimated the loss at between $133,800 and $150,000, including $10,000 for the building, $2,000 for damage to the nearby cabin replica (notwithstanding its total original cost of only $1,500 the year before), and $100,000 for the loss of a million names and addresses of coin purchasers, contributors, and contestants valued at ten cents each.[35]

4. Hopkins Hall. A forty- by sixty-foot two-story brick building east of the Burroughs house was completed in 1949. It was named in

[34]Chester L. Brooks, Superintendent's Report for December 1957, January 2, 1958 (A28).

[35]See p. 50.

honor of Walter L. Hopkins, a member of the Virginia General Assembly and one of the first whites to accept membership on the Birthplace Memorial's board of trustees. Hopkins had been instrumental in securing the $15,000 state appropriation for the Memorial in 1946. After the destruction of the Burroughs house, the administrative offices and the post office were transferred to Hopkins Hall. This building also housed "opportunity students" during late 1950 and 1951.[36]

5. Tuck Industrial Hall. The frame barn which the Robertsons had built north of the Burroughs house was renovated in 1949 at a cost of $8000, using funds from the state appropriation. It was named for Governor William M. Tuck, who, according to Phillips, "gave splendid cooperation to the Memorial's program."[37] Despite its relatively recent origin and the fact that the Burroughs barns had been log structures, Phillips stated that the renovated barn had been "preserved in its original exterior form for historical reasons."[38] At the Booker T. Washington Memorial Trade School commencement exercises held in Tuck Hall in 1951, the Rev. Stanford J. Harris began his sermon: "It is an honor to stand here within these hallowed walls, which have taken on a degree of sanctity from the vibration of the echoes of precious memories of our

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[36]See p. 33.

[37]"The History and Achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial...," 1951, p. 2.

[38]Ibid.

great national and internationally known educator, Booker T. Washington."

Tuck Hall at various times housed teachers and workers, and provided dining room space for residents at the area.

6. Virginia Cottage. The two-room house built by Peter Robertson for his mother in 1932 was enlarged to twelve rooms and was provided with central heating. The expanded residence, christened "Virginia Cottage," served as quarters for Phillips and, on occasion, several workers. (Prior to the renovation of this building and the Burroughs house, Phillips and the Birthplace Memorial had used the home of Mrs. M. H. Watson in Rocky Mount as a base of operations.)

7. Burch Memorial Building. In 1951 construction began on a two-story, thirty- by sixty-foot brick structure intended to take over the functions of the demolished Burroughs house. On April 1 of that year, local Congressman Thomas B. Stanley unveiled the nameplate for the new building, named for his predecessor, Thomas G. Burch. As will be seen, Burch had introduced the bill in Congress which enabled coinage of the Booker T. Washington commemorative half dollar.

Only the foundation of Burch Memorial Building was ever completed.

8. Poultry houses. In connection with the operation of the demonstration farm at the Birthplace Memorial, four poultry houses were

constructed on the property. These were located along the east side of the two-lane entrance drive, just above the circular turnaround.

9. "The Life of Booker T. Washington in Electrical Illumination."[39] The most eye-catching of the improvements made by the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial to the former Burroughs plantation was its unusual technique for interpreting the story of Washington. An electrical wire fence with ninety-three posts was built around a five acre plot, surrounding the main physical plant. Each fence post represented a year from 1857 to 1949, and a white, blue, red, or amber bulb was placed atop each post.

> The scheme is so arranged that the white bulbs begin on the first post, which is marked 1857, and end on the post marked 1914. The cabin wherein Booker was born represents the beginning and is marked within with a red light while the amber on the post marked 1915 represents the year of his death. Between these are red lights here and there, representing the years in which outstanding events happened during his lifetime. The amber lights, beginning in 1915, appear on each post except those representing years that indicate the bestowment of national honors upon his name and memory. In such years the blue lights appear.... The idea gives a historical background to the Birthplace for the study of visitors and to the passerby it is more than an attraction--it is a beautiful and solemn reminder of the life and leadership of a great man.

D. Birthplace Memorial Activities

Publicity emanating from the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial in 1951 described the birthplace as a "'center of unselfish service'

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[39]From The Southern Letter, September 1949, p. 1.

where conscientious Negro men and women work night and day to help in the development of activities and plans designed to help the Negro to stand on his own feet. From this center has been developed a 'Field Service' which is carrying help and guidance to thousands of Negroes who stand gravely in need of this help."[40]

This section will survey the numerous activities and efforts of the Birthplace Memorial in carrying out its objectives.

1. Expansion of the property. Although including almost all of the plantation on which Booker T. Washington was born, the land which Phillips had purchased from the Robertsons was not considered sufficient for the Memorial's anticipated activities and developments. On October 21, 1949, Albert Saunders deeded to the Memorial some 246.5 acres adjoining the former Burroughs property on the north and east. The price was $30,000, of which $3,000 was paid in cash.[41] On the same day, the Memorial conveyed the Saunders tract to a trustee to secure notes for the balance of the purchase money.[42] This property included the house and a portion of the land which had been owned by Josiah Ferguson, one-time owner of Booker T. Washington's stepfather and the likely

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[40]Phillips, "The History and Achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 1.

[41]Deed Book 116, p. 34, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

[42]Trust Deed Book X, p. 383, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

grandfather of Washington.[43] Like the Burroughs house, the large brick Ferguson home on the acquired property did not survive its ownership by the Memorial; it burned during the early 1950s.

A month after the purchase of the Saunders tract, the Memorial acquired an additional 101 acre holding on the west. This was received from Posey L. Plybon by deed on November 25, 1949, for the sum of $15,000. Twenty-five hundred dollars was paid in cash, the balance being secured by another deed of trust.[44]

The resulting composite tract, totaling approximately 550 acres, marked the height of the Birthplace Memorial's real estate holdings.

2. Post office. An example of the political influence of Sidney J. Phillips was his success in securing the establishment of a United States Post Office at the Memorial on February 12, 1948. The post office, designated "Booker Washington Birthplace, Virginia," enabled the Birthplace Memorial to refer to its headquarters as a "community" in its publicity:

> To have a community named for the noted educator is a great tribute. The center of this community is a second-class United States Post

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[43]See Mackintosh, "The Burroughs Family," pp. 10-11. The Birthplace Memorial erroneously claimed that Washington's mother was born on the Ferguson plantation.

[44]Deed Book 116, p. 527, Trust Deed Book X, p. 570, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

> Office through which millions of pieces of mail pass annually. With each piece carrying the postmark, the public is reminded of a Memorial to a great American.[45]

The "millions of pieces of mail" were almost entirely the products of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial.

In 1950 Phillips was able to have his wife appointed postmistress through his association with Congressman Thomas B. Stanley. Until that year, as noted earlier, the post office was located in the east wing of the Burroughs house; following the fire it was moved to Hopkins Hall.

In August of 1952, a postal inspector at Lynchburg proposed that the Booker Washington Birthplace Post Office be relegated to the status of a postal station operating in connection with the post office at Rocky Mount. The inspector added that he had never known the government to establish a post office merely for the convenience of a private organization. Phillips protested this proposal in a letter to then-Congressman William M. Tuck in 1953. He claimed that the post office had been established to honor Booker T. Washington, and asked that it be retained in the same status it presently enjoyed. The post office was slated to be reduced to third class level on July 1, 1953, due to its declining receipts, but Phillips told Tuck that an anticipated increase in business should return the office to the second class level in 1954.[46]

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[45]Phillips, "History and Achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 2.

[46]From undated draft of letter in Birthplace Memorial files.

Although this did not happen, Phillips' influence again won out: the Booker Washington Birthplace Post Office retained its separate identity.

A. D. Stover, the Post Office District Manager in Roanoke, was also unsuccessful in recommending elimination of the Birthplace Memorial's post office. However, he apparently applied pressure to the extent that Phillips was induced to make the Memorial's facilities available to the Booker Washington Birthplace Post Office rent-free as of May 1, 1955.[47] Prior to this concession, the Birthplace Memorial had received $1,000 per year from the Post Office Department in rent.

The climax of the postal operation at the birthplace of Booker T. Washington came on April 5, 1956, when the Washington centennial stamp was issued. A total of 110,000,000 of these three-cent stamps were printed, featuring an illustration of Washington's "birthplace" cabin as reconstructed by the Birthplace Memorial.

3. Mop factory. During 1948, a small mop factory at Washington's birthplace turned out over six thousand "Booker T." mops which, according to The Southern Letter, "served as a symbol of Booker T. Washington's ideals of cleanliness and of glorifying and dignifying labor and putting brains and skill into the common occupations of life."[48]

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[47]Letter, Phillips to Stover, April 4, 1955.

[48]Winter Quarter, 1949, p. 1.

The mops were designed to be sold as a source of revenue for the Birthplace Memorial--75¢ wholesale, $1.00 retail.

4. Memorial Trade School. The Booker T. Washington Memorial Trade School was established in Roanoke, Virginia, in September 1948, with A. V. Mundy as Director. The objective of this school was "to offer trade and industrial training opportunities to adult Negroes who did not have such opportunities in their earlier years."[49] Courses were offered in auto mechanics, bricklaying, carpentry, beauty culture, radio repair, shorthand, typing, office practice, and bookkeeping; they ranged in length from nine to twenty-four months. Plans also called for courses for domestic and hotel workers and classes in shoe repair and sewing, but these had to be suspended due to a lack of registrants.

The Memorial Trade School students were almost entirely Negro veterans of World War II on the G.I. Bill. Memorial publicity claimed that the school was the only private school ever to be approved by the State Approval Agency for the training of veterans.[50] The school operated in Roanoke for five years, until all enrolled veterans had completed their courses and the G.I. Bill had expired. According to Phillips, "More than 500 skilled workers were turned out and nearly 1500 others received

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[49]Phillips, "History and Achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 3.

[50]Ibid.

some training. More than $3,000,000 were brought into the Roanoke trade area through this undertaking."[51]

5. The Goodwill Hour. In 1948 the Birthplace Memorial formed a "Radio Commission" to promote its message over the air. Its product was "The Booker T. Washington Goodwill Hour," broadcast each Sunday morning over stations WROV in Roanoke and WSFA in Montgomery, Alabama. Phillips described this program:

> Each broadcast usually includes heart-warming Negro spirituals sung by talented, and in some instances, famous, Negro groups from various areas. Well-prepared scripts attempt to sell the idea that goodwill is necessary to the invincibility of our Nation and that the Golden Rule, to be effective, must be practiced towards all mankind--regardless of race or creed.... The Booker T. Washington Goodwill Hour, because of its Christian spirit and sound principles of Americanism, has a large listening audience and has helped to earn the respect of the American people for the efforts of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial and those responsible for its progress and guidance.[52]

Portia Washington Pittman sometimes served as accompanist on these broadcasts, which ran for eight years.

6. Community Service Clubs. "The Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial knows that no better tool can be found to help the Negro to help himself than the sane, fundamental teachings of Booker T.

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[51] "Facts and Accomplishments of Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," The Tribune (Roanoke, Va.), January 29, 1955, p. 6.

[52] "History and Achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 4.

Washington applied to daily living," proclaimed Phillips.[53] A further attempt to promote these teachings was the program of the Booker T. Washington Community Service Clubs, designed as self-help groups whose members would work to improve conditions in their own communities. A theme was laid down for each month of the year: e.g., January--"Glorifying and Dignifying Labor"; May--"Public Conduct and Behavior"; July--"High Ideals of Americanism--Everyday Christianity"; November--"Labor and Humility."

The first Booker T. Washington Community Service Club was established at Washington's birthplace in 1948. Although the clubs were intended to be nationwide, they were actually organized only in "several areas of Virginia and Alabama."[54]

7. The demonstration farms. "Macon County, Alabama, and Franklin County, Virginia, were selected as typical Southern rural communities that needed help and guidance in soil building and conservation, plant and seed selection, crop rotation, marketing, and general farm management," Phillips declared.[55] By no great coincidence, these two counties

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[53]"History and Achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 4.

[54]Phillips, "Facts and Accomplishments of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 7.

[55]"History and Achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 6.

happened to be the areas in which Phillips had already been active--Macon being the county containing Tuskegee.

In Franklin County, the demonstration farm was located on the land purchased from Saunders in 1949. Principal crops grown were wheat, corn, tobacco, cotton, and vegetables for canning. Local Negro farmers helped to operate the farm. In September of 1950 an "opportunity school" program was initiated, under which young men worked three days a week on the farm to pay for the cost of their board, then studied in the Trade School for the other three days. This program lasted a year, at the end of which time most of the students were drafted.[56] National Park Service Historian Frank Barnes reported that "a mere handful" of workers were pursuing agricultural tasks on the land in 1953.[57]

At the Macon County Farm Project, otherwise known as the Macon County Agricultural Workshop, some 132 acres were at one time planted in sweet potatoes, corn, cotton, and peas.

8. George Washington Carver National Monument Foundation. On July 14, 1943, shortly after the death of George Washington Carver, the Federal government authorized establishment of a national monument at

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[56]Phillips, "Facts and Accomplishments of Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 6.

[57]Historic Site Survey, Booker Washington Birthplace, October 19, 1953, Part II, p. 4 (L58).

the Negro scientist's Missouri birthplace. With the war in process, however, adequate funds were not appropriated to purchase the required land. In 1949 "an interested member of Congress"[58] informed the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial that Carver's birthplace had $85,000 in outstanding obligations against it.

With customary vigor, Sidney J. Phillips set about to satisfy these obligations and fulfill the establishment of George Washington Carver National Monument. In January of 1950 he secured the incorporation of the George Washington Carver National Monument Foundation and became its president. Its other personnel were also almost entirely from the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial. While the main purpose of the Foundation was to promote establishment of the national monument at Carver's birthplace, an additional program was outlined in hopes of gaining broader support:

> 1. To help underprivileged Negro youth through opportunity scholarships.
> 2. To conduct demonstrations and research in the field of agriculture and to make surveys on rural life.
> 3. To establish George Washington Carver Community Service Clubs.
> 4. To promote a program of racial understanding and greater goodwill, based on the philosophy of Dr. Carver and Booker T. Washington, and to assist other non-profit Negro educational institutions.[59]

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[58]Phillips, "History and Achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 8. The congressman was probably O. K. Armstrong of Missouri, a close associate of Phillips.

[59]Ibid.

Although its accomplishment of these subsidiary objectives was minimal, the George Washington Carver National Monument Foundation was successful in getting Congress to appropriate an additional $120,000 to acquire the Carver land and establish the national monument. The government received title to the Carver birthplace on June 12, 1952, but a resident superintendent did not arrive until that September. During the interim, and for some months preceding, the area was given "voluntary protection and care" by the Foundation.[60] A farm project was established on the property during this period.

In September of 1952, National Park Service Director Conrad L. Wirth appointed Phillips as Collaborator with the Service in connection with the George Washington Carver National Monument. The Birthplace Memorial's news release announcing this expressed the hope that Negroes would eventually fill all positions at the new national monument.

9. "The Burning Bush." In 1950 DuPont's "Cavalcade of America" radio program broadcast a dramatization of Booker T. Washington's life entitled "The Burning Bush." The Birthplace Memorial acquired transcriptions of this program, and a sound truck carried it to Negro school children in various areas of the South. These tours were made for three years.

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[60]Paul L. Beaubien and Merrill J. Mattes, "George Washington Carver National Monument: The Archeological Search for George Washington Carver's Birthplace," Negro History Bulletin, November 1954, p. 34.

10. Better Worker Institutes.

By way of encouraging right work attitudes and pride in work well done, the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial, during the course of the year, holds several "Better Worker Institutes." These are short inspirational courses that consist of demonstrations; informative discussions and helpful addresses that point out the value of efficiency, punctuality, regularity and dependability; round table discussions and forums. Certificates of merit are awarded to workers and leaders who stand out because of the contributions they have made to job efficiency or to community welfare.[61]

11. Booker T. Washington Memorial Night. Sidney J. Phillips, through his connections with the National Baptist Convention as Director of Public Relations and as sales representative there for Nehi, seized the opportunity to promote the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial at the religious organization's annual conventions. One night each year was set aside as a tribute to Booker T. Washington. As Phillips described it,

> ...the Convention has dedicated a part of this time to a review of the program and achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial. The President of the Memorial gives a short talk on the work of the Memorial after which there is a grand exhibition and demonstration of all phases of the Memorial's program. Widespread newspaper publicity is given to the "Booker T. Washington Memorial Night" at the Baptist Convention and the 20,000 Baptist Churches represented in the Convention give their heartiest support and cooperation to the program of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial.[62]

12. Booker T. Washington Elementary School. In the early

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[61] Phillips, "History and Achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 8.

[62] Ibid., p. 9.

1950s, the Franklin County School Board realized the need for a new Negro elementary school in the county. On May 9, 1952, the trustees of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial voted to donate six acres of the Memorial's land to the county for such a school. This land (actually 5.99 acres) was taken from the northwestern portion of the original Burroughs plantation, and was conveyed by deed on October 29, 1952, along with a right of way through the Memorial's property for an access road from State Route 122.[63] Phillips tried to use his influence with then-Governor Thomas B. Stanley to have this road hard-surfaced, but this attempt failed.

Not surprisingly, the school was named after Booker T. Washington. It opened for classes on September 7, 1954, following the appointment of James A. Holmes as principal. Holmes and his family moved into then-vacant Tuck Hall, which they occupied until the National Park Service took over the area in 1957.[64]

13. The Memorial Highway. In June of 1953, Phillips succeeded in obtaining from the Boards of Supervisors of Bedford and Franklin Counties and the town councils of Bedford and Rocky Mount resolutions supporting the designation of fifty-five-mile-long State Route 122 as

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[63]Deed Book 123, p. 150, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va. See map, p. 112.

[64]Holmes continued as principal until the school was closed by integration in 1966, and served as seasonal ranger at Booker T. Washington National Monument from 1958 to 1968.

"Booker T. Washington Memorial Highway." Phillips forwarded these resolutions to the Virginia Department of Highways, along with his request for action as president of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial. On June 23 the Department of Highways approved the request, and Commissioner J. A. Anderson wrote Phillips, "Appropriate signs will be erected along this route as soon as practical."

The signs were installed on July 2, three days before the Memorial-sponsored dedication ceremony. That night many of them were pried off and scattered along the highway. Highway workers replaced them on July 4, but local white supremacists again went into action that night and covered the signs with black paint. The dedication was held the following day, with ribbon-cuttings at Rocky Mount, Bedford, and Big Island and speeches by Portia Washington Pittman, ex-Congressman Thomas B. Stanley, and G. Lake Imes, vice-president of the Birthplace Memorial. The signs were subsequently cleaned up, but despite the Bedford Bulletin's editorial condemnation of those who defaced them,[65] few succeeded in remaining intact for long.

The only open opposition to the naming of the highway was voiced by a delegation from Moneta at a Board of Supervisors meeting in Bedford on July 27. Three petitions totalling 126 names were presented, and Horace A. Watson, spokesman for the group, based their objections on the

[65] July 16, 1953, p. 2.

fact that they had not been consulted and on their belief that property values along the road were endangered. The supervisors refused to alter their position, noting the many letters received from public officials around the country in support of the highway designation.[66]

Today, most of the original signposts remain, but only a small minority of them still display the Booker T. Washington Memorial Highway signs.

14. Publications. Sidney J. Phillips was a strong believer in the power of the written word to put across his message and that of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial. In addition to frequent news releases concerning its activities, the Birthplace Memorial at various times published a variety of periodicals designed to promote public support for its programs--and, not infrequently, for Sidney J. Phillips.

The Southern Letter was the general organ of the Birthplace Memorial, its stated purpose being to acquaint the public with the Memorial's activities and objectives. This four-page sheet presented a rather optimistic picture of the organization, and included frequent laudatory references to its founder and president: "...an indefatigable worker, with a keen and sympathetic interest in the welfare of the disadvantaged

[66] Bedford Bulletin, July 30, 1953, p. 1.

of his race... he has dreamed day and night as he has poured out his best endeavors to make this great venture a success.... His inspired leadership...."[67] When Marshall Wingfield, president of the West Tennessee Historical Society, delivered the principal address at the "birthplace" cabin dedication, the portion of his speech praising Phillips was published in full under the heading "The Second Washington."[68]

The Southern Letter was issued for only two years, 1948 and 1949.

The Booker T. Washington Memorial Trade School News was the publication of the trade school in Roanoke, and described the activities of that operation. Another four-page sheet, this was also issued over a two year period.

The Better Worker was a small eight-page booklet published monthly by the "Better Workers Institute" at the birthplace of Booker T. Washington. It was largely a collection of platitudes urging hard work, thrift, patriotism, and self-reliance; the March 1953 copy printed such directives at the bottom of each page as "BE RELIABLE" and "BE CHEERFUL!!!" Phillips often contributed a column, the one for February 1955 being entitled "Labor and Humility." One objective of The Better Worker was "to impress workers with the need of doing a full day's work every day."

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[67]August 1948, pp. 3-4.

[68]Spring Quarter, 1949, p. 1.

From time to time a number of "extension leaflets" were published. The stated purpose of these was "to wage a fight against the spread of Communism and to deal with projects involving local, state, and national responsibilities."[69] An example was Extension Leaflet #12 of 1951 entitled "The Negro's Case Against Communism."[70]

15. Unrealized objectives. A number of the Birthplace Memorial's plans never got beyond the planning stage. Included in these was the most ambitious goal of all and the one which Phillips seems to have had in mind when he founded the Memorial: a full scale industrial and agricultural school along the lines of Tuskegee Institute at the birthplace of Booker T. Washington.

As will be remembered, this idea dated from the time of Congressman Mitchell's visit to the birthplace in 1937, and was repeated by the Norfolk Journal and Guide in September of 1945. However, a year later this Negro weekly urged abandonment of the plan for industrial training in Franklin County:

> It might be that a real service can be rendered more adequately by a different memorial project than the attempt to found and operate a school of any merit. One such alternative might well be the creation of a scholarship fund to help deserving students to attend

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[69] Phillips, "History and Achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 9.

[70] The case was weakened by such scare allegations as "Because automobile owners are capitalists, 1,500,000 U. S. Negroes would have their cars and trucks taken from them under Communism without compensation."

Hampton, where Dr. Washington was educated, or Tuskegee, which he founded and developed--or any college for that matter.

Dr. Jackson Davis, vice president and director of the General Education Board, concurred with this idea in a letter to the Journal and Guide:

> There are very few Negroes in the area in which Franklin County is situated, and for this reason it would not seem the best place to locate a school. Moreover, the two schools that will always be associated with the name of Booker Washington are Hampton Institute, where he was educated, and Tuskegee Institute, which he founded. The program of Tuskegee represents Dr. Washington's philosophy of education and his methods. Also, the independent schools not connected with the State or some religious denomination are having a very difficult time securing funds for operation.... I can think of no form of memorial which would be more suitable and appropriate to the spirit of Booker Washington than the one you have suggested.

The Richmond Times-Dispatch published this exchange in an editorial of its own, also backing the concept of a scholarship fund rather than a new school at the birthplace of Booker T. Washington.[71]

Such a suggestion held little appeal for Sidney J. Phillips, who, in his self-image as "the second Washington," wanted to establish a second Tuskegee. The August 1948 issue of The Southern Letter featured on the front page an architect's drawing of the industrial training center to be constructed at the birthplace--a large, sprawling building with a tall smokestack. This facility was designed to accommodate five hundred students, with dormitories, an auditorium-gymnasium, shops, and library. Included in the prospectus for the center was an historical pageant on the life of Booker T. Washington "similar to Williamsburg's 'The Common Glory.'"

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[71] September 18, 1946.

Originally it was thought that receipts from the sale of the Booker T. Washington commemorative half dollars would be sufficient to finance this ambitious undertaking. As will be seen, however, it soon became clear that this source of funds was grossly inadequate. As a result, a group representing the Birthplace Memorial appeared before the governor's Budget Advisory Committee on October 10, 1951 to present an appeal for a two million dollar state appropriation for the project. It was hoped that the $2,000,000 would be granted by the 1952 session of the Virginia General Assembly, and that an additional $1,367,386.20 would be raised by solicitation or appropriated later by the state. The site for the industrial training center was to be deeded to the Commonwealth of Virginia by the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial--probably land from the former Plybon tract.

An alternate plan submitted at the same time by the Birthplace Memorial called for state support of the Booker T. Washington Memorial Trade School in Roanoke. This had been a heavy drain on the Memorial's finances, costing over $60,000 during the first year alone. The sum of $218,637 was requested for this, to be administered through the Virginia Board of Education. This included $75,000 for an auditorium named "Virginia Hall" to be constructed at the birthplace for the use of Negro meetings and to serve as a "Service Center" for visitors to the birthplace. The site for Virginia Hall was also to be deeded to the state.[72]

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[72]"An Appeal to the Joint Session of the Senate Finance Committee

Despite continued appeals over a three year period, neither of these plans achieved the support of the Virginia government. As his hopes for being the founder of a new school faded, Phillips turned to a third alternate plan: attainment of the presidency of Tuskegee Institute. To promote himself for this position, Phillips now adopted the earlier idea of a scholarship fund--to be financed by "a relatively small annual grant of $2,000,000" on the part of Congress. He sent a letter containing this proposal to leading members of Congress, informing them of his personal goal and asking for their comments on his scholarship plan--comments he undoubtedly hoped to present as backing for his candidacy. Congressional response is not known, but Phillips' proposal did not go through. And on November 1, 1953, Dr. L. H. Foster was selected as the new president of Tuskegee Institute--though by only one vote over Phillips.[73]

Comparable in scope to the industrial training center was the Memorial's proposal for a five million dollar Negro veterans' hospital at Booker T. Washington's birthplace. The Southern Letter pushed this idea, stating that the birthplace "...is sufficiently removed to offer

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and the Appropriations Committee of the House of Delegates for Funds to Establish an Industrial Training Center and Auditorium at the Birthplace of Booker T. Washington, Together with an Alternate Plan for Limited Help for Virginia's Handicapped Negroes, and for Adult Negroes of Low Educational Status to be Established at Roanoke, Virginia" (mimeographed).

[73]See page 135.

opportunity for building a calm, peaceful sanctuary where disabled veterans can mend their broken bodies and minds. It is one of the most inspiring spots in all America."[74]

Phillips and Portia Washington Pittman testified in favor of the plan before the Veterans' Affairs Committee of the House of Representatives in 1949, and bills providing for the hospital passed the House in both the Eightieth and Eighty-First Congresses. Its strongest backer was Representative John E. Rankin of Mississippi, Chairman of the House Veterans' Affairs Committee--and also one of the staunchest segregationists in Congress. Rankin's committee again favorably reported the hospital bill in the Eighty-Second Congress (1951), but this time it ran into difficulty on the floor of the House. On June 6, 1951 Negro Representatives Dawson of Illinois and Powell of New York spoke out against the bill; Powell called the proposed hospital a "Jim Crow facility," attacked Phillips and the Birthplace Memorial as having no standing among the nation's Negroes, claimed that Phillips would personally profit from the sale of land to the government for the hospital, and alleged that ninety percent of the profit from the sale of the Washington commemorative coins was going for salaries.[75] Rankin replied that the only opposition to his bill was coming from "...a Communist front organization

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[74]September 1949, p. 1.

[75]Congressional Record, 82nd Congress, 1st Session, June 6, 1951, p. 6193. Phillips refuted the charges against himself and his organization in a letter of July 7, 1951, to all members of the House, but could not deny that the hospital would perpetuate segregation.

[the N.A.A.C.P.] that cannot use these Booker T. Washington Negroes and are therefore against the Negro veterans' hospital."[76] However, enough moderate and liberal congressmen joined forces against the bill to defeat it. The hospital bill was never voted on in the Senate.

On a somewhat smaller scale than either the industrial training center or the veterans' hospital were three other development goals for the Birthplace Memorial's property. These included a $200,000 garment factory which would employ five hundred to one thousand Negroes, a building to house a general collection of Negro art and literature with a special collection on the life and achievements of Booker T. Washington, and a $50,000 canning plant.[77] Although publicized as fund raising objectives, none of these ideas ever got beyond formulation.

E. The Commemorative Half Dollars

The $15,000 appropriated by the Virginia General Assembly in March of 1946 for the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial was a good beginning, but it was not nearly enough for the extensive plans which Sidney J. Phillips had for his new organization. What was needed was a far larger source of income, preferably one which would be national in scope. Fred R. Splawn, president of the Royal Crown Bottling Company in Mont-

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[76] Congressional Record, June 6, 1951, p. 6199.

[77] The Southern Letter, Winter Quarter 1949, p. 4, Spring Quarter, 1949, p. 2.

gomery, Alabama, suggested to Phillips the idea of a Booker T. Washington commemorative coin as a fund raising medium.[78] The coin would be sold at a premium over its face value, and the difference would go to the Birthplace Memorial.

Despite the fact that previous commemorative issues had rarely been successful in raising money for their sponsoring organizations, Phillips thought this suggestion to be an excellent one. He discussed the idea with Congressman Thomas G. Burch of the district containing Washington's birthplace, and with Senator Carter Glass of Virginia. So persuasive was Phillips that on May 23, 1946, both men introduced bills in Congress for creation of the Booker T. Washington commemorative half dollar. The bills proposed that five million such coins would be authorized for minting over a five year period, to be issued only upon request of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial. All proceeds from the premium on the coin would be used to "...purchase, construct, and maintain suitable memorials to the memory of Booker T. Washington, deceased, as may be decided upon by the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial of Virginia."[79]

Hearings on the House bill were held by the Committee on Coinage, Weights and Measures on June 28, 1946. Appearing before the committee,

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[78]Washington, Up From Slavery, Centennial Edition (Booker Washington Birthplace, Va., 1956), p. 246.

[79]H.R. 6528, S. 2242, 79th Congress.

Phillips described the numerous developments and benefits that would be realized by the sale of the coin. One such development not previously mentioned in this history was a layout of state memorial plots at Washington's birthplace:

> A portion of the property will be designated as a national section. Plots in this area will be laid off for each State. State governments and individuals may place in this plot any appropriate tribute to Booker T. Washington that they desire.

Phillips also spoke of a "Living-Breathing Memorial"--this to consist of trees and shrubs to be planted at the birthplace, then sent over the country as "Booker T. Washington memorial plants."[80] Of course, the majority of his presentation was devoted to the Birthplace Memorial's larger objectives, and was strengthened by his submission of supporting letters from forty-two state governors. Despite an adverse report from the Treasury Department opposed to further commemoratives,[81] the House committee reported favorably on the bill on July 12, and the corresponding Senate committee concurred on July 23.

The bill authorizing the minting of five million Booker T. Washington commemorative half dollars was passed by Congress, and President Truman signed it on August 7, 1946. Considering that the Booker T.

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[80]Hearings before the Committee on Coinage, Weights and Measures, House of Representatives, 79th Congress, 2nd Session, on ... H.R. 6528, June 28, 1946 (Washington, 1946), p. 12.

[81]"A multiplicity of designs on United States coins tends to create confusion, to increase the possibility of counterfeiting, and to encourage traffic in commemorative coins for private profit...." (Letter, Acting Treasury Secretary E. H. Foley, Jr. to Rep. Compton I. White, Chairman, Committee on Coinage, Weights and Measures, June 21, 1946, cited in H. Report 2506, 79th Congress.)

Washington Birthplace Memorial had been incorporated only a few months earlier, the speed of this accomplishment was remarkable.

The first of the coins, designed by Negro sculptor Isaac Scott Hathaway of Lexington, Kentucky, were released that December. The design featured the head of Washington, and on the reverse the motto "From Slave Cabin to Hall of Fame" with views of both buildings, all encircled by "Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial." The price of the coin was pegged at one dollar, which meant that fifty cents from each sale would go to the Birthplace Memorial. If all five million coins were sold at this price, the Memorial would realize the considerable sum of $2,500,000. The Peoples National Bank of Rocky Mount was asked to help distribute the coins, and banks around the country were sent application forms for ordering the coins from the mints. An Executive Committee on the Sale of Booker T. Washington Memorial Half Dollars was formed, for which Phillips was able to secure such "Who's Who" names as New York Governor Thomas E. Dewey (Honorary Chairman), United Mine Workers President John L. Lewis, C.B.S. President Frank Stanton, and Dr. Robert G. Sproul, president of the University of California.

By the end of 1948, some $500,000 had been taken in by the Birthplace Memorial from the sale of the coins.[82] But after this initial success, receipts began to dwindle. More promotion was needed if the

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[82]Barnes, Historic Site Survey, Part II, p. 3.

five million coins were all to be sold by the August 7, 1951 deadline. In 1950, with time growing short, the Memorial advertised a "$1,000,000 Premium Sharing Plan": individuals and organizations could purchase the coins from the Memorial for seventy-five cents and sell them for a dollar. A form letter Phillips wrote to individuals inquiring about the program promised big earnings:

> ...The coin is easy to sell. Every individual you meet is a prospect. We could have had them all sold if we had had enough salesmen in the field.... You will be surprised at the amount of money you can make once you get into the selling game.

If the prospective seller did not rise sufficiently to the bait, Phillips sent him a form followup:

> Dear Salesman:
>
> Yes, we are calling you a salesman even though we have not heard from you recently.... Somehow, we feel that you can be one of our best salesmen, if you would just give yourself the chance.... We have found that the white people buy these coins more readily than do our own people. Realizing this, we feel that diligent sales promotion efforts among this group will amaze you at the quick results you will receive, and of the income which shall soon be yours from this venture.

Another coin promotion scheme in 1950 was the "Golden Harvest $4,000.00 Grand Prize Contest." The details of this contest are not known, but payments to the winners were considerably delayed and had to be made on "time."

It was during these last-ditch coin sales promotion campaigns that the old Burroughs house burned, resulting in the loss of a million names and addresses of coin purchasers, contributors, and contestants valued by the Birthplace Memorial at ten cents each. In view of the tempo of

coin sales at the time, this assessment was probably on the high side.

At this time in the nation, a great deal of turmoil was being produced by certain allegations--notably on the part of Senator Joseph McCarthy of Wisconsin--that Communists were infiltrating the government and many other aspects of American society. While the extent of this infiltration was and is a matter of considerable debate, Phillips seized upon the issue as the major theme of his 1951 coin sales campaign. In a news release of January 12, 1951, he announced that the trustees of the Birthplace Memorial had voted to use fifty percent of the premium from the Booker T. Washington half dollars minted that year to "fight Communism":

> ...An intensive educational campaign will be carried on to inform the Negro public of the vicious principals [sic] of Communism and the resultant evil effect that these principals will have upon our American way of life if permitted to get too strong a foothold in our country. Radio broadcasts, feature stories in the press, the millions of pieces of mail that are sent out annually by the Memorial, all of its publications, the teaching staff of its Trade School, and a number of thoroughly prepared speakers will carry to the public facts of Communistic teachings and activities as disclosed in the various hearings before the Committee on Un-American Activities.... Particularly will Negroes be warned against glib-tongued, mildmannered agents of Communism who seek to sell their un-American idea to underprivileged groups.

The news release stated that the first coin minted in 1951 would be sent to President Truman with a statement to let him know that "the American Negro is against the infiltration of Communism." A minimum sales quota was set for each state; when a state met its quota, the governor was to be presented with a first-run half dollar in a ceremony.

Phillips wrote to all senators asking them to name individuals in their states who might help in the campaign, and sent them all half dollars. Great quantities of sales literature were distributed with endorsements by several senators: "It is a particular source of gratification to me to note that one half of the funds which will be raised are to be dedicated to the fight against Communism"--Homer Ferguson, Michigan; "If alive today [Booker T. Washington] would be in the front line of the fight against Communism"--Herman Welker, Idaho. An example of the anti-Communist effort itself was Extension Leaflet #12, "The Negro's Case Against Communism."[83]

Unfortunately, this timely new coin promotion theme did little to increase sales of the Booker T. Washington commemorative half dollar. The Birthplace Memorial faced the end of its authorized five year sales period with only 1,300,000 coins sold. Of the authorized five million coins, three million had not even been minted.

Sidney J. Phillips was not easily discouraged. Considering that perhaps Booker T. Washington's appeal was too narrow, he arrived at the idea of a new coin, to which the name and likeness of George Washington Carver would be added. Once again, certain members of Congress proved cooperative. On March 12, 1951, Representative Brent Spence of Kentucky introduced a bill to authorize coinage of the balance of the five

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[83]See p. 41.

million half dollars with the new design. The bill extended the time limit for another three years, and stated that "...all proceeds therefrom shall be used, in the manner decided upon by the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial and the George Washington Carver National Monument Foundation to oppose the spread of Communism among Negroes in the interest of the national defense."[84]

To aid in pushing this measure through Congress, Phillips submitted a twelve-page mimeographed leaflet entitled "The History and Achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial made possible through funds realized from the sale of the Booker T. Washington Memorial Half Dollar--issued 1946 under Public Law 610--together with a statement showing the greater achievements that will be made possible through House and Senate Amendments 3176 and 1047 respectively to extend the time of Public Law 610 and provide for a slight change of design which will make it possible for the likeness of George Washington Carver to be placed along with that of Booker T. Washington." In this document Phillips continued to cite the "fight against Communism" as the major objective of the Birthplace Memorial:

> The vast majority of Negroes always have been, and it is our honest opinion, always will be loyal Americans. Because, however, NEGROES HAVE BEEN AND ARE TARGETS OF CONSTANT RELENTLESS COMMUNIST PROPAGANDA...the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial included a FIGHT AGAINST THE SPREAD OF COMMUNISM in its 1951 program.... The Memorial, with funds made available through this [new] half dollar, plans a perpetual program of good sound Americanism.... The Stars

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[84]H. R. 3176, 82nd Congress.

and Stripes will take on a new meaning to thousands...a meaning which Communism or no other "ism" of this type can replace.[85]

Phillips noted that the Birthplace Memorial had been more successful than most organizations which had previously attempted to sell commemorative coins at a premium.

> Since our results were achieved without experience and know-how, we believe it is a reasonable estimate to say that this Second Chance--backed by experience and know-how--should bring to our program a complete sale of the Booker T. Washington-George Washington Carver half dollars. This success will make possible the expanded program and provide an endowment fund to assure the carrying on of this gravely needed program for years to come to help future generations.[86]

Phillips' efforts were again successful. The bill went through Congress without amendment, and became law upon Truman's signature.

On November 15, 1951, the five members of the newly-formed Carver-Washington Coin Commission met at Washington's birthplace to discuss promotion of the new coin. The commission consisted of two members each from the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial and the George Washington Carver National Monument Foundation, and Sidney J. Phillips as chairman. It was voted to request the Peoples National Bank of Rocky Mount to continue its help with the coins, and to continue the price of the

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[85]Phillips, "History and Achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," pp. 10-11.

[86]Ibid., p. 12.

coin at two dollars--indicating that this had been the price for some time previously. Phillips was authorized to contact the Federal Reserve Board to secure its cooperation in coin distribution, and to engage a public relations firm "...to assist in dramatizing the purpose for which the funds will be used in the program of 'FREEDOM AND OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL' and the fight against the spread of Communism among Negroes."[87] In line with the latter authorization, Phillips hired Don Short of the Public Relations Management Corporation; Short requested $2500 as a base retainer for "investigation and preliminary planning."[88]

The new coin was first minted in December of 1951. As with the name of the Carver-Washington Coin Commission, Carver took precedence on the coin, his head being superimposed on that of Washington. The reverse side featured a map of the United States encircled by the motto "Freedom and Opportunity for All--Americanism." The name of the commission was soon changed, at least in its public appearances, to the "Carver-Washington Americanism Commission," and an advertisement for the coins in early 1952 capitalized on current national fears:

> There has been an insidious attempt for years to convert American Negroes to Communism.... Here is an opportunity to provide the sinews for an active campaign among a group of Americans whose sensitivities are being played upon in a most vicious manner by those who would betray the nation into the chains of Russia.

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[87]Minutes of Carver-Washington Coin Commission meeting, November 15, 1951.

[88]Letter, Short to Phillips, January 16, 1952.

On March 28, 1952, Phillips sent out a form letter to Negro newspapers with a news release about Washington's upcoming birthday. This news item quickly shifted to an advertisement for the Carver-Washington coin, offering a "free" Booker T. Washington half dollar with the purchase of each Carver-Washington half dollar at two dollars. The newspapers were asked to carry this item without charge; those which did were to have their names inscribed on the "Negro Press Scroll of Honor" to be exhibited in the cabin replica at Washington's birthplace.

The Birthplace Memorial made use of every possible occasion to promote sales of the Carver-Washington half dollar. In a form letter of July 23, 1953, to "Dear Friend and Neighbor," Phillips discussed the upcoming Booker T. Washington Memorial Highway dedication ceremonies, and promised that all who purchased coins before the dedication program went to press would be listed on the program as "patrons" of the occasion.[89] Another 1952 birthday release announced a two-day celebration designed "...to expose the Negro masses to a program of solid Americanism that will counteract Communist propaganda and offer educational advancement in American ideals and principles"; it concluded by advertising the coins at a flat two dollars each.

Despite such efforts, coin sales continued at a feeble rate. Clearly, a new campaign approach was needed. Following the death from cancer

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[89]As published, the program was a mimeographed sheet with no patrons listed.

of Senator Robert A. Taft in 1953, Phillips hit upon such an approach. Concern about cancer was becoming widespread at this time, and thus the Birthplace Memorial instituted a program of sharing the $1.50 premium from the coin with the American Cancer Society. The first idea was to have the premium split three ways between the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial, the George Washington Carver National Monument Foundation, and the American Cancer Society; in later practice, half went to the Birthplace Memorial and half to the Cancer Society.

Sales still did not improve, and once again the Congressional deadline was approaching. Only one tack remained: a drastic price cut. On July 7, 1954, C. J. Davis of the Peoples National Bank made an appeal to other banks to order the three million coins still remaining in the mints before August 8, when no more would be issued. (Those left after that date would be melted down.) Wrote Davis:

> These half dollars have sold for the popular price of $2.00 each, however, the officials of the Memorial have reduced the price to 60¢ which is only 10¢ above their face value. Recently tests have been made throughout the country which indicates [sic] that the public buy these half dollars in large quantities at this price.

At sixty cents, the Cancer Society tie-in was dropped. As might be expected, more coins sold at this price than were sold at one dollar, just as more had sold for a dollar than were sold for two dollars.

In a letter of December 28, 1954, Phillips requested the banks handling the coins not to release their stock at par after the first of the

new year, as was the prior arrangement, but rather to continue sales at sixty cents. Of the 3,800,000 coins of both designs issued from the mints, Phillips claimed that some 3,400,000 were disposed of by January of 1955.[90] A later newspaper article gave the somewhat lower sales figure of 2,885,271.[91]

In a two-page article in the Negro-published Roanoke Tribune following the Birthplace Memorial's bankruptcy in January of 1955, Phillips looked back upon his organization's experience with the commemorative coins:

> The promotion of the sales of the Carver-Washington half dollars was perhaps the most difficult job of the Memorial's undertakings. The public was not enthusiastic over paying a premium on a coin whose intrinsic value was definitely set at fifty cents.... Every organization and individual who attempted to promote the sale of these half dollars eventually lost money and gave up the promotion as a most difficult program to put over.[92]

Phillips estimated that ninety-seven to ninety-eight percent of the coins sold were purchased by whites, and noted that Negroes had shown little interest: from an expenditure of more than $15,000 for coin advertisements in Negro papers, the Birthplace Memorial had received less than

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[90]"Facts and Accomplishments of Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 7.

[91]Dick Sutherland, "Booker T. Washington Centennial Costs Nearly $225,000," Roanoke World-News, October 21, 1957, p. 2.

[92]"Facts and Accomplishments of Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 7.

one thousand dollars from coin purchases by Negroes.[93]

The experience of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial may have contributed to the fact that these coins were the last commemoratives ever issued by the United States Government.

F. Social Philosophy and Political Activity

Sidney J. Phillips, Founder and President of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial, was a master politician. As has been seen relative to the initial state appropriation and the minting of the coins, and as will be seen even more in connection with the establishment of Booker T. Washington National Monument and the Booker T. Washington Centennial Commission, Phillips--despite certain significant failures--was remarkably successful in dealing with those in power at both state and national levels to achieve his aims. It took no little political ability to place on the Birthplace Memorial's Board of Governors in 1948 the names of twenty-three Southern congressmen and three senators, and to add in 1952 Senator Robert A. Taft of Ohio, then the nation's leading Republican.[94]

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[93]"Facts and Accomplishments of Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," p. 7.

[94]While such names were merely window-dressing, they looked most impressive lining the margins of the Birthplace Memorial's letterhead.

As with the great majority of successful politicians, Phillips knew how to appeal to those he sought to influence, speaking both to their desires and to their fears. We have seen how quickly he adopted a militant anti-Communist stance in his 1951 coin minting and sales campaigns in the face of rising national concern over that issue. The early 1950s also saw the beginning of widespread concern over the question of racial segregation in the South. As had been the case a century earlier, a fundamental Southern institution was once again under attack. Sidney J. Phillips needed the continued support of Southern white leaders on behalf of his various enterprises. What could be more valuable to these Southern whites anxious to maintain the status quo than the presence of such a Negro leader as Phillips, also advocating the continuance of segregation?

During the early years of the Birthplace Memorial, Phillips was deliberately vague about his philosophy regarding segregation, avoiding the issue whenever possible. Amid the increasing polarization of the fifties, however, he could no longer keep from taking sides and still maintain his position. On July 4, 1953, at the Birthplace Memorial's "Annual Observance of the Commencement of the Career of Booker T. Washington," Phillips made a speech in which he clearly outlined his views on the subject of segregation:

> ...it is my considered belief that (1) The circumstance of the segregation system has been of overall benefit to the Negro. Handicapped as he was on emerging from slavery, it has given him a field of his own to develop. Within that field he has had opportunity to work out his own destiny, to find himself, to grow to a man's estate without the competition with which he could not have coped had

the circumstance been otherwise. (2) The economic progress of the Negro as achieved, and as presently enjoyed, is due in large measure, if not in practical entirety, to the pattern of segregation. Those who have attained economic success to a noticeable degree have been, and are, beneficiaries of that practice wherein Negroes serve other Negroes, as teachers, as doctors, ministers, merchants, editors, and the like.... (3) The dual system has made the Negro look to himself, in large measure, for his earnings, his property holdings, his achievements, the respect he commands, and even the popularity he enjoys. That credit the race receives for certain accomplishment in a given period all stems from accomplishment of Negroes, with Negroes, for Negroes. Had it been otherwise, the identity of the Negro would have been lost, his personal accomplishment stifled, and advancement of the race as a whole probably retarded in greater detriment to the masses. Men are made stronger on realization that the helping hand they need is at the end of their own right arm.

I believe, in any consideration of the matter of segregation, these things should be taken into account. The consideration should also recognize certain customs and habits through which economic advantages accrue to the masses of Negroes under the segregation system. It is not a far-fetched contemplation as to what might happen to small Negro business operators, or to many Negro professional wage earners under a strictly integrated economy. Neither should there be overlooked that the segregation system gives a virtual monopoly to Negroes in certain unskilled pursuits. Jobs are necessary if we are to survive as a people; and thousands could be at peril in the event of any sweeping change resulting from legislation....

One wonders what would be Booker T. Washington's answer to today's problem. It is my thought that while, doubtless, he would be the foremost champion of freedom and opportunity for every man, he would not have departed materially from his Atlanta Exposition proverb that, "In all things that are purely social, we can be as separate as the fingers; yet one as the hand in all things essential to mutual progress."

As might be expected, the full speech, mimeographed and distributed by the Birthplace Memorial, was widely reported in the Southern press under such headlines as "Negro Leader Defends Segregation." White editors praised Phillips' wisdom, and although the speech drew sharp criticism from many prominent Negroes, the president of the Booker T.

Washington Birthplace Memorial had made himself a valuable asset of the "establishment."[95]

Virginia state elections were approaching in the fall of 1953, and Sidney J. Phillips again found a way to make himself useful to influential whites--in particular, to the Democratic "Byrd machine" so long the ruling power in Virginia politics. Byrd machine stalwarts Thomas G. Burch, William M. Tuck, and Thomas B. Stanley had already been of much assistance to the Birthplace Memorial in previous years; Phillips now sought to continue this political support as Chairman of the Negro Committee for Thomas B. Stanley for Governor. In "A Plan by which the Negro Voters of Virginia Can Be Influenced to Vote for Honorable Thomas B. Stanley for Governor of the Commonwealth of Virginia," Phillips suggested naming conservative Roanoke Tribune publisher F. E. Alexander as a state Negro campaign manager. This move, wrote Phillips,

> ...would prove to the Negroes that they are being "counted in".... They would feel since the party leaders were using Negroes to assist in the election of a Governor of the Commonwealth they would be satisfied to a great extent that the administration would be friendly towards them within the pattern of custom and policies that are practiced in this area.... It is our thinking that the "Race problem," "Segregation," or "Civil Rights" should be discussed as little as possible. Should questions be asked they should be answered in the most diplomatic and understanding manner....
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> The Negro press in Virginia will cooperate by carrying news stories regarding the activities of the campaign in various sections of the state as the campaign develops. We are certain of

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[95]It would be wrong to paint Phillips as a complete opportunist regarding his stand on segregation. While he used his position for political advantage, he appears to have been genuinely convinced of the overall benefits of segregation for his race.

this cooperation if a reasonable share of paid political advertisements are placed in the following papers....

Phillips was careful to write to Stanley, Lieutenant-Governor-elect A. E. S. Stephens, and Attorney-General-elect J. Lindsay Almond immediately after their election victory, congratulating them and reminding them of his role in the campaign.

G. Authorization of the National Monument

1. Initial efforts. With heavy debts against the Birthplace Memorial's property, receipts from the sale of the commemorative coins dwindling, and repeated appeals to the state for the two million dollars for the industrial training center meeting with failure, Sidney J. Phillips began to see the handwriting on the wall as far as the future of his organization was concerned. By the beginning of 1953, in addition to the mortgages, the Birthplace Memorial's property taxes were delinquent for two years and the Internal Revenue Service held liens totaling $7,273.17 against Phillips and the Memorial for unpaid Social Security and withholding taxes.[96] It was becoming increasingly evident that the Birthplace Memorial could not keep its head above water much longer.

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[96]Letter, Russell L. Davis to Phillips, March 9, 1953; Barnes, Historic Site Survey, Part II, p. 4.

Faced with this realization, the Memorial's board of trustees met to consider possible courses of action. Its decision was contained in a letter from Phillips to Conrad L. Wirth, Director of the National Park Service, on March 3, 1953:

> In the last meeting of our Board of Trustees it was decided that a request would be made for the National Park Service to make a study for the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial with reference to establishing a national monument, national memorial, or a "Booker T. Washington National Park," or any other such name which will be appropriate for the birthplace of the noted Negro educator. A few days ago a preliminary discussion of the above mentioned idea was held with Mr. Tolson, Mr. Thompson, Mr. John McBride, and me. We are writing to ask if you would be kind enough to consider having a study made of this historic area so that presentation might be made to establish a national area here as part of the National Park Service under the United States Department of the Interior....

Phillips' letter called attention to the accomplishments of the Birthplace Memorial, and noted that "...inasmuch as the government will make $1,620,000 from the coinage of the 5,000,000 commemorative half dollars [in seigniorage], this would be good grounds on which to ask for an appropriation so that the National Park Service might maintain this area as a National Monument...." Phillips stated that the Birthplace Memorial was prepared to donate the 214-acre birthplace tract, then encumbered only by federal tax liens, to the government; should the remainder of the Memorial's property be needed, it could be had by paying off the outstanding indebtedness.[97]

Wirth approved the Birthplace Memorial's request, and asked Regional Director Elbert Cox to "...undertake the historical and recreational

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[97](L58).

studies and field investigation necessary to produce a report and recommendations as to the desirability and suitability of this area for inclusion in the National Park System." Wirth noted that it would also be important to evaluate the place of Booker T. Washington in American history.[98]

The Historic Site Survey portion of the resulting study was handled by Assistant Regional Historian Frank Barnes. Barnes concluded that the central part of the Birthplace Memorial property was indeed the birth site of Booker T. Washington, but noted that the eastern boundary of the original Burroughs plantation could no longer be determined due primarily to the Robertson-Cook land trade of 1917.[99] He considered the central tract as all that would be necessary for historical interpretation purposes. After surveying the career of Washington, Barnes moved on to discuss the recent history of his birthplace. He described the inauthentic nature of the Birthplace Memorial's cabin replica, stating that it would have to be replaced with a more accurate structure, and indicated that Tuck Hall and Virginia Cottage would have to be removed in the course of park development. Maximum development he considered would involve partial reconstruction of the plantation buildings, including the Burroughs house.

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[98]Memorandum, March 17, 1953 (L58).

[99]Barnes did not interview Peter Robertson, who recalled the approximate location of the tracts involved. The map on page 12 illustrates the best approximation of these tracts and the original boundary.

Upon arriving at the principal question under consideration, Barnes was a bit ambiguous:

> ...granted Booker Washington's "greatness," is the birthplace in Franklin County the best site for memorializing this man? Is this the spot above all others from which the broad aspects of his life may best be presented? The answer seems to be a theoretical "yes"--and, a practical "no."[100]

Barnes recognized the negative view of Washington held both by modern Negroes regarding him as an "Uncle Tom" and by white supremacists challenging the greatness of any Negro; he cited the recent difficulties surrounding the naming of the Booker T. Washington Memorial Highway as an example of the larger problems which might result if a national monument were established at Washington's birthplace. The lack of physical remains was held to be another adverse factor: "There is no original structure on the Burroughs-Washington site today which can in any way be associated with Booker T. Washington."[101] Finally, there was the remoteness of the area.

On the other hand, Barnes felt that the birthplace might be the most "neutral" spot for full interpretation of Washington, and the site most conducive to "average tourist" visitation. In his view, a monument at Tuskegee--the obvious alternative--would tend to overemphasize Washington's educational contributions at the expense of his social role, and would be visited primarily by educators and educationally-minded

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[100]Part III, p. 6.

[101]Part III, p. 7.

people. "For these reasons, the investigator would recommend--always subject to the 'practical' considerations enumerated above--national recognition (as an historical shrine) for the Booker T. Washington Birthplace."[102]

The portion of the study examining the recreational possibilities of Washington's birthplace was prepared by Park Planner W. T. Ammerman. Ammerman declared that if the area were to be developed for active recreation, the entire 537.2-acre holding should be acquired. However, he described the property as "not scenically outstanding," and Gills Creek as "not particularly attractive." "The historic site," he said, "is lacking in the picturesque mellowness which the general public usually associates with old plantation homes." Ammerman concluded that "The natural values of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace site are lacking in the outstanding or unique qualities considered essential for a recreational area of national or regional interest."[103]

On October 23, 1953, Regional Director Cox forwarded the completed Barnes-Ammerman report to the Director with his recommendations. Cox readily agreed with Ammerman concerning the recreational possibilities of Washington's birthplace, but came out against Barnes' qualified

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[102]Part III, pp. 9-10.

[103]"Recreational Possibilities, Booker T. Washington Birthplace," October 1953, pp. 5-6, 14 (L58).

recommendation for inclusion:

> On the basis of Barnes' evaluation I would agree that the man himself is of national significance and from the standpoint of his importance in American history, he is deserving of national recognition. However, the birth site itself is not equally impressive, and lacks the potential interest and value for commemorative purposes which are necessary to justify inclusion in the National Park System. No structure or object remains on the birthplace site around which one could develop a compelling commemorative project for Booker T. Washington. This situation would have been entirely different if the original birthplace cabin or the old homestead were still preserved.... I would not place too much emphasis on the point, but it appears that cleavages, even among his own race, would make less effective any efforts to administer the area as a National Monument. This would be particularly true in its bearing upon visitation and programs of interpretation and education for the visitors.[104]

The Secretary of the Interior's Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments met on March 22, 1954, to consider, among other matters, the proposal for including the birthplace of Booker T. Washington in the National Park System. After reviewing the Barnes-Ammerman report and the Park Service recommendations, the Advisory Board passed the following resolution:

> The Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments having considered the proposal that the Booker T. Washington Birthplace be included in the National Park System, resolves that while Booker T. Washington, the man, is an impressive national figure, the birth site is not equally impressive, since it is largely devoid of original structures or object remains associated with him. It is also lacking in outstanding potentialities for recreational development were the area to be included in the National Park System on recreational grounds. The Board greatly appreciates the value of the work that the Booker T. Washington Memorial is doing and commends it for preserving a spot which was dear to Booker T. Washington.

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[104](L58).

Conrad Wirth informed Phillips of the Advisory Board's resolution and expressed his agreement with its conclusions. Said Wirth, "I trust that the Booker T. Washington Foundation [sic] will find it possible to continue its great work of preserving the birthplace as a fitting memorial to the life and work of Booker T. Washington."[105]

Sidney J. Phillips was never one to give up without a fight. If the National Park Service was not in sympathy with his proposal, he would get a bill introduced in Congress anyway and rely on a great outpouring of public--and political--support to put it through. Accordingly, Representative A. L. Miller of Nebraska, Chairman of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, was prevailed upon to introduce H.R. 9416 on June 2, 1954--a bill to provide for the establishment of Booker T. Washington National Monument. Under the provisions of this bill, the federal government would satisfy all outstanding obligations of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial in return for title to the land. Appropriations not to exceed $150,000 would be authorized for development of the monument.

It was already too late in the session to expect passage of this measure by the Eighty-Third Congress. The main purpose of the bill at this time was to serve as a subject for publicity and a vehicle for attracting support. During the remainder of the year, Phillips conducted

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[105]Letter to "Dr." S. J. Phillips, April 22, 1954 (L58).

an intensive letter-writing campaign, informing all of the state governors and members of Congress of the pending legislation and urging them to communicate their support to Representative Miller and Interior Secretary Douglas McKay. He sent news releases about the bill to newspapers throughout the country, asking them to comment favorably and to forward copies of their stories and editorials for his file. One such release stated that the "Honorable Douglas McKay has sent a very encouraging letter to Mrs. Portia Washington Pittman, saying that he was in favor of an appropriate and lasting Memorial erected as a National Monument to her Father on his birthplace."[106]

Despite the Park Service rejection of the national monument proposal, Director Wirth apparently remained on good terms with Phillips and even encouraged him in his campaign. In a letter to Representative Miller, Phillips wrote,

> A few days ago I discussed over the telephone H.R. 9416 with Mr. Conrad L. Wirth, Director of the National Park Service. He felt since Congress was about to adjourn that it was best not to push for passage of this bill. It was his opinion that we should build up a file on the project and have a bill introduced in the next session of Congress. He further said that this fall they would have an opportunity to give some study to the area. In my opinion he appeared to have been in favor of doing something. I told him that I had written all the Governors in regard to the

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[106]In actuality, McKay's letter of June 30, 1954 was thoroughly noncommittal: "...I have always had the highest regard for your father's outstanding contributions, both as an educator and as a great American citizen. I shall be happy to do whatever I can to help memorialize his outstanding work in an appropriate way.... I shall approach the preparation of the report on this bill with the fullest understanding." (Hearing on H.R. 6904, p. 30.)

present bill. He thought that was a fine idea and suggested that copies of the letters be sent to the Secretary's office....[107]

2. Bankruptcy of the Birthplace Memorial. Meanwhile, the financial plight of the Birthplace Memorial was growing ever more bleak. As recounted previously, the mints stopped issuing the commemorative half dollars on August 7, 1954, and the premium on the slow-moving coins outstanding had to be reduced to ten cents. When it was realized that the legislation which would create a national monument and pay off the Birthplace Memorial's mortgages and tax liens was going to be delayed, the only course in view of the Memorial's $140,000 debt was bankruptcy.

On December 16, 1954, the trustees of the Birthplace Memorial authorized assignment of the Memorial's property to a trustee in order to protect the interests of the organization's numerous creditors. This was carried out by deed of assignment to Attorney B. A. Davis, Jr. on January 10, 1955.[108] The deed named three parcels of land to be put up for sale: the birthplace tract of 214 acres, more or less, minus the 5.99 acres conveyed to the Franklin County School Board; the Albert Saunders tract of 246.5 acres, more or less; the Posey Plybon tract of 101 acres, more or less. The deed contained an inventory of the Memorial's property and a list of its creditors--including prizewinners of the Second and Third Annual Goodwill Contests to whom over six thousand

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[107]From undated draft of letter in Birthplace Memorial files.

[108]Deed Book 133, p. 351, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

dollars was owed.

Contributing to publicity about the Birthplace Memorial's demise was a two-page spread by Phillips in the Roanoke Tribune on January 29, 1955. In this article, Phillips offered his explanation for the Memorial's failure:

> Particularly was it surprising to find that when interest and cooperation were manifested it came largely from the white group. The Negro public generally evidenced but very little interest in the undertaking.... Our experience indicates that the white people were more interested in seeing the ideals and teachings of Booker T. Washington perpetuated than Negroes.[109]

One reason for this Phillips held to be the negative attitude of Tuskegee's administration. He claimed that it was opposed to the Memorial through fear that it would diminish Tuskegee's importance or financial support. "Many individuals and organizations that might have supported the Memorial would not do so because they were confused by the attitude of Tuskegee Institute."[110]

The birthplace and Plybon tracts were auctioned off on February 26. John W. Booth bought the Plybon tract for $6500.[111] The birthplace tract, containing the Memorial's principal buildings, was sold to Sidney J. Phillips for $16,000.[112] While the deed was made out to Phillips, the bid

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[109] Pp. 6,7.

[110] Ibid., p. 6.

[111] Deed Book 134, p. 389, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

[112] Deed Book 135, p. 257, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

was publicized as having been made by Portia Washington Pittman on behalf of the "Booker T. Washington National Monument Committee," S. J. Phillips, Chairman. The Booker T. Washington National Monument Committee, according to a paper issued by Phillips, had been formed to establish a "suitable and lasting monument" at the birthplace of Washington. Its plans were as follows: to form a national biracial committee to promote its objective; to organize local committees in cities to promote appreciation for Washington's birthplace; to obtain contributions to repay the loan with which the property was purchased; to promote legislation by Congress establishing a national monument to be maintained by the government; to complete the program in 1956, along with a nationwide Washington Centennial.

The Albert Saunders tract was exposed for sale on March 12, 1955, by its trustee, default having been made in payment of the note secured by the deed of trust. The land was purchased by Ruth Jane and Thomas R. Saunders for $11,000.[113]

3. The Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation. On April 7, 1955, Phillips obtained a mortgage on the repurchased birthplace tract from the Bankers Trust Company of Rocky Mount in the sum of $9,500, and a second mortgage for $6,000 from the same Nehi officials who had

[113]Deed Book 135, p. 8, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

enabled him to purchase the property ten years earlier.[114] Repeating his original course of action, he then secured the incorporation of an organization to take over the land. This time it was the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation, chartered on April 18, 1955 "...to establish a perpetual memorial in commemoration of the life and character of Booker T. Washington in promoting legislation which will provide for the establishment of the Booker T. Washington National Monument located at his birthplace in Franklin County, Virginia...."[115] On July 29 the birthplace tract, along with its mortgages, was conveyed to the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation.[116]

Unencumbered by the excess land and the myriad dreams of the defunct Birthplace Memorial, the new organization set to work to achieve its primary objective. In the first session of the new Eighty-Fourth Congress, six representatives were persuaded to introduce identical bills which would provide for the establishment of Booker T. Washington National Monument: Clair Engle of California, new Chairman of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs (H.R. 6904); A. L. Miller, ranking Republican on the committee and former chairman (H.R. 6963); Brady Gentry of Texas (H.R. 7187); James Roosevelt of California (H.R. 7242); Harrison A.

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[114]Deed Book 135, pp. 261, 264, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

[115]Charter Book B, p. 218, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

[116]Deed Book 137, p. 427, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

Williams of New Jersey (H.R. 7292); and Clyde Doyle of California (H.R. 7809). The new bills eliminated the reference in the old Miller bill to the now-defunct Birthplace Memorial, and raised the authorized appropriation from $150,000 to $200,000.[117]

Once again, Phillips embarked upon a massive letter-writing campaign to secure influential support for the proposed Booker T. Washington National Monument. The Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs meanwhile requested a report from the Department of the Interior on the pending legislation. Accordingly, the Advisory Board on National Parks, Historic Sites, Buildings, and Monuments, in a meeting on September 7-9, 1955, reviewed its earlier negative conclusion concerning the national monument proposal. The Advisory Board reaffirmed its previous decision on this occasion, stating that while the achievements of Booker T. Washington were worthy of national recognition and should be appropriately memorialized, "...the place for such memorialization is at Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, where he made his greatest contributions to American life." In view of the absence of original remains at the birth site, the Advisory Board again concluded that no expenditure of federal funds was justified there.[118]

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[117]For full text of the new bills see Appendix A.

[118]Letter, Assistant Secretary of the Interior Wesley A. D'Ewart to Clair Engle, February 2, 1956 (Hearing on H.R. 6904, pp. 2-3).

Phillips still had his friends in the Virginia government, however. Through his influence, an item of the state appropriation for 1956 provided $17,000 to pay off the indebtedness on the birthplace of Booker T. Washington--under condition that the United States Government would accept title to the property and responsibility for its maintenance.[119] This was a major accomplishment by the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation, and a powerful incentive to carry the job through.

4. The Congressional hearing. The Subcommittee on Public Lands of the House Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs met on February 3, 1956, to consider the bills which would establish Booker T. Washington National Monument. Adverse reports by both the Department of the Interior and the Bureau of the Budget, based on the recommendation of the Advisory Board, were first presented, followed by statements on behalf of the bill from the six congressmen who had introduced the legislation and a telegram from Booker T. Washington III, who expressed his "...admiration for the truly great work that Mr. Phillips has, through the years, performed in perpetuating the ideals and teachings of my grandfather."[120]

The first witness to appear before the subcommittee was Herbert E. Kahler, Chief Historian of the National Park Service. Kahler called

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[119] Item 483, General Appropriation Act of the Commonwealth of Virginia for the Biennium ending June 30, 1958.

[120] Hearing on H.R. 6904, p. 7.

attention to the qualifications of the Advisory Board, and reiterated its conclusion that any monument to Booker T. Washington should be at Tuskegee.

"Does the Department have any plans for establishing a suitable monument at Tuskegee?" asked Representative John J. Rhodes of Arizona.

"It does not," replied Kahler.

"So the position of the Department at the present time is that you disapprove the site recommended in H.R. 6904; you feel if there were to be a monument established it should be at Tuskegee; but you have no present plans to establish such a monument?"

"That is correct," Kahler admitted, adding that Tuskegee was the place where Washington had spent thirty-four years, the most productive years of his life.[121]

George W. Abbott, Committee Counsel, spoke up: "In view of the statement just made, how many years did Abraham Lincoln spend at Hodgensville, Ky. [site of Abraham Lincoln Birthplace National Monument]?"

"A very, very short time," Kahler was forced to admit. "I would say less than nine years." In further interchange with Abbott, he remarked that "...the Advisory Board, as it has been considering sites, has become more and more reluctant to consider birthplaces for this reason: today more and more persons are born in hospitals, they are not born in homes."[122]

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[121]Hearing on H.R. 6904, p. 9.

[122]Ibid., p. 10.

This latter statement did not make much of an impression, and on the whole, the Park Service took something of a beating at the hearing. Kahler failed to adequately defend contemporary Park Service standards for historical areas in the face of past inconsistencies, and the fact that the Service had not actively planned for a monument at Tuskegee was used against it.

Kahler's was the lone voice present raised against the proposed monument. Following his harrowing ordeal came the massive, thoroughly organized presentation of Sidney J. Phillips and his Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation. Phillips read a lengthy prepared statement, starting with a word on behalf of Nehi and playing on fears of Communist influence among Negroes: "Because of conflicting ideas and ideologies which are trying to be sold to our citizens...the American people need constant, and where possible, permanent reminders of the principles for which this land of ours stands." In rejoinder to Kahler, he stated that "It is in keeping with American traditions to establish monuments or memorials at the birthplace of men and women who have contributed in some form to our national well-being." As a form for the new monument, Phillips suggested the restoration of a typical plantation settlement with the owner's house and slave quarters, and a museum on American Negro history and contributions.[123]

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[123]Hearing on H.R. 6904, pp. 12-13.

Phillips gave a chronology of Washington's life, and misleadingly read a portion of the 1937 Joplin W.P.A. report which indicated that the Burroughs house was still standing and that other slave quarters could be located by their foundations. From a discussion of Washington's contributions, he moved on to describe how the creation of this monument would promote tourist travel and spending in Virginia. Finally Phillips presented an array of supporting telegrams from Negro educational, religious, and fraternal organizations, and his file of letters from governors and members of Congress relative to both the previous and present bills. Concerning H.R. 9416, Phillips had received letters from thirty governors, thirty-six senators, and eighty-five representatives; on H.R. 6904 he heard from fifty-five senators and 187 representatives. The majority of them, said Phillips, indicated endorsement of the legislation.

Under questioning by the subcommittee, Phillips defended the choice of Washington's birthplace as the site for the national monument:

> I believe that the people seem to have a kind of sacred feeling for his birthplace, any number of people who have been there, and they say, "We feel that we are standing on sacred ground to be where Booker T. Washington was born."...I have never heard them make such a statement on the campus of Tuskegee Institute.[124]

Reflecting the point of view brought out by Frank Barnes in his Historic Site Survey, Phillips added that a monument at Tuskegee would tend to be swallowed up in the larger program of the school, whereas a monument at Washington's birthplace would be specialized and isolated from any other

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[124]Hearing on H.R. 6904, pp. 27-28.

purposes.

Representative Rhodes was interested in learning about the reconstructed cabin at Washington's birthplace. "Were you able to locate the exact spot with any degree of particularity? In other words, do you feel that you actually know where the exact cabin in which he was born was located?"

"Yes, sir," replied Phillips. "In fact, we had a playmate of his, a boy, Uncle Henry Swain, who helped identify this spot in 1936 [sic] when Congressman Mitchell made a visit there, and they put an iron peg there and we had the Historical Society of Virginia draw up the plans. They were certain that that was the spot on the basis of the old base of the chimney there, and according to this man who was alive when Booker T. Washington was a boy we put it on the exact spot."[125]

Next to appear on behalf of the bill was Dr. T. J. Jemison, Secretary of the National Baptist Convention. The national monument should be at Washington's birthplace, said Jemison, because it is important to know where a man has come from in order to better appreciate what he has done. As an example he cited the restoration of Christ's birthplace in Bethlehem. Following Jemison was another close associate of Phillips, Pittsburgh Courier editor George S. Schuyler. In his initial statement he too expressed strong preference for the birthplace as the site for

[125]Hearing on H.R. 6904, p. 32.

the national monument, stating that Tuskegee Institute was a sufficient monument in itself. Added Schuyler, "The great success of the sale of Booker T. Washington memorial half dollars indicates beyond a doubt that his memory and the record of what he did is still fresh.... I am sure that a national monument at his birthplace would be universally applauded."[126]

Representative Rhodes asked Schuyler whether he knew of any Negroes who wanted to establish the monument at Tuskegee rather than at the birthplace. Schuyler said that he did not, and added that because of the post office and the many conventions and gatherings at the birthplace, the public already considered the site as a monument to Booker T. Washington.

"Would it be a fair statement to say, then, that the only people who apparently want to establish the monument at Tuskegee is the National Park Service?" questioned Rhodes.

"I think so, and I do not think they have given sufficient thought to the real significance and philosophy behind this thing." Schuyler continued by indicating that the birthplace would best illustrate the humble origin of Washington in contrast with his ultimate position of greatness, and would thereby memorialize the rise of the entire Negro race in the United States from slavery.[127]

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[126]Hearing on H.R. 6904, p. 34.

[127]Ibid., p. 35.

Next appeared Dr. G. Lake Imes, retired Secretary of Tuskegee Institute and former vice president of the defunct Birthplace Memorial. Imes called attention to the common practice of memorializing birthplaces, citing those of George Washington, Lincoln, Wilson, Roosevelt, Shakespeare, and Carver. He said that Virginia, by her initial $15,000 appropriation, her construction of the Booker T. Washington Elementary School, and her latest conditional appropriation of $17,000, had expressed her sponsorship of the legislation. And he claimed that the federal government had already endorsed the proposal by its actions in minting the commemorative half dollars, establishing the Booker Washington Birthplace Post Office, and authorizing the centennial stamps. Imes stated that the monument at Washington's birthplace would have special value in that it would be easily accessible to the foreign visitors who come to the East Coast; a monument in Alabama would be out of reach.

Representative Wayne Aspinall of Colorado asked Imes if he knew of any Negro who was consulted by the Advisory Board in reaching its decision, to which Imes replied that he did not. Representative Stewart Udall of Arizona expressed his approval of the birthplace shrine concept, and his hope that the committee would look with favor upon the bill.

Perry W. Howard, General Counsel for the Negro Elks, added his voice to those witnesses supporting the birthplace national monument. His statement implied criticism of the Tuskegee administration:

> ...I have not heard one member of the racial group express a desire for this memorial to be at Tuskegee. We know that the institutions and faculties of institutions do not always reflect the sentiment of the founder and promoter of a great organization like that.... we know that Dr. Washington was not a politician, but he left a good many politicians around Tuskegee.[128]

Last to appear was Portia Washington Pittman, Washington's daughter. She told of how Phillips had bought the birthplace at her instigation, and of the deep meaning which the place had for her. "If this becomes a national monument I think I will die happy," she concluded.[129]

5. Success. Representative Rhodes moved that the bill be reported favorably to the full committee; this was done without objection. On February 14, 1956, the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs issued a favorable report on the bill to the House. This report criticized the adverse report of the Department of the Interior:

> ...The committee feels that the National Park Service has shown little interest in establishing a national monument to Booker T. Washington, whether at his birthplace, at Tuskegee Institute, or elsewhere. The only witness sent by the Park Service to testify at the hearings affirmed that the Service had made no plans for the establishment of a national monument to Booker T. Washington.
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> The committee also feels that the Advisory Board lost sight of fundamental human values in arriving at its conclusions. Beyond this, the Board's reluctance to consider birthplace sites because "...today more and more persons are born in hospitals, they are not born in homes," as reported by the historian for the National Park Service, is less than persuasive, if germane.[130]

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[128]Hearing on H.R. 6904, p. 43.

[129]Ibid., p. 44.

[130]House Report 1766, 84th Congress, in Hearing on H.R. 6904, p. 49.

The Senate Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs concurred in the recommendations of the House committee report, and reported favorably on the bill without further hearings. To emphasize its interest in economy, the Senate committee added the following statement in its report:

> It is the unanimous feeling of the committee that every effort should be made by the National Park Service to develop newly created monuments and memorials in a manner that will entail no excessive annual maintenance costs. The committee suggests, therefore, that in developing the Booker T. Washington National Monument, the National Park Service attempt to concentrate its efforts in this particular area to a fitting treatment of the central features of the tract to be donated by the State of Virginia, rather than attempt to reconstruct the original plantation theme by fully developing the entire tract.[131]

Both houses of Congress passed the measure, and on April 2, 1956, President Eisenhower signed the bill which authorized establishment of Booker T. Washington National Monument.[132]

H. The Centennial Commission

With the signing of the bill authorizing establishment of Booker T. Washington National Monument, the primary purpose of the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation had been achieved. But the government was not to take title to the property for more than a year there-

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[131] Senate Report 1692, 84th Congress, March 19, 1956, pp. 6-7.

[132] Public Law 464, 84th Congress (70 Stat. 86).

after. And another objective remained: the nationwide "Washington Centennial." Buoyed by his recent success, Sidney J. Phillips once again turned to Congress--this time for aid in financing his proposed year-long celebration of the hundredth anniversary of Washington's birth.

One would think that the Birthplace Memorial's experience with commemorative coins would have caused Phillips to steer clear of this method of raising money. But Phillips was hard to convince. On June 5 and 6, 1956, Representatives William E. McVey of Illinois, Henry S. Reuss of Wisconsin, and Barratt O'Hara of Illinois introduced bills to enable the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation to return all remaining commemorative coins on hand to the Treasury, which would mint new coins equal to the number returned (not to exceed 100,000). The bills provided that "Such coins may be disposed of by the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation...at face value or at a premium, and the net proceeds shall be used for such purposes related to the centennial anniversary of the birth of Booker T. Washington as such foundation shall direct."[133]

These bills did not go through. Neither did another bill introduced by Representative Brent Spence on July 24 which would have authorized the minting of ten thousand Booker T. Washington commemorative medals to be furnished the newly formed Booker T. Washington Centennial

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[133]H.R. 11602 (McVey bill), 84th Congress.

Commission.[134] However, the Centennial Commission was well provided for by an item sponsored by Senator Everett Dirksen in the Second Supplemental Appropriations Act, approved on July 31, 1956:

> For necessary expenses of the Booker T. Washington Centennial Commission to carry out the year-long celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the birth of Booker T. Washington and to promote the spirit of interracial good will, and revive interest in the practical policies, programs, principles, and philosophies of Booker T. Washington, $225,000 to remain available until expended.

The Booker T. Washington Centennial Commission had been created by the trustees of the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation. On August 10, 1956, Sidney J. Phillips, Executive Director of the Centennial Commission, submitted a memorandum to the Comptroller General of the General Accounting Office outlining the proposed program and budget of the Commission. This included such items as $65,500 for media publicity, $13,000 for printed material, $20,000 for salaries, $20,000 for a "Booker T. Washington 100th Anniversary Goodwill Building Contest," and $4000 for a Booker T. Washington Centennial Road-Side Shrine with cabin replica in Macon County, Alabama. Phillips requested that no restrictions be placed upon the Centennial Commission in the formulation and execution of its plans, and that any net revenues and any property acquired by the Commission revert to the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation upon completion of the celebration. He suggested that $25,000 be made available immediately to the Commission for planned

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[134] H.R. 12390, 84th Congress.

activities in August and September.[135]

These proposals were acceptable to the Comptroller General's office. Following the $25,000 advance, further disbursements were to be made upon presentation of receipts for expenditures. In view of its indirect interest in the activity, the National Park Service was selected by the Bureau of the Budget to supervise the disbursement of the appropriated money to the Centennial Commission. The Service's responsibility was limited to seeing that vouchers were supported by receipts, and that certified vouchers did not exceed $225,000.[136]

The principal publication issued by the Booker T. Washington Centennial Commission was a special Centennial Edition of Up From Slavery. This contained nineteen pages not found in the original, including a chronology of Washington's life compiled by S. J. Phillips; a "Note on the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial" which declared, "Mr. Phillips has a large measure of the vision and spirit of Dr. Washington and works with the same dedicated zeal in the interests of his people"; a eulogistic biography entitled "This Man, Sidney J. Phillips";[137] and a

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[135]Memorandum, Phillips to Joseph Campbell (L58).

[136]Letters, Assistant Comptroller General Frank H. Weitzel to S. J. Phillips and Conrad L. Wirth, August 15, 1956 (L58).

[137]Excerpts: "Surely his accomplishments, carried out in a manner which has won the hearty cooperation and support of influential men and women of both races, mark a noble achievement in the great American tradition. With it all, Mr. Phillips has been as modest and self-effacing

section on "Perpetuating the Ideals and Teachings of Booker T. Washington" by Sidney J. Phillips. Sidney J. Phillips was also prominently mentioned in the foreword to the book, which called attention to his biography at the end.

In his section on "Perpetuating the Ideals and Teachings of Booker T. Washington," Phillips painted an impressive picture of the Centennial Commission's program then in progress:

> Because Booker T. Washington's contributions to national welfare were of sufficient scope and magnitude to affect the well-being of the nation as a whole, the Booker T. Washington Centennial Commission was created by the National Monument Foundation to handle this particular phase of its program. The entire nation was invited to participate.... A nationwide "Goodwill Building Crusade" was adopted as the theme of the celebration.
>
> The nation responded to the invitation wholeheartedly. Thousands of school superintendents, principals, and teachers the nation over paid their tribute by planning goodwill building programs for millions of children in the schools of America. In like manner, churches, labor organizations, social, civic, and fraternal groups all worked nationally toward the success of the centennial program.
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> At the present writing the Booker T. Washington Centennial Commission's "GOODWILL BUILDING CRUSADE" has taken on national scope. Millions of lines have been written and are being written in the nation's press to carry its message--a message that appeals to men of all races and creeds to join hands in helping to build an invincible nation, by putting into practice the ideals of goodwill to which Booker T. Washington dedicated his life.[138]

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as he has been diligent and persistent. A dedicated man of devotion and integrity, and at the same time a natural diplomat, able to win friends and influence people, he has given of himself without stint or personal reward in his great efforts to forever perpetuate the memory and ideals of the immortal Booker T. Washington." (P. 239.)

[138]Ibid., p. 244.

Following the conclusion of the centennial celebration, a series of front page articles by Dick Sutherland in the Roanoke World-News[139] presented a more specific and considerably less laudatory view of the Booker T. Washington Centennial Commission. These articles carried such banner headlines as "Commission President Paid $660 Each Two Weeks" and "Employees, Phone, Travel and Cars Cost Centennial $99,830." It was revealed that the officers and trustees of the Centennial Commission had received over $60,000 for salaries or services, and that all individuals who received money were also members of the National Monument Foundation. The Booker T. Washington Sales Agency, headed by Phillips, took $2,500 for advertising and sales promotion of the Centennial Edition of Up From Slavery, although the book was never sold, all copies being distributed without charge.[140] A $225 donation was given to the "Prince of Peace Bible School" headed by W. B. Fleming, a Commission representative; despite a thorough search by the World-News, this school could not be located. In addition, Fleming also received $180 for dental work.[141] Other articles called attention to the Commission's ten-month phone bill of $4,576, its red, white, and blue station wagon with $275 gold lettering, and its new cars: "The portion of Washington's philosophy which deals with thrift seems to have escaped the commission's

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[139] October 21-28, 1957.

[140] All box holders in Tuskegee and Rocky Mount received copies of this edition, with its heavy larding of praise for Phillips.

[141] October 25, 1957, p. 1.

mind when it purchased a 1957 car with a continental spare tire kit."[142]

The greatest response to the Commission's "Goodwill Building Crusade" came from the public schools, many of which held some kind of Booker T. Washington study or program following the Commission's promotion. Sutherland reported a typical goodwill building program at Washington's birthplace, when the aforementioned W. B. Fleming came to speak to the children from the adjacent Booker T. Washington Elementary School. Fleming praised Booker T. Washington, and described Sidney J. Phillips as a second Washington.[143]

Another aspect of the Goodwill Building Crusade was nationwide newspaper advertising. The Commission's advertisements carried rather vague appeals for friendship, cooperation, and good will, and inevitably concluded with a sales pitch for coins and books; e.g., "YOU TOO CAN HELP CELEBRATE--Hurry! Just a Few Left--CARVER-WASHINGTON COMMEMORATIVE COINS $1.00--World Famous Autobiography "UP FROM SLAVERY" Pocket Size--50 Cents--ORDER TODAY."[144] The books advertised were from a stock of seven thousand of the regular edition obtained prior to the Centennial Edition's publication. These, along with a stock of the old commemorative coins, realized a profit for the National Monument Foundation of

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[142]October 28, 1957, p. 2.

[143]October 24, 1957.

[144]Ibid.

at least $9,250 according to Sutherland's estimate. Most of the books and many of the coins were simply given away as "goodwill building devices."[145]

The only permanent physical result of the work of the Centennial Commission was declared to be the duplicate "birthplace" cabin built near Tuskegee. With all materials for it shipped from Franklin County, the project cost over five thousand dollars.

In his final article, Sutherland evaluated the Booker T. Washington Centennial Commission:

> ...some of the major expenditures in the year-long campaign, newspaper ads, coins, the first books, were made with the hopes of reaping a profit.... The commission, organized by the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation, used federal funds to purchase, advertise for sale and distribute products with the proceeds going to the foundation. Only one of the ads failed to have a coupon for convenient purchase of either half dollars or books or both. In fact, it, a Christmas ad, was nothing except a pitch for buying the autobiography and coins.... The advertising campaign cost $25,049.33.... Selling was behind almost every move of the commission. The school campaign was tied to an effort to sell copies of the autobiography to the schools. Elk lodges and Negro women's clubs were being asked to sell coins and books for the commission....
>
> Almost every time Booker T. Washington has been mentioned in the commission's literature and ads, the name of S. J. Phillips has also been mentioned. Surely no one exposed to all the centennial commission's outpouring about Booker T. Washington could have failed to remember S. J. Phillips too. Several articles are definitely devoted to telling the reader what a great and noble man S. J. Phillips is, while another writer describes him as "modest and self-effacing."[146]

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[145] October 23, 1957, p. 1.

[146] October 28, 1957.

Sutherland also revealed that Phillips had been fined for refusing to file a 1956 Virginia state income tax return.

There was nothing illegal about the dealings of the Booker T. Washington Centennial Commission. The government had placed no restrictions upon its activities or expenditures, and its revenues had clearly been authorized to go to the National Monument Foundation. As might be expected, however, the prominent World-News feature series left a thoroughly negative impression of Sidney J. Phillips and all that was associated with him in the Roanoke-Franklin County area.[147]

I. S. J. Phillips--An Evaluation

If ever one man were responsible for the creation of a unit in the National Park System, it was Sidney J. Phillips. Though the Park Service

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[147]Phillips was a hard man to keep down. In 1961 he drew up plans for a George Washington Carver Centennial Commission, to be financed by a $249,000 Congressional appropriation. Resolutions authorizing this expenditure were favorably reported by both House and Senate committees, but Senator A. Willis Robertson of Virginia succeeded in delaying further action pending his investigation of the Booker T. Washington Centennial Commission. Upon reviewing Phillips' prior activities, Robertson denounced the proposed Carver Centennial Commission appropriation in the Senate: "This proposal, frankly, is the scheme of a single promoter to lay his hands once again on federal funds under the pretext of honoring the work of an outstanding member of the Negro race.... Phillips' own account of his activities leaves no doubt that the [Washington] Centennial Commission was used to promote the interests of Phillips and his friends and as a sales agency for the commemorative coins, the proceeds of which, you will recall, went to Phillips." (Roanoke World-News, February 22, 1962.) The appropriation did not go through.

was not particularly grateful upon the success of his efforts, it nevertheless had none other than Phillips to thank for the existence of Booker T. Washington National Monument. It is important, therefore, to attempt to arrive at some conclusions about the most significant individual--other than Washington himself--in this history.

Like his hero, Booker T. Washington, Phillips was a controversial figure for his social views--views which may have been realistic in Washington's day, but which would better be termed reactionary a half century later. While Phillips was thoroughly dedicated to the task of perpetuating Booker T. Washington's ideals and teachings, it may be questioned whether certain of Washington's accommodations to his times--e.g., his compromise with segregation in the 1890s-- were worthy of being perpetuated at the middle of the twentieth century. Contrary to Phillips' belief, Washington himself may have taken a quite different position fifty years later. Nevertheless, few who knew Phillips, either as friend or opponent, voiced serious doubts about his sincerity concerning his stated aims.

In contrast with Washington's case, however, Phillips' personal integrity was also subject to controversy. For in addition to his dedication to the cause of Booker T. Washington, Phillips was also thoroughly dedicated to his own glorification. This goal tended to dilute his constant appeals on behalf of Booker T. Washington, and it also led him into a number of questionable practices. Phillips was fundamentally a

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promoter--an ad man--and as with many such individuals, the end of selling the product often justifies almost any means to put it across. We have been trained to accept rather tasteless methods in the field of commercial product advertising. But Phillips applied them to the promotion of a great man and his philosophy--and to the promotion of himself.

Above all, Sidney J. Phillips wanted a place in history as the "second Washington." While it is a bit early yet to pass final judgement, it would appear that his personal advertising campaign to this end was a failure.

V. THE NATIONAL MONUMENT: 1957-

A. The Park Service Takes Over

Although the establishment of Booker T. Washington National Monument was authorized on April 2, 1956, the government did not accept title to the land until June 18, 1957, and did not take physical possession until that December. A part of this time lag resulted from normal administrative procedures, but the continued presence of the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation and the activities of its Centennial Commission were also contributing factors.

On August 16, 1956, Attorney C. Carter Lee of Rocky Mount informed the Secretary of the Interior's office that he was in possession of Virginia's check for $17,000 to be used in paying off the indebtedness of Washington's birthplace. This he was prepared to disburse upon the Secretary's approval of a deed conveying the property to the federal government.[148]

There was still some question as to the exact land which was to comprise the new national monument, however. On August 21, Sidney J. Phillips requested that certain exclusions be made from the property to be acquired by the government; namely, the road to the Booker T. Washington Elementary School, two plots involved in a land exchange between

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[148]Letter (L1415).

Phillips and John W. Booth relative to the road right of way, and a two acre plot adjacent to the school tract which the Booker T. Washington Elementary School P. T. A. allegedly purchased from the National Monument Foundation in 1955.[149] In view of this, National Park Service Acting Director E. T. Scoyen replied to Attorney Lee that further action would have to wait until the Secretary had determined the lands to be included in the national monument.[150]

To assist in making this determination, Park Service personnel conducted a field investigation of the area on August 28-29, 1956. Participating, among others, were Regional Director Elbert Cox, Washington Office Historian Roy E. Appleman, and Superintendent Sam P. Weems of the Blue Ridge Parkway. For reasons of scenic control, the group concluded that the Service should not agree to Phillips' request for exclusion of the two-acre tract adjacent to the school, which contained a dilapidated abandoned house built by the Robertsons. The southern and western portion of the property below the school tract was viewed as nonessential for the purposes of the monument, but it was agreed that this area could be included unless the state could use it for exchange purposes to acquire other land needed along State Route 122 for visual protection.[151]

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[149]Letter, Phillips to Donald Lee, NPS Chief of Lands (L58).

[150]Letter, August 27, 1956 (L1415).

[151]Memorandum, Elbert Cox to Files, August 30, 1956 (L58).

While on the field investigation, Historian Appleman looked into another aspect of the situation which was to cause the Park Service some degree of consternation. Six office workers of the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation were present in Hopkins Hall, and Appleman spoke with them about their future plans.

> ...My conversation was slanted in part in finding out what Dr. [sic] Phillips and his group planned to do when the National Monument is established. One of the tasks would be to remove the present occupants. Two families now live on the area [Phillips and Holmes, principal of the elementary school] and six people work in one of the buildings. There is also the question of the Post Office which is not needed. Miss Chappell [a clerk] said that all of them expected and hoped to stay there. She said this was Dr. Phillips' expectation also. Her report discloses that the present group will attempt to obtain some kind of arrangement which will permit them to stay where they are.... I consider it very important for the future operation of the national monument that Dr. Phillips and all his associates be removed from the national monument area. I mention this conversation with Miss Chappell only as a warning of what I anticipate will be a problem for the Service.[152]

Back in Washington, following conversation with the Virginia Attorney General's office, it was concluded that the state appropriation was contingent upon the federal government accepting title to the entire property of the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation--no more and no less. This decision was held to rule out both Phillips' proposals for exclusions and hopes that the state might acquire for the monument lands along the highway not in the tract. Accordingly, the Regional Director was requested to take steps to obtain acceptable title evidence on the entire tract (at that time held to contain 164.6 acres,

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[152]Memorandum to Acting Director, September 24, 1956 (L1415).

more or less, as the result of a 1955 survey). The indebtedness was not to be paid off until the title had been approved by the United States Attorney General.[153] Attorney Lee and Phillips were both notified of these decisions.

The deed was drawn up on October 29, 1956, but detailed examination of the title data occasioned further delay. Phillips was becoming increasingly anxious to conclude the transaction, and prevailed upon Congressman William M. Tuck to write to Director Wirth asking what progress was being made in the matter.[154] Finally, on June 18, 1957, Attorney General Herbert Brownell approved the title. On this date the deed of donation was accepted by the Assistant Director of the National Park Service, thereby completing the last official step in establishing the Booker T. Washington National Monument. The following month, an Interior Department news release announced the appointment of Chester L. Brooks, Historian at Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park, as the first superintendent of the monument.

As Historian Appleman had forseen, Phillips, his Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation, and his Booker T. Washington Centennial Commission made no move to leave the newly established national monument. Furthermore, he retained a considerable degree of political

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[153]Memorandum, Acting Director Hillory A. Tolson to Regional Director, Region One, September 6, 1956 (L58).

[154]February 22, 1957 (L1415).

influence. Acting Director Scoyen considered the situation:

> ...our relationships with Dr. Phillips will probably constitute a very delicate problem when we initiate our administration of the area. It should be kept in mind that he was able to have the Monument established over our objections and that he also secured the appropriation of $225,000 for the celebration of the Booker T. Washington year without any help from us; as a matter of fact, we were rather surprised when we found out that he had gotten it.
>
> Of course, the Park rules and regulations do not permit anyone to reside permanently in a National Park or Monument area unless he is engaged in business or employed there, or otherwise permitted by the Director of the National Park Service. This is a question that will no doubt come up, but we will handle it when we get to it.... Mr. Wirth emphasized the fact that we should keep in mind that Dr. Phillips will require rather careful handling so that we do not become involved in serious controversy....[155]

Into this delicate situation came newly-appointed Superintendent Chester L. Brooks. Arriving in Roanoke on September 27, 1957, he set up temporary headquarters in the Blue Ridge Parkway office there. Then he journeyed out to survey his new domain. It was not an inviting spectacle. As Brooks later described it, "The area looked like a city dump."[156] The buildings were filthy, the grounds were overgrown with weeds, and several years' accumulation of trash had been pushed into the branch behind Hopkins Hall. Wrote Brooks, "...the buildings at the Monument constitute one of the worst imaginable fire hazards. The attics are filled with papers; the fire extinguishers have not been recharged since 1950; the wiring is unsatisfactory and there are a host of other conditions existing there that defy fire prevention standards." In addition, a

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[155]Memorandum to Regional Director, Region One, August 16, 1957 (L58).

[156]Interview, March 6, 1969.

recent harvesting of timber for pulpwood had created a critical forest fire hazard.[157]

In initial conversation with Brooks, Sidney J. Phillips again showed no inclination to leave the national monument. He pointed to the post office at George Washington Birthplace National Monument as justification for retaining the Booker Washington Birthplace Post Office, and indicated that Brooks was not to put anyone on his staff until he--Phillips--had cleared it with Governor Stanley.[158]

Brooks wanted no publicity associating the National Park Service with its new area until the area looked somewhat like a park, and until Phillips, the National Monument Foundation, and the Booker Washington Birthplace Post Office were removed from the grounds. Clearly, the elimination of Phillips and his organizations would be the greater challenge. Brooks soon realized that the only way to gain the upper hand would be to undermine the support of Phillips' political backers in Virginia and elsewhere. Dick Sutherland of the Roanoke World-News was then preparing his series of articles on the Centennial Commission, and Brooks cooperated fully with him in gathering information for his disclosures. For its part, the newspaper agreed to suspend publicity tying the Park Service to the area until Brooks' initial goals had been achieved. When

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[157]Superintendent's Report for November 1957, December 4, 1957 (A28).

[158]Interview with Brooks, March 6, 1969.

Sutherland's articles appeared in late October, Brooks saw to it that copies were sent to all those to whom Phillips might turn for help in maintaining his position at the monument.[159] Phillips had never been too careful about taxes, and in early December Brooks wrote, "I am cooperating with Mr. J. N. John, District Operator, Internal Revenue Service; the Internal Revenue Bureau is interested in Mr. Phillips' finances."[160]

These tactics proved highly successful. When the Park Service refused to issue a special use permit for the Booker Washington Birthplace Post Office, Phillips acquiesced without further protest and closed it on December 1, 1957.[161] His support having melted away, Phillips and the National Monument Foundation completed evacuation of the area five days later.

Following this significant achievement came the second monumental task of cleaning up the area. Albert S. Wright was transferred from the

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[159] Interview with C. L. Brooks, March 6, 1969.

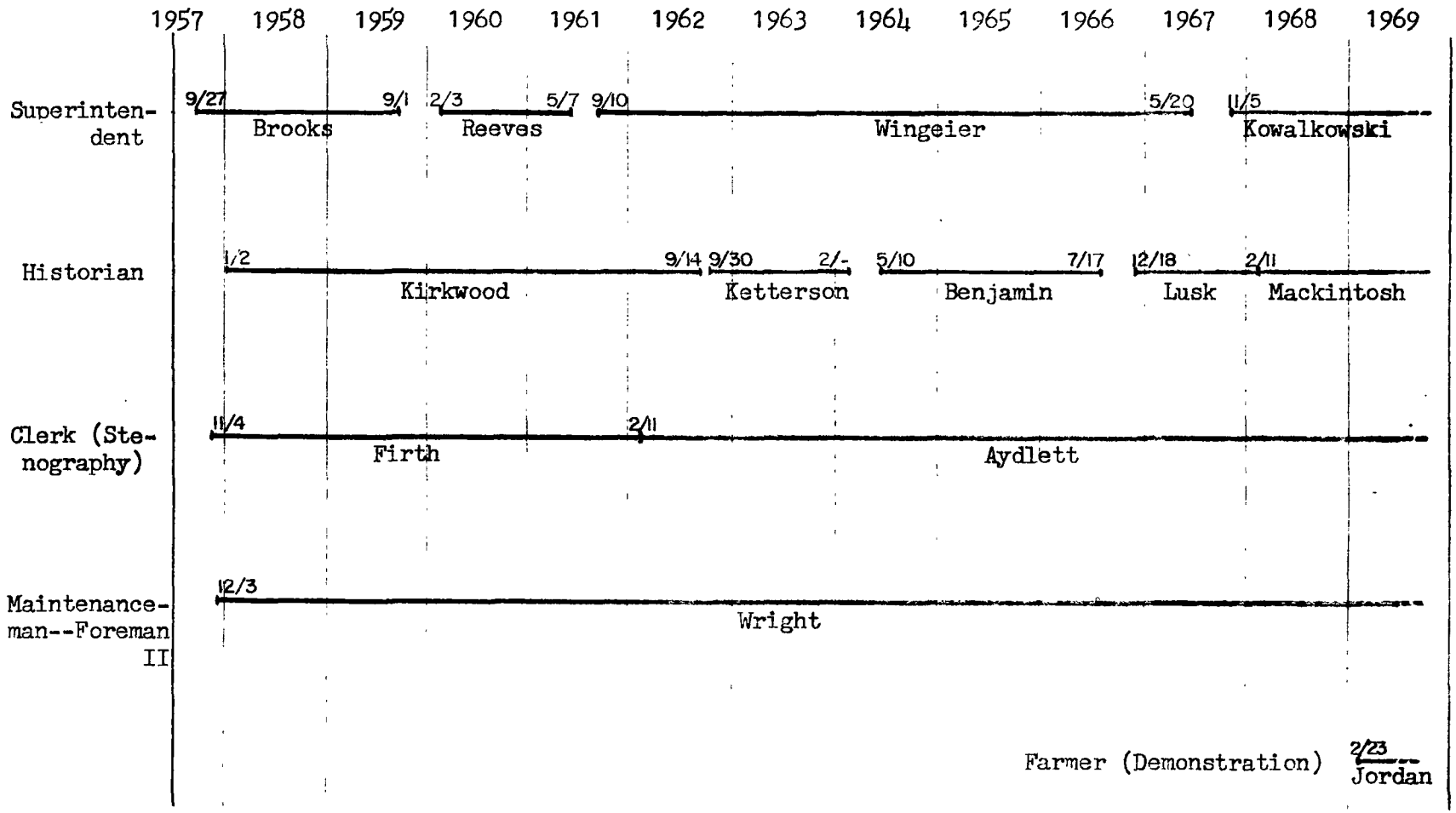
[160] Superintendent's Report for November 1957, December 4, 1957 (A28).

[161] Earlier in the fall, foreseeing that his post office might be forced out of the national monument, Phillips had approached Ruth J. Saunders about placing a rural postal station in a building he proposed to erect on her property, directly adjacent to the monument. According to J. H. Gadsby, Acting Chief, Division of Recreation Resource Planning, "She appeared not much in sympathy with the Phillips proposal but thought she would at least have her lawyer hear him out." (Memorandum, Gadsby to Regional Director, Region One, November 29, 1957, L1415.) This postal station was never established.

Blue Ridge Parkway to fill the Maintenanceman position on December 3. By the end of the month, eighteen pickup truck loads of trash had been removed from various points on the grounds, and the wishing well had been eliminated. During the year 1958, Tuck Hall was removed, as were the foundations of never-completed Burch Hall, the house near the elementary school, and a number of Robertson-built tobacco barns and shacks. The former Virginia Cottage was painted and improved to serve as on-site quarters for Maintenanceman Wright and his family. Hopkins Hall became the visitor center, although the monument offices remained in Roanoke.

B. Personnel

Before considering further the various aspects of the history of Booker T. Washington National Monument, it would be well to introduce the monument's cast of characters from the time of its establishment to the present. The following chart will enable the reader to determine the permanent personnel on duty at the monument at any given time. In the absence of a superintendent, the incumbent historian acted in that capacity.



TENURE OF PERMANENT PERSONNEL

1. Superintendents. Chester L. Brooks, the monument's first superintendent, came to the area from Theodore Roosevelt National Memorial Park, where he served as historian. His important accomplishments included taking exclusive possession of the monument for the Park Service, making it presentable as a unit of the National Park System, and uncovering much historical information necessary for the area's development and interpretation. He left to become superintendent of Petersburg National Military Park.

Roscoe Reeves was a former ranger on the Blue Ridge Parkway. During his relatively short tenure as superintendent, the cabin reconstruction and the Roll Road Trail were completed. Reeves left following his promotion to Assistant Chief Ranger on the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Fred A. Wingeier came to the monument from a ranger position at Great Smoky Mountains National Park. During his administration, the monument office was moved to the monument property and the new visitor center was constructed. Wingeier died in office on May 20, 1967.

Stanley C. Kowalkowski was another Blue Ridge Parkway ranger. Development of the living historical farm at the monument has been of primary importance during his current administration.

2. Historians. James J. Kirkwood began and ended his Park Service career as first historian at Booker T. Washington National

Monument. He worked closely with Superintendent Brooks on much of the original research for the area, and was responsible for the early publications. Kirkwood served a total of nine months as acting superintendent.

Andrew F. Ketterson was formerly historian at Chickamauga-Chattanooga National Military Park. The principal accomplishment of his brief term at the monument was the design and construction of exhibits for the temporary visitor center in the old Hopkins Hall. He was promoted to a position at Castillo de San Marcos National Monument.

Albert J. Benjamin joined the Park Service on a permanent basis at Booker T. Washington after temporary employment at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. He worked on the Museum Prospectus, the audiovisual program, and the interpretive folder. Benjamin left upon promotion to an historian position on the Natchez Trace Parkway.

H. Gilbert Lusk came to the monument after service at Castillo de San Marcos. Nearly six months of his term were spent as acting superintendent following the hospitalization and death of Superintendent Wingeier; for this he received a Special Act Award. Lusk originated the living farm concept for Booker T. Washington National Monument. He was promoted to a supervisory historian position at Cape Hatteras National Seashore.

Barry Mackintosh arrived after two years of furlough with the United States Army, prior to which he had been assigned to Fort Caroline National Memorial. Research and development work in connection with the living historical farm have occupied much of his time to date.

3. Clerks. Louise K. Firth came to the monument from the veterans' hospital in Roanoke. Failing eyesight forced her retirement. Louise H. Aydlett saw prior service in the Blue Ridge Parkway office. She received a Special Act Award for her work following the death of Superintendent Wingeier.

4. Maintenanceman--Foreman II. Albert Sidney Wright was another former Blue Ridge employee. His position of Maintenanceman was upgraded to that of Foreman II (Farmer) following the institution of the living historical farm program.

5. Farmer (Demonstration). John L. Jordan worked for the monument as an intermittent laborer beginning on March 14, 1966. His new permanent position as Farmer (Demonstration) was established for the living historical farm program, and involves costumed interpretive work.

C. Land Acquisition

As noted by the field investigation team sent to the area in August

of 1956, the land occupied by the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation and subsequently donated to the federal government was not adequate to provide visual control and protection against possible adverse development along State Route 122. Accordingly, the Boundary Status Report prepared on May 16, 1957 and approved by Acting Associate Director Hillory A. Tolson on June 2 recommended that a total of about twenty acres on both sides of the highway be acquired. This would give the monument a highway frontage of some 1,950 feet and a protective strip about 300 feet deep along the north side of the highway. The property desired for addition was described as "mostly low value land of submarginal quality."[162]

Following his arrival, Superintendent Brooks developed a somewhat larger conception of what the monument boundaries should be. In the preliminary draft of the Mission 66 Prospectus for the area, he proposed that the 5.99-acre county school tract be added, along with some 80 acres of the Saunders land to the northeast. Regional Director Cox turned down this proposal, reminding Brooks of the approved Boundary Status Report.[163] Brooks revised his prospectus.

In the summer of 1958, a new survey of the monument property was made for the purpose of installing permanent concrete boundary markers.

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[162](L1417).

[163]Memorandum, February 4, 1958 (A98).

From this it was determined that the land consisted of 199.73 acres--considerably more than was implied by the previous "164.6 acres, more or less" determination resulting from the 1955 survey. Considering the absence of the 5.99-acre school tract, this brought the monument's acreage very close to the figure of 207 acres held by James Burroughs (keeping in mind that the 1917 land exchange had traded away about seven of these "original" acres).

According to A. F. Perkins, Regional Chief, Branch of National Park System Planning, further Congressional legislation would be needed to authorize purchase of any additional land for Booker T. Washington National Monument.[164] This would involve considerable delay, and Brooks feared that the cash value of the lands recommended for acquisition would rise in the meantime with every improvement made at the monument. On July 30, 1958 he talked with Mrs. Lizilia Harris Hayes, owner of the tract adjacent to the northwest boundary. His apprehensions were voiced in a memorandum to the Regional Director:

> ...It is apparent that the improvements in the Monument within the past year have caused Mrs. Hayes to visualize the commercial possibilities of this seemingly small, but strategically located tract of land. The Norwood Harris tract [then owned by Mrs. Hayes] is adjacent to the site of a proposed housing and utility area. It also controls the access to the highway for the Monument's entrance road development. Any concession stand or similar operation at this location would detract from the area, confuse the visitor as to whether it was a part of the park, and complicate our development plans.[165]

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[164] Memorandum to Brooks, May 9, 1958 (L1415).

[165] August 1, 1958 (L1415).

Brooks foresaw the possibility of a rise in Gills Creek following construction of the Smith Mountain Dam on the Roanoke River, thereby increasing the value of the monument's southern land as lake shore property. If this were to happen, he thought that Mrs. Hayes and the Saunders (owners of the desired land on the northeast) might be interested in trading their land for monument land on the south side of Gills Creek.[166] Meanwhile, Brooks wanted to know if the needed land might be purchased under provision of the Historic Sites Act.[167]

Acting Regional Director H. Reese Smith replied to Brooks' anxious memorandum, stating that legislation would be required even if the land or funds for it were to be donated under the Historic Sites Act. Concerning Brooks' idea of disposing of some of the monument's southern land, he wrote,

> We have had in mind all along, as you know, that after things settle down we might want to dispose of the southern end of the Monument, perhaps everything south of the School Board Tract. The idea was not only that the lands might possibly be used for exchange purposes, but also that to cut down on maintenance and protection by eliminating those lands which would not contribute to the purpose for which the Monument was established.... We also had in mind that we could eliminate from the Monument the one acre that lies on the west side of the County road leading into the Franklin County School building....[168]

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[166]The hoped-for rise never occurred.

[167]Memorandum to Regional Director, August 1, 1958 (L1415).

[168]Memorandum, August 6, 1958 (L1415).

On September 27, 1958, Superintendent Brooks met with Ruth and Thomas R. Saunders, owners of the desired land on the northeast. They were not interested in selling and named a totally unrealistic price of $30,000--"about ten times what the land is worth," according to Brooks. He believed that if the price had been reasonable, the Eastern National Park and Monument Association might have purchased this land for the monument.[169] Shortly thereafter, Brooks made a plea for immediate action to introduce legislation enabling acquisition of the needed lands:

> ...Although no construction is scheduled at the Monument at the present time, it is imperative that a Boundary Revision Bill be introduced in the present Congress, as it is conceivable that it might take two or more years to obtain passage of such a bill.

At the same time he suggested that the monument boundary be extended to include a strip along the entire west side of the county school road.[170]

Assistant Regional Director E. M. Lisle's reply indicated that the Service's legislative program was already heavy with land acquisition bills for areas with higher priority Mission 66 construction programs. "In the circumstances," he stated, "it is not possible to consider sponsoring the introduction of a special measure for Booker T. Washington in the first session of the 86th Congress but if good progress is made with the present program perhaps it might become feasible to introduce a bill in the second session." Lisle did not accept the idea of the

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[169]Superintendent's Report for September 1958, October 7, 1958 (A28).

[170]Memorandum to Regional Director, November 19, 1958 (L1415).

buffer strip along the west side of the school road, believing that as long as the monument retained its existing land on that side, the likelihood of other developments there would be slight. However, he did feel that the small triangular fragment owned by John W. Booth remaining on the east side of the road should be acquired.[171] (At that time the service road to a proposed utility building was expected to pass over this land.) Accordingly the Boundary Status Report was revised on June 22, 1959, to include this .04 acre tract. This made a total of 18.14 acres recommended for inclusion, at an estimated cost of $4,180.[172]

Nearly a year later, Brooks' successor Roscoe Reeves inquired about the status of the legislative program for acquiring the lands included in the Boundary Status Report. Superintendent Reeves declared that the 20,000-acre reservoir to be created by the Smith Mountain Dam would soon increase the value of property in the vicinity, and added, "...there is no doubt that commercial buildings of all kinds will spring up along the roads leading to the facilities of the reservoir, which would include Highway 122 which runs right by the entrance to the Monument....it is more apparent than ever that we should make an all out effort to acquire this property."[173]

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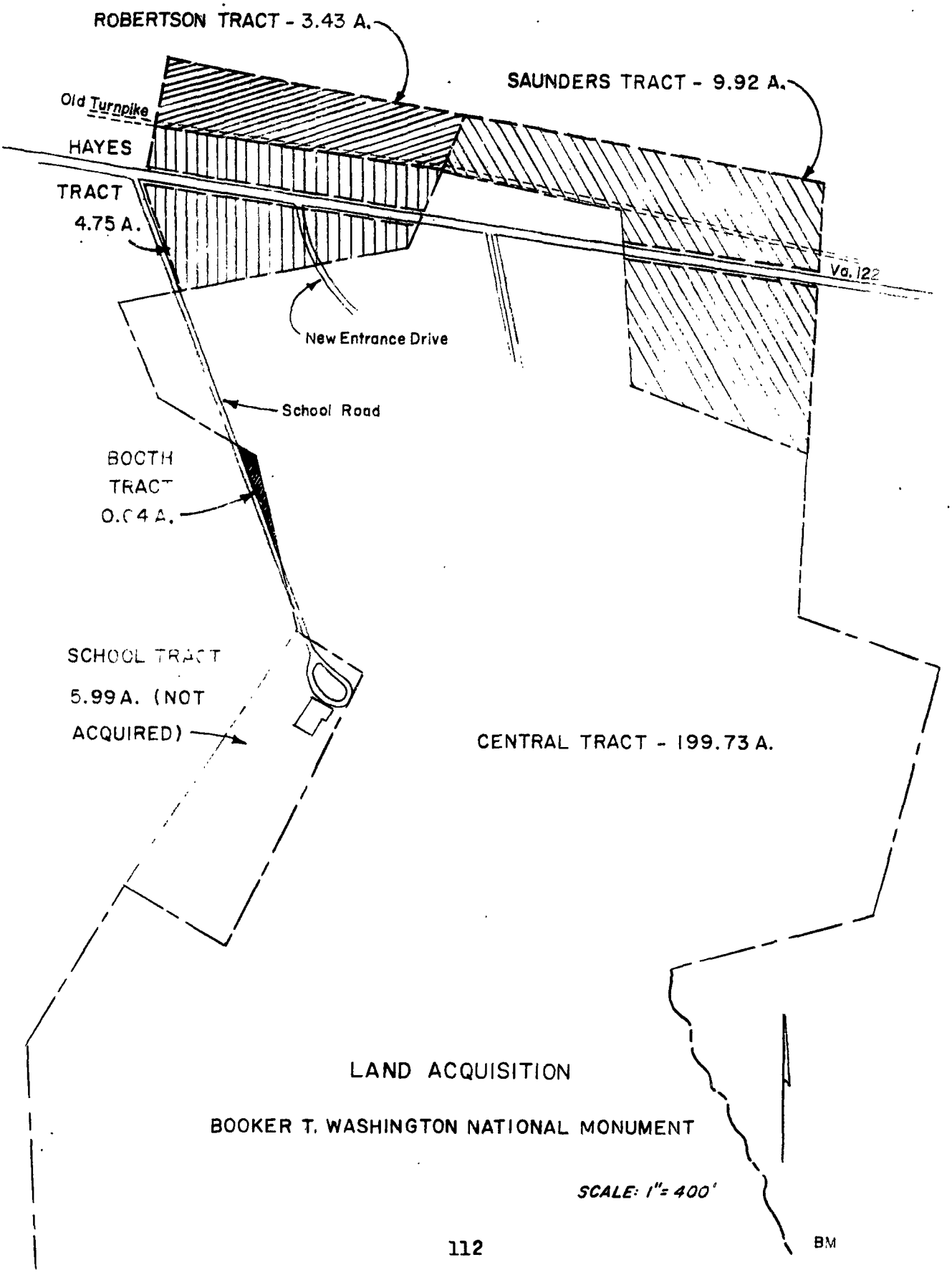
[171]Memorandum to Brooks, December 11, 1958 (L1415).

[172]Boundary Status Report prepared August 11, 1959 (L1417).

[173]Memorandum to Regional Director, March 7, 1960 (L1415).


ROBERTSON TRACT - 3.43 A.
SAUNDERS TRACT - 9.92 A.
Old Turnpike
HAYES
TRACT
4.75 A.
Va. 122
New Entrance Drive
School Road
BOOTH
TRACT
0.04 A.
SCHOOL TRACT
5.99 A. (NOT
ACQUIRED)
CENTRAL TRACT - 199.73 A.
LAND ACQUISITION
BOOKER T. WASHINGTON NATIONAL MONUMENT
SCALE: 1"= 400'
BM

By this time it was apparently agreed that the needs of Booker T. Washington National Monument warranted some kind of higher-level action. The monument was informed in the fall of 1960 that an item concerning its needed land was included in the Service's Preliminary Legislative Program for the first session of the Eighty-Seventh Congress (1961). The item, however, was thoroughly noncommittal:

> ...It has not been finally determined whether amendatory legislation will be needed to effect such addition, or whether an increase is required in the existing authorization for the use of appropriated funds. When these questions have been resolved an appropriate recommendation will be submitted.[174]

Another year passed. On September 19, 1961, Fred A. Wingeier, Reeves' successor, wrote to find out what, if anything, was going on: "The question of land acquisition at this Monument seems to me to be a matter of considerable urgency. We would like to know the present status of proposed legislation and what is occasioning the delay."[175]

In view of all that had gone before, the reply was remarkable: not only was no legislation considered necessary to acquire the additional lands, but the Solicitor's opinion to this effect had been transmitted to the Director as early as January of 1960. The Solicitor had based his opinion on the Senate report on the bill to authorize establishment

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[174]Quoted in memorandum of Neal A. Butterfield, Regional Chief of Recreation Resource Planning, to Reeves, September 26, 1960 (L1415).

[175]Memorandum to Regional Director (L1415).

of the monument. In his memorandum to the Director, he reasoned as follows:

> ...the Senate Committee report states that the National Park Service should concentrate its development efforts on "...the central features of the tract to be donated by the State of Virginia, rather than attempt to reconstruct the original plantation theme by fully developing the entire tract." This statement indicates that the Senate Committee believed that the National Park Service could acquire more than the central portion because otherwise there would have been no need for the Committee suggesting that the National Park Service concentrate its development efforts in the central area in order to hold down maintenance costs.[176]

The same memorandum also transmitted the startling news that the $200,000 limitation in the act authorizing Booker T. Washington National Monument referred to all expenditures at the monument:

> The act contains provisions pertaining to maintenance as well as provisions pertaining to development and, as a result, in the absence of a definite indication to the contrary in the legislative history, the $200,000 limitation must necessarily be construed to apply to both development and maintenance.... Accordingly, we believe that the $200,000 limitation is a restriction upon all expenditures by the National Park Service at Booker T. Washington National Monument.[177]

If this interpretation were to be followed, the monument's closure would

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[176]Memorandum, Richard A. Buddeke, Assistant Solicitor, National Parks, to Director, NPS, January 6, 1960 (L1415). This reasoning is hard to accept. A more realistic (though less favorable) interpretation of the Senate committee's intentions would be that "the central features of the tract to be donated by the State of Virginia" referred simply to the area around the Burroughs house and outbuildings, and that "the entire tract" meant no more than the land then owned by the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation which was to be donated to the government. It is difficult to see how this language implies that any additional land could be acquired.

[177]Ibid.

be imminent. Here was the perfect opportunity to abandon an unwanted area! More realistically, Associate Director E. T. Scoyen parried the Solicitor's opinion, believing that normal operating costs would logically be excluded from the limitation "in the absence of a point of order being raised":

> We think it unlikely that a point of order will be raised because it is unreasonable to assume that in authorizing the Monument Congress did not intend to authorize such annual expenses as may be required to administer the area and as Congress may appropriate therefor each year. When expenditures for development and land acquisition costs reach $200,000 we will, of course, seek amendatory legislation if our requirements cannot be met within the limitation.[178]

With the belated transmittal of the Solicitor's opinion regarding land acquisition to the regional and park levels, the way was now open for positive steps toward obtaining the desired properties. On April 3, 1962, Lewis Garber of Rountrey and Associates, a Richmond firm, appraised the four tracts under consideration at $5,090 (later adjusted to $4,555).[179] However, efforts by monument personnel to interest the landowners in selling at the appraised values met with little success. Only John W. Booth, owner of the .04-acre triangle east of the school road, was willing to

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[178]Memorandum to Regional Director, Region One, September 15, 1961 (L1415). In view of the Solicitor's extremely loose interpretation of Congress's intentions regarding land acquisition for the monument, it is particularly surprising that he would have arrived at such a strict interpretation of the monetary limitation--especially since Congress could have never intended to abandon the monument after the expenditure of $200,000.

[179]Memorandum, Acting Assistant Regional Director Raymond O. Mulvaney to the Director, April 23, 1962 (L1415).

part with his tiny tract for the proffered sum of $25; the deed for this was executed on December 14, 1962.[180] Lizilia Harris Hayes, owner of the land most needed for monument development, was also the most adamantly opposed to selling her property. She declared that the land concerned was where she was raised and that it contained her family's cemetery. The offer of a sixty-foot square cemetery reservation with free access did not help, especially after her appraiser valued the land at $6,350--$5,160 more than the government's offer.[181] The other owners, Cora B. Robertson and Thomas and Ruth Saunders, showed little more inclination to sell.

Under the circumstances, condemnation became the only alternative. A Declaration of Taking for the remaining lands was filed on March 18, 1963, and on March 20 an Order for Delivery of Possession was adjudged by the United States District Court. With the addition of these lands the monument attained its final total of 217.87 acres.[182] The landowners did well to hold out for condemnation: the court-appointed commissioners subsequently awarded them a total of $7,554, $3,024 over the combined appraised values of their lands.

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[180]Deed Book 201, p. 166, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.

[181]Letters of Assistant Regional Director Neal A. Butterfield to Jack B. Coulter, September 25 and October 23, 1962 (L1415).

[182]The acreage is officially listed at 217.93 due to the Booth tract having been conveyed as 0.1± acre rather than .04 acre.

On May 22, 1964, Regional Director Elbert Cox gave written permission to the Hayes family through their lawyer for continued use of and access to their cemetery plot, now owned by the government.[183]

One further attempt was made to add land to Booker T. Washington National Monument, this time on the part of "outsiders." As a result of integration, the Booker T. Washington Elementary School was closed in 1966, and in April of 1967 the Franklin County School Board resolved that this property be offered for sale to the federal government. School Superintendent Harold W. Ramsey wrote to Interior Secretary Udall on April 18 concerning the resolution, sending copies to Senators Harry F. Byrd, Jr., and William Spong, and to Representative William M. Tuck. Tuck wrote Udall urging favorable consideration of the proposal; he reasoned that "As Franklin County was the original home of Booker T. Washington, this school...would be an appropriate addition to the Monumental Development."[184] Park Service Assistant Director Theodor R. Swem replied to Tuck's letter, stating that a study of the proposal was being made and informing him that if the property were to be acquired, legislation would be needed both to raise the statutory limitation of $200,000 (then expended) and to extend the monument's boundaries.[185]

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[183]In view of the considerable past correspondence relative to it through his office, Cox's statement that "The National Park Service was not aware that there was an active cemetery on the Lizilia H. Hayes property when it recommended that condemnation proceedings be filed..." must have occasioned something of a credibility gap. (Letter, Cox to Jack B. Coulter, L1415.)

[184]Letter, April 20, 1967 (D34).

[185]Letter, May 31, 1967 (D34). Considering the previous resolution

Acting Superintendent H. Gilbert Lusk recommended against purchase of the School Board property, noting the school building's lack of adaptability to any function useful to the monument.[186] Chief Edward S. Peetz of the Office of Resource Planning, Washington Service Center, also opposed the acquisition, giving as one reason the statement that "The boundaries of the present National Monument include all the 207 acres of the original James Burroughs plantation...."[187] Of course, this was untrue, the school tract ironically being one of the two pieces of the original plantation which the monument did not include.[188] The unintentional falsehood was perpetuated in Assistant Director Edward A. Hummel's letter of July 14, 1967, to Tuck explaining the Service's negative decision concerning the proposal. It was fortunate for the Service that Congressman Tuck did not know any better either.

D. Construction

1. The cabin. The "birthplace" cabin replica inherited from the Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation was the sole physical attraction of the new national monument upon its establishment in

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of the question, the alleged need for additional legislation to extend the boundaries was in fact nonexistent.

[186] Memorandum to Regional Director, May 18, 1967 (D34).

[187] Memorandum to Assistant Director, Cooperative Activities, June 12, 1967 (D34).

[188] The other, as will be remembered, was the tract conveyed by John D. Robertson to W. T. Cook in 1917.

1957. In addition to being inaccurate, however, the cabin was in very poor condition. Wrote Superintendent Brooks to Regional Director Cox in 1959, "The present 'replica' of the slave cabin is rapidly deteriorating. If a visitor should push against the north wall with any degree of force, the wall could collapse."[189] If the cabin were to continue as the principal attraction of the monument, a wholly new structure would be needed.

On June 26, 1959, Superintendent Brooks and Historian James J. Kirkwood submitted their Historic Structures Report entitled "Reconstruction of Slave Cabin."[190] The report pointed up the inaccurate and rotten state of the existing cabin, and cited the availability of Peter and Grover Robertson (sons of John D.) as reason for expediting a new reconstruction. The Robertson brothers were both skilled as carpenters, and remembered the original cabin well.

The most significant item in the report was the disclosure that Washington's birthplace cabin had not been at the site of the existing replica, but rather had stood to the southeast of the Burroughs house. This conclusion was reached after interviews with the Robertson brothers, who related the story told their father by Thomas Burroughs.[191] The

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[189]Memorandum, July 31, 1959 (H30).

[190](H30).

[191]See pages 9-10.

daughter of a former Burroughs neighbor also stated that Washington had been born in the cabin to the southeast of the house.[192] Brooks and Kirkwood realized that this discovery weakened the case for a new reconstruction of the cabin at the southwest corner of the Burroughs house. Nevertheless, they urged this reconstruction on the grounds that a cabin was essential to interpretation of the monument story, and that this cabin was the only one for which knowledge was available concerning its exterior appearance. The possibility that Washington may have spent part of his boyhood in this cabin, as related by Thomas Burroughs through the Robertsons, also was used to help justify this reconstruction.

From talking with the Robertsons, Brooks and Kirkwood learned that the original cabin on the site of the replica then existing had a wooden floor (at least in the 1890s). However, they proposed that the interior of the new reconstruction follow Washington's description of his birthplace cabin "for interpretive purposes," with a dirt floor, a potato hole, and cookware in the fireplace.[193] In short, the reconstruction would combine the exterior of one cabin and the interior of another. A message repeater inside the cabin was planned to give Washington's description of his cabin, along with a brief statement of the significance of the log cabin in American history.

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[192]Kirkwood and Brooks, "Reconstruction of Slave Cabin," p. 14.

[193]Ibid., pp. 19, 25.

The Division of Interpretation was less than enthusiastic about the "combination cabin" proposal. According to Chief Architect Dick Sutton, the Division felt that the cabin should be reconstructed at the birthplace site, with a "period" exterior and the interior as described by Washington in Up From Slavery.[194] Acting Regional Director E. M. Lisle replied to this counterproposal:

> ...We have no accurate information on the exact appearance of the birthplace cabin and this site (No. 1) cannot be located precisely because of construction and bulldozing in its vicinity in past years. The other location (No. 2, site of probable boyhood cabin and present replica) has physical remains in the ground. A photograph of the cabin at this site is also available to support the archeological evidence. We believe it is better to reconstruct a known building on a known site than to construct a replica of doubtful design on a site which cannot be authenticated.... In this home [Washington] received his boyhood training and from here he went to make his place in the world.... Although justification for reconstruction would have been much stronger if this had been the birthplace, we are convinced that the reasons presented in the Historic Structures Report are sufficient to justify the reconstruction on the boyhood cabin site....[195]

Meanwhile, in the summer of 1959, Regional Archeologist John W. Griffin had conducted preliminary investigations in the vicinity of the site at the southwest corner of the Burroughs house, during which he had uncovered nails and pottery of the mid-nineteenth century and had verified the accuracy of the Phillips cabin location in terms of the original cabin on that site. On October 29 he submitted a preliminary

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[194]Memorandum to Regional Director, Region One, September 16, 1959 (H30).

[195]Memorandum to Director, September 28, 1959 (H30). Note how the "boyhood cabin" appellation had moved from the realm of possibility to that of fact. For full discussion of this issue, see Appendix B.

report to support Region's stand on the reconstruction of the "boyhood" cabin. Griffin reasoned as follows:

> ...If Washington lived as much as the first four or five years of his life in the birthplace cabin, and then moved, it is likely that his description of the cabin interior is of the second cabin. If so, the earth floor and potato hole would be appropriate to this second cabin.... The wooden floor could have been added between Washington's departure from the plantation in 1865 and the Robertsons' purchase in 1892 [sic].... In short, I see nothing in the documentary evidence as presented that would definitely indicate that Cabin No. 2 was not the earth-floored one described in Up From Slavery, even though it quite definitely was not the one in which Washington was born.[196]

The opposition returned fire. Charles E. Peterson, Supervising Architect of Historic Structures, had visited the monument on August 27 to consider the reconstruction proposal. "In many ways it reminded me of the other Washington birthplace project as it stood in 1930," he wrote to Eastern Office of Design and Construction Chief Edward S. Zimmer, "--only this new project appeals to me even less." Peterson opposed the reconstruction of any cabin; he included as reasons the lack of accurate available information, the fact that one minor building alone would be out of context, and his belief that an unprotected log cabin would have to be regularly replaced.

> ...The construction of an authentic early log cabin (nearly--if not entirely--a lost art) would take an inordinate amount of architectural time and attention which we can hardly afford.... It seems to me that Booker T.'s life in the area could be more vividly and realistically presented in dioramas in the proposed Visitor Center. A simple and dignified marker on the supposed site would be a lot more practical and would not require an attendant to explain that

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[196]Preliminary Report, Archeological Investigations, Cabin Site, Booker T. Washington National Monument, October 29, 1959 (130).

this is not the original cabin, etc.[197]

ECDC Chief Zimmer agreed with Peterson and recommended that the cabin be eliminated.[198]

Acting Superintendent Kirkwood fired back, emphasizing the need for the cabin in the monument's interpretive program: "In the absence of historic remains related to Washington's life on the plantation, it is necessary to have something tangible on the ground to make the visitor aware of the humble conditions surrounding Washington's birth and early life. A marker at the cabin site could hardly do this." Kirkwood stated that on-site paintings of the other plantation buildings would help recreate the whole scene; in addition, he pointed out the availability of seasoned, treated logs and the Robertson brothers' practical knowledge of cabin construction.[199]

The controversy was settled by Regional Director Cox. In explaining his decision to retain the cabin, Cox wrote to Chief Zimmer:

> ...I believe the Slave Cabin should not be regarded as an architectural "problem" but rather as a matter of interpretation--"In such a rude cabin was born a slave child..." The log cabin will serve primarily as a "prop" illustrative of the theme of the Booker T. Washington National Monument. The explanation of the cabin, insofar as it will be given, will be contained in the script for the message repeater to be located at or in the cabin....

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[197]Memorandum, November 5, 1959 (H30).

[198]Memorandum to Regional Director, Region One, November 6, 1959 (H30).

[199]Memorandum to Regional Director, November 10, 1959 (H30).

Furthermore, he revealed the fact that Acting Director Scoyen had already approved the cabin on November 5.[200]

During the month of September 1959 the Phillips replica had been removed by the monument staff. Further archeological investigations by John W. Griffin in December disclosed the base of the fireplace and chimney of the original cabin on that site. Construction of the new cabin began in April of 1960, and was completed that August. Total cost for the structure came to $1,838--a considerable improvement over EODC's estimate of $13,200.[201]

The cabin audio station, with Washington's description of his birthplace cabin and a segment on the historical significance of the log cabin, was installed inside the new reconstruction. Shortly thereafter, Donald Erskine of the Division of Audiovisual Arts initiated the idea of having a Negro voice speak the words of Washington on the tape.[202] Region and the monument were very cautious about such a radical approach. Superintendent Reeves expressed his belief that the "right kind of colored voice" might be effective, but decided that the matter needed "further study."[203] Acting Regional Director E. M. Lisle concurred, saying

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[200]Memorandum, November 23, 1959 (H30).

[201]This figure did not take into account the donation of many of the logs used.

[202]Memorandum to Regional Director, Region One, September 19, 1960 (H30).

[203]Memorandum to Regional Director, April 11, 1961 (H30).

that "We shall leave it to Superintendent Reeves to take the initiative if and when he feels the time is ripe."[204]

Erskine picked up the ball (where it would otherwise have lain indefinitely). He engaged James Butcher, a Negro drama teacher at Howard University, and on June 17, 1961, mailed a tape with Butcher's cultured voice to the monument for trial. Perhaps significantly, Chief Naturalist Howard R. Stagner's memorandum forwarding the tape described the voice only as "southern"; "Negro" was not mentioned. The tape was put into regular use, with no adverse comment recorded concerning the "southern" accent.

There was some comment about the length of the message, however. Few visitors stayed to hear the entire three minutes and fifty-four seconds of it--particularly the latter portion on log cabin symbolism and significance. Carl Degen and Don Erskine noticed this on their visit to the monument in the fall of 1964, and reduced the time to a minute and thirty-seven seconds. Despite the pleas of Degen and Erskine, however, Superintendent Wingeier insisted upon retaining the longer message, stating that in this way those who wanted the whole story could get it, while those with less interest could leave.[205]

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[204]Memorandum to Director, April 14, 1961 (H30).

[205]Memorandum to Director, June 7, 1965 (H30).

The matter was dropped until 1968, when this time the monument took the initiative. Historian Mackintosh submitted a revised message script, shortened to a minute and fifty-five seconds and entirely in the words of Booker T. Washington. The new tape was received in December of 1968, and has been judged satisfactory.

2. The tobacco barn. The other "historic" structure selected for preservation at the monument was one of the Robertson-built tobacco barns. The roof and upper portion of this barn had caved in, and it was restored in July of 1959 utilizing a few logs from the remains of an original Burroughs barn nearby. In 1963 an open shed was added to the right side of the restored barn, and a hogshead built by Maintenance-man Wright, of the type believed to have been used to roll tobacco to market in the mid-nineteenth century, was placed beneath it. As a result of new research, the hogshead was replaced with a wagon in early 1969.[206]

3. The visitor center, utility building, and residences. The Master Plan for Booker T. Washington National Monument provided for construction of a modern visitor center, removed from but overlooking the "historic area." A separate utility building in the vicinity of the Booker T. Washington Elementary School and three employee residences on the school road were also planned.

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[206] See page 143.

The former Hopkins Hall initially served as a visitor center, and also became monument headquarters after the move from Roanoke on March 31, 1964, but its incongruous location close by the reconstructed cabin was unfortunate. As a visitor center, the large brick building was miscast; the Master Plan noted that "The present Visitor Center does not provide an effective introduction to the area, as the building is rather forbidding in appearance and the visitor tends to avoid it."[207] The sounds of hammers, power saws, and other machinery emanating from the maintenance shop in the basement also provided irritation and discomfort for both visitors and employees in the office overhead. The nonhistoric residence occupied by Maintenanceman Wright and his family was even closer to the reconstructed cabin, and was equally intrusive to the historic scene.

Finally, in 1964, the time came for the elimination of these two buildings and their replacement in accordance with the Master Plan. The separate utility building had been dropped for reasons of cost, and the maintenance area was to be joined to--but insulated from--the new visitor center. On November 25 a contract for the entrance road and utilities for the new visitor center and residence was awarded to the S. R. Draper Paving Company of Roanoke in the amount of $27,472.60. Draper began work on December 17, 1964.

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[207] Chapter 3, Management Programs, The Visitor, p. 6. (D18)

On April 22, 1965, the single bid on the visitor center and one new residence by the Paul E. Overstreet Construction Company was opened and found to be $144,000--$31,000 over the estimated cost. This would put the monument well over its $200,000 limitation, and could not be accepted. A final contract of $106,300 was negotiated, but at the expense of the new residence. It was fortunate that Draper had not begun the road and utility system for the residence; these items were deleted from his contract.

Overstreet began work on May 28, 1965, and the new building was opened to the public on March 9, 1966. The following month a $7,321.50 contract was awarded to Waynesboro Nurseries for planting and grounds improvements. This work was completed on May 27.

Dedication ceremonies for the new visitor center were held on June 18, 1966, the ninth anniversary of the Park Service's acquisition of the area. A Ku Klux Klan rally the night before a half mile away was ominous. Protection personnel from Region and the Blue Ridge Parkway guarded the area during the night, but experienced no trouble. At the ceremony itself, Director Hartzog was unable to attend, but Associate Director A. Clark Stratton and Regional Director Elbert Cox were present. Principal speaker was Howard B. Woods, Deputy Associate Director of the United States Information Agency. Wielding the scissors at the ribbon-cutting was the venerable Portia Washington Pittman. Most of the

program had to be held six miles away at the Burnt Chimney Elementary School because of rain.

E. Interpretation and Research

1. 1958 Museum Prospectus. Due to the absence of historic remains at the newly-created Booker T. Washington National Monument, Superintendent Brooks and Historian Kirkwood were keenly aware of the need for a visitor center-museum at the area to tell the story of Washington. In their draft of the Museum Prospectus submitted in April of 1958, they stated, "Before the area can be promoted as a justifiable visitor goal, the visitor center must be constructed. The self-guiding trail and other developments must follow construction of the visitor center, and not precede it."[208] The Museum Prospectus recognized the difficulty of telling Washington's story in view of his controversial position with many of both races; it attempted to keep to the facts and present a balanced view allowing the visitor to form his own opinions. This original prospectus provided for a total of twenty exhibits, including coverage of slavery in general.

2. Burroughs Plantation Planning Report. The Master Plan conference held at the monument on August 19, 1958, approved the location for the visitor center and the proposed self-guiding trail. While about

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[208] P. 61 (D6215).

half of those present expressed a desire for reconstruction of the "big house" and other plantation buildings, Regional Director Cox opposed such extensive developments. He questioned the Service's ability to do an authentic or convincing restoration, and voiced doubt that the cost would be justified. "It seems to me," said Cox, "that we cannot recreate the whole setting of the original homestead and consequently our plan should be simple, relying upon the museum and the site to stimulate the imagination and emotions of the visitor."[209]

On September 17, 1958, Brooks and Kirkwood submitted their Burroughs Plantation Planning Report as a supplement to the Museum Prospectus, providing detailed plans for outdoor interpretation at the area. The report outlined what they believed to be the minimum development necessary to tell the plantation story. The purpose of interpreting the plantation would be to depict Washington's birthplace, but also to correct the popular "magnolia concept" by showing a typical small plantation of the region. Among the planning report's proposals were easel-type exhibits with lift-up covers around the trail, an herb garden with an exhibit on plantation medicine, and an outdoor shelter outside the visitor center with message repeaters playing a variety of five-minute programs, including spirituals and slave work songs. The restored tobacco barn was to have the front logs removed up to a height of seven feet for interior visibility, and would contain an exhibit on prizing and rolling tobacco

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[209]Memorandum to Brooks, September 17, 1958 (D18).

as was thought to have been done in the 1860s. A message repeater was planned to describe the harvest, prizing, and rolling, with a musical introduction and an auctioneer's chant as conclusion. An operating charcoal pit would serve to supply fuel for curing the tobacco.

None of the above-mentioned proposals were ultimately adopted, although as stated earlier, a hogshead was built and placed under a shed on the side of the fully enclosed barn. The meat of the report was its outline for interpretation along the "Roll Road Trail," so named because of the belief that tobacco hogsheads had been rolled to market along part of it during the Burroughs years. With certain exceptions, the trail and its exhibits were completed substantially in accordance with the Burroughs Plantation Planning Report. Artist Sidney E. King produced eight two-by-three-foot paintings of plantation buildings and scenes during 1959, paid for by a donation from the Eastern National Park and Monument Association. These were placed in vertical wooden cases on the sites of their subjects around the trail.

3. Publications. The first publication issued by Booker T. Washington National Monument was a mimeographed sheet run off in December of 1957. This gave a brief sketch of Washington's life, the Service's plans for his birthplace, and a description of how to get to the monument. One statement made about Washington was the following: "His belief that the Negro should adjust to his social and economic environment led him to advocate a doctrine of race relations which has survived in the South

for three generations." While technically accurate, such an interpretation was not calculated to win the admiration of too many modern Negroes or liberal whites.

The second publication was another mimeographed sheet entitled "The Replica of the Birthplace Cabin," issued in early 1958. This referred, of course, to the Phillips replica, and described the site as that of Washington's boyhood cabin. Certain problems began to present themselves in connection with this sheet, in the form of Sidney J. Phillips. Phillips obtained a copy at the monument on August 26, 1958. The ensuing events were related by Superintendent Brooks to the Regional Director:

> ...On September 2 [Phillips] telephoned me from Tuskegee, Alabama, and threatened that if our free informational leaflet were not written the way he desired he would take the matter to Congress. Mr. Phillips desired the leaflet to contain a rather lengthy summary of the work of his various organizations in establishing the Monument. I informed him we would not be pressured into doing anything we did not think was right. After Mr. Phillips changed his attitude, I mentioned that we could work something out. The portion of the proposed leaflet dealing with the establishment of the Monument was revised and that section sent to him.
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> On September 9 Mr. Phillips called at the office, again protesting that there was not enough about his various organizations in the proposed revised leaflet. I showed him leaflets of other Park Service areas and indicated that we had already given his organizations more recognition than is normally included in leaflets. I also informed him that this was a monument to Booker T. Washington and that we needed all the space available to present the Booker T. Washington story. He seemed somewhat mollified. I believe that I left the impression with him that he would get nowhere with threats.[210]

On March 12, 1959, Phillips again visited the monument office, and according to Brooks, "he more than hinted that he thought we should give more

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[210]Memorandum, September 17, 1958 (K1459).

publicity to his activities on behalf of establishing the monument."[211]

In November of 1959, Historian Kirkwood submitted his text for the first "official" publication, an eight page folder. This 6x8½-inch folder was received in June of 1960, and continued in use with one minor revision until March 1967. Interestingly enough, it contained no reference whatsoever to Phillips or any of his organizations. The folder was completely redone by Historian Benjamin in 1966, and further revised by Region. It was received in the new 4x9¼ inch format in March of 1967, and has been favorably commented upon by many.

The guide for the Roll Road Trail began as a mimeographed leaflet in 1960. That August, Historian Kirkwood submitted a text and layout for a guide folder to be published by the Eastern National Park and Monument Association. The finished product was obtained in January of 1961, and was distributed free. With the 1962 reprint, it became a five cent sales item, later raised to ten cents.

Another of Kirkwood's projects was the Historical Handbook for Booker T. Washington National Monument. He sent a first draft to Region in January of 1960, and rewrote it in 1961, following the suggestions of Publications Officer Roger J. Rogers and Regional Historian James W. Holland. The following year he again submitted the handbook to Region for

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[211]Superintendent's Report for March 1959, April 3, 1959 (A28).

publication. Nothing happened. In late 1964 Superintendent Wingeier requested that the handbook be published as soon as possible in order to be ready for the new visitor center.[212] Charles E. Shedd, Jr., Regional Chief of Interpretation and Visitor Services, replied, stating that the heavy workload with park folders was postponing the handbook; he had no idea as to when it might be completed.[213] Over two years later, Wingeier again inquired about the status of the handbook. Shedd's answer revealed that the manuscript was still in the Washington Office. "After working quite extensively with Jim Kirkwood on the text, Mr. Rogers was somewhat discouraged by the cool reception which the History Editor in Washington gave it," said Shedd. "While it has not been rejected officially, it appears that more work on it is needed."[214] The handbook series in general had slowed to a crawl, especially after the introduction of the mini-folders. At the time of this writing, however, Rogers reports that the Booker T. Washington Historical Handbook is to be published after all, hopefully at some time during the 1970 fiscal year.

4. Early research. During October of 1958, Superintendent Brooks visited the Library of Congress and conducted some preliminary research in the vast collection of Booker T. Washington papers there. The next April, Brooks and Historian Kirkwood visited Tuskegee Institute on a research trip. Brooks described the visit to the Regional Director:

[212]Memorandum to Regional Director, December 7, 1964 (K3823).

[213]Memorandum to Wingeier, December 10, 1964 (K3823).

[214]Memorandum to Wingeier, January 18, 1967 (K3823).

...As you know, there has been some difficulty connected with research at Tuskegee. I think we learned some of the reasons behind this seemingly uncooperative attitude. Once everyone knew we were not connected with Mr. S. J. Phillips, we had no difficulty in securing the information and cooperation we desired.... Thereafter, when we were introduced it would go something like this: "This is Mr. Brooks, Superintendent of Booker T. Washington National Monument, which is strictly Federal and has no relationship with anyone--in other words, he is here without stigma."

I learned more of the problems between Phillips and Tuskegee and can now understand why Tuskegee has looked askance at the Phillips operations in connection with Booker T. Washington and George Washington Carver National Monuments. Mr. Trout [Chairman of Public Relations] told me that during the period when Dr. Patterson, President of Tuskegee, was considering retirement, he was plugging for Dr. Foster (now president) for the president's job. Mr. Phillips was plugging for Phillips for the same position and a running battle ensued in which Phillips came "that close" (the speaker's hand held up with forefinger and thumb close together) to becoming president of Tuskegee.... The people at Tuskegee feel that Phillips' Booker T. Washington Memorial activities were done to spite Tuskegee....

We went to Tuskegee without Phillips' knowledge. This was evidently a good move, for everyone asked if Phillips knew we were there. When we said no, the individual felt we could be trusted.[215]

The research trip to Tuskegee Institute was particularly helpful in obtaining old photographs of Washington and the school for future use in the visitor center exhibits and in publications. A month later, in May of 1959, Brooks and Kirkwood spent two more weeks at the Library of Congress amid the Washington papers, learning much about Washington's later life but relatively little about his early years at his birthplace.

5. Museum development. The first "museum" at Booker T.

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[215]Memorandum, April 14, 1959 (H2215). Phillips visited the monument on several occasions thereafter, but offered no further difficulties. He died on March 9, 1965.

Washington National Monument was the former Hopkins Hall. This served merely as a reception station until June of 1963, when seven exhibits designed by Historian Ketterson were installed. These panels were well received, but were to be only temporary. The time for the new visitor center was approaching, and in the spring of 1964 Acting Assistant Regional Director J. C. Harrington requested a revision of the 1958 Museum Prospectus to provide for ten exhibits at a cost of $17,000.[216]

Historian Benjamin prepared the revision (now termed an Interpretive Prospectus), which again emphasized the need for a museum in view of the lack of historic features at the site. "Furthermore," he wrote, "the features of Washington's story which are most important are primarily intellectual and philosophic in nature, so they necessitate museum treatment."[217] Wayne W. Bryant, Acting Chief, Division of Interpretation and Visitor Services, commented upon Benjamin's prospectus: "In our experience this type of subject has proven singularly unsuited to exhibit treatment." Bryant noted that Washington's story did not involve exhibitable specimens in any important way. "For these reasons we suggest that the primary medium of presentation be an audiovisual program rather than a series of exhibits."[218]

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[216]Memorandum to Wingeier, March 31, 1964 (D6215).

[217]Interpretive Prospectus, draft of July 1, 1964, p. 1 (K1815).

[218]Memorandum to Regional Director, Southeast Region, July 29, 1964 (K1815).

Accordingly, the Interpretive Prospectus was again revised, this time in Region. It provided for the audiovisual program as the chief interpretive medium and reduced the number of exhibits to five, including a diorama depicting the emancipation of the Burroughs' slaves, an aerial painting of the plantation, and three panels on the career of Booker T. Washington. At least three audio stations in addition to the one existing at the cabin were proposed, including the spring and the tobacco barn as subjects. Superintendent Wingeier approved this final revision on August 21, 1964.

With the expense of the audiovisual program and facilities higher than expected, Harold L. Peterson, Acting Chief, Branch of Museum Development, proposed on May 3, 1965, that the diorama be reduced to a "sculpture group," and that the aerial painting be deferred.[219] Wingeier made a plea for retention of both the diorama and the painting: "We sincerely hope that enough money can be saved in some other less important area so that the interpretive program will retain its needed depth."[220] But Peterson's recommendations were approved. And by the time the visitor center was under construction, it was found that there was not enough money for even the sculpture group. Since the framing for the sculpture group had already been installed, it was decided to install a sales display housing in the space for the Eastern National Park and Monument Association.

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[219]Memorandum to Regional Director, Southeast Region (K1815).

[220]Memorandum to Regional Director, May 6, 1965 (K1815).

The audiovisual program, a seventeen-minute motion picture entitled "What's a Heaven For," was produced by the Division of Audiovisual Arts and placed into operation on June 5, 1966. Its modern collage art has proved controversial, but the film has generally been received with enthusiasm.

On January 18, 1967, the monument requested a donation from the Eastern National Park and Monument Association for the deferred Burroughs plantation aerial painting. The request was withdrawn upon the discovery that $2000 had been saved on the visitor center furnishings and would be available for the painting.[221] Sidney King bid $500 for the job, but Russell J. Hendrickson, Chief of the Eastern Museum Laboratory, said that they would prefer to do the painting there "where we can more readily exert quality control."[222] Over a year later, in March of 1968, Rumsey Beery, contract artist for the painting, visited the monument to make preliminary sketches. The painting was finally received that June, completing for the foreseeable future the visitor center exhibits at Booker T. Washington National Monument.

6. The living historical farm. In the course of the monument's development, a number of individuals had suggested from time to time that

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[221]Memorandum, Assistant Regional Director Granville B. Liles to Chief, Branch of Museum Development, February 6, 1967 (D6215).

[222]Memorandum to Regional Director, Southeast Region, March 1, 1967 (D6215).

more be done to recreate the appearance or operation of the Burroughs plantation. At the hearing on the bill to establish the monument, Sidney Phillips had proposed the restoration of a typical plantation settlement, with the owner's house and slave quarters. Half of those at the Master Plan conference in 1958 favored at least the reconstruction of the "big house." As was seen, Regional Director Cox vetoed this idea, as he did again in 1960 when the opportunity arose to obtain old logs from a nearby abandoned house.[223] The Master Plan specified that full-scale restoration of the plantation buildings and grounds would not be attempted. In addition to the cabin and tobacco barn, however, a number of lesser efforts were made to recreate the plantation scene. A small patch of tobacco was first planted in 1959; the harvested tobacco has been fire-cured in the barn each fall and left hanging there as an exhibit. Cattle were allowed to graze on the land under permit beginning in 1960. In 1963 a flax patch was established, though no use was made of the harvested crop.

With the completion of the new visitor center and its audiovisual program and exhibits in 1966, the plantation assumed a more subordinate role in the interpretation of the area. For the first time, some visitors did not even go to see the reconstructed cabin, now hidden from view by the remaining residence. Historian (and Acting Superintendent) Gil Lusk came to regard the area's interpretation, particularly that

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[223]Superintendent's Report for February 1960, March 11, 1960 (A28).

dealing with the plantation, as "dead."[224] On September 28, 1967, with the encouragement of Regional Chief of Interpretation Charles E. Shedd, Jr., Lusk submitted an amendment to the Interpretive Prospectus, "...necessitated by the failure of the present Interpretive Prospectus to deal with interpretation on the Burroughs Plantation...."[225] This preliminary draft envisioned the reconstruction of the major plantation buildings, and a "living historical farm" with on-site interpreters in period costume. Lusk recommended elimination of the trail guide booklet and its replacement with permanent wayside exhibits and markers. Another suggestion called for removal of the tobacco barn shed and relocation of the hogshead at the proposed horse barn.

Shedd and Alan E. Kent, Acting Chief, Division of Planning and Interpretive Services, visited the monument on December 19-20 to help Lusk with ideas for a new Interpretive Prospectus. They agreed to minimize interpretive markers, and to use the planned minifolder as the initial guide booklet. The prospectus would outline the ultimate development of the plantation, but would also provide for an interim phase until the Congressional monetary limitation could be raised.[226]

Lusk forwarded the completed Interpretive Prospectus on January 19, 1968. The introduction presented its purpose:

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[224]Interview, May 14, 1969.

[225]P. 1 (D6215).

[226]Memorandum, Kent to Kowalkowski, December 2, 1967 (D6215).

> ...The initial prospectus, while adequate in defining museum development, failed to develop the Burroughs Plantation as the birthplace and childhood home of Booker T. Washington. The interpretive program was based on a man's accomplishments, with little interpretation of his early life, his confinement as a slave, and the effects of those early experiences on his life. If we are to interpret a man's great achievements, we must also interpret his heritage, otherwise we create a skyscraper with no foundations.[227]

In the reconstructed buildings there would be no railings or cases to keep the visitor away from antique furnishings; instead, "tissue paper artifacts"--expendable reproductions that could be handled--would be used. Among the planned reconstructions were the Burroughs house, birthplace cabin, smokehouse, blacksmith shop, barns, corn cribs, and privy. The existing cabin, termed the "boyhood home of Booker T. Washington," was to be remodeled with a wooden floor and a storage area as recalled by the Robertsons. Contrary to his first prospectus amendment draft, Lusk now decided to leave the hogshead at the tobacco barn and build two more sheds there. Another hogshead would serve as an "entrance feature" by the parking area.

In the fields and pastures, period crops and livestock would be raised by a costumed farm crew using period tools and equipment. A number of craft demonstrations were planned, including charcoal making for tobacco curing; message repeaters playing first-person vernacular tapes would be located at the "big house," birthplace cabin, blacksmith shop, tobacco barn, horse barn, and cemetery.

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[227]P. 1 (D6215).

As these developments occurred, the prospectus called for the elimination of the Sidney King paintings around the Roll Road Trail. The building reconstructions were not viewed as possible under the existing Congressional limitation, and were therefore placed under the "ultimate plan" for the area; most of the other developments were called for in the "interim plan."

Lusk's Interpretive Prospectus was enthusiastically received in Region and Washington. Regional Director Jackson E. Price approved it on May 31, 1968, and Director Hartzog made the establishment of a living historical farm at Booker T. Washington National Monument one of his goals for the following fiscal year. Developments began during the summer of 1968, and at the time of this writing include a vegetable garden, a hog pen, a sheep pasture, a cornfield, and the acquisition of a horse, wagons, and other equipment. Tobacco and flax are still grown, and cows continue to graze under permit. A nearby log barn was obtained without cost and dismantled in August of 1968; it is currently being reassembled as a "craft demonstration" on the site of the Burroughs horse barn with monument labor, thereby circumventing the construction limitation.

In line with the Interpretive Prospectus, Historian Mackintosh, Lusk's successor, prepared a script for the new tobacco barn audio station; the voice is that of Munroe, a Burroughs slave, describing the tobacco harvest and curing.[228] Mackintosh submitted a manuscript for the

[228]Considering the hesitation about trying even a cultured Negro

minifolder in July of 1968, but when this was indefinitely postponed that fall, he prepared a new sales folder for association publication to replace the long-obsolete Roll Road Trail guide booklet.

Since the approval of the Interpretive Prospectus, research for accurate development and interpretation of the living historical farm has been of prime importance, and has already caused several significant changes in belief and action. During the remainder of 1968, Historian Mackintosh produced studies on the Burroughs family, the local community during Washington's years in it, and agriculture on the Burroughs plantation.[229] These efforts disclosed--contrary to long-standing belief and interpretation--that all fourteen of the Burroughs children did not live in the "big house" or even on the plantation, that charcoal was not used by the Burroughs to cure their tobacco, and that the Burroughs did not roll their tobacco to market in hogsheads or even use hogsheads at all. These discoveries required elimination of the existing and proposed charcoal exhibits and hogsheads, and redesignation of the Roll Road Trail to "Plantation Trail." The most recent damage inflicted by Mackintosh--this time to the long-accepted story of Washington's "boyhood" cabin--may be surveyed in Appendix B of this history. On a more positive note, use of the agricultural and industrial censuses of 1860 revealed much about these subjects in the community, including the kinds and quantities

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voice at the cabin audio station in 1960, the use of an uneducated dialect nine years later indicates real progress in the encouragement of diversity.

229 "The Burroughs Plantation: Background Studies."

of crops and livestock produced on the Burroughs plantation during that year.

The principal guideline for future development of the living historical farm at Booker T. Washington National Monument will be the major study on the subject by Edwin C. Bearss, research historian at the Division of History. Bearss' study, undertaken during the first half of 1969, covers in detail all aspects of agriculture as it would have been practiced on the Burroughs plantation, and offers recommendations for the various building reconstructions. With the exception of the Burroughs house, which will require an Historic Structures Report and formal pre-construction procedures, it is now believed that all of the farm buildings may be erected, using logs from the monument and nearby structures, on an "informal" basis without regard to the construction limitation.

F. The Public

So far as the public was concerned, Booker T. Washington National Monument began its existence with four strikes against it: the controversial nature of Booker T. Washington among many of both black and white races, the negative impression left by Sidney J. Phillips, the monument's isolated location relative to major highways, and its absence of historic remains or other features of interest.

The appeal of Washington as an individual among the vicinity's less literate white supremacists is illustrated by occasional elementary school trips to the monument: certain parents keep their children at home rather than have them exposed to the influence of a Negro.[230] In addition to the adverse publicity about the Centennial Commission, it was widely rumored that Sidney Phillips had deliberately burned both the Burroughs and Ferguson houses to destroy certain files and to collect the insurance. What made this a problem was that many people continued to associate Phillips and his organizations with the monument long after its establishment. As late as January of 1969, in an article entitled "Booker T.'s Home Bypassed by Public," Roanoke World-News writer Si White described the monument's location and appeal: "It is off the beaten path--way off--and as an historic attraction it just doesn't draw. For one thing few people know where it is or how to get there. And if they should locate it they may wonder why they took the trouble as there is little to see."[231]

Although visitation had not reached 9,000 for the first two years of operation, Superintendent Reeves in 1960 offered an optimistic prediction for the future, with a major jump to 39,000 in 1965.[232] To justify his figures, Reeves cited the construction of a new visitor center and the creation of nearby Smith Mountain Lake by the recently-begun dam, and

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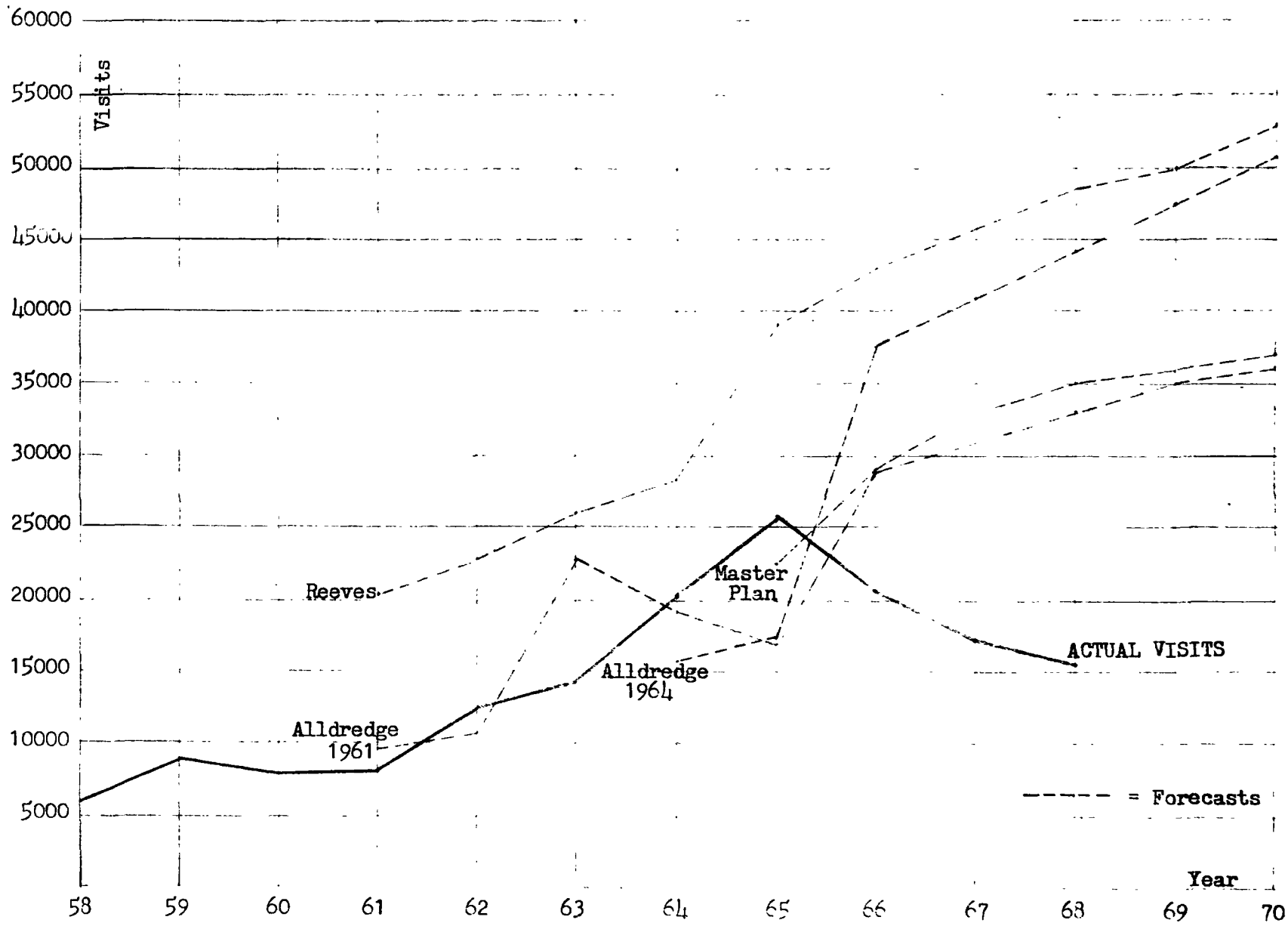
[230]Interview with David K. Johnston, Principal, Moneta Elementary School, May 14, 1968.

[231]January 29, 1969, p. 10.

[232]Memorandum to Regional Director, August 12, 1960 (A88).



VISITATION - PREDICTED AND ACTUAL

assumed the erection of directional signs at all major highways in the vicinity.[233] Plans to get signs on the Blue Ridge Parkway had already been initiated in May of 1960.

Statistician Rendel B. Alldredge responded in May of 1961 by plotting somewhat lower figures than those of Reeves.[234] In April of 1964 he raised his estimates, predicting a jump in 1966 to 37,800 to allow for the increased Smith Mountain Lake traffic along State Route 122.[235] The final long-term visitation prediction appeared in the Master Plan approved in July 1964, with figures more conservative than Alldredge had lately forecasted.

Unfortunately, even the most conservative forecasts proved to be far in excess of what resulted. Visitation rose steadily through 1965 to 25,567, but then dropped off in 1966 to 21,756. This was the year during which school integration was forced upon the local communities, and the neighborhood Ku Klux Klan chapter became increasingly active, staging numerous rallies close by the monument throughout the summer. Superintendent Wingeier blamed the visitation drop on these factors, and emphasized the need for more highway directional signs; "We...have only met

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[233]Memorandum to Rendel B. Alldredge, Analytical Statistician, WASO, January 5, 1961 (A88).

[234]Memorandum to Superintendent, May 22, 1961 (A88).

[235]Memorandum to Wingeier, April 1, 1964 (A88).

with opposition when requesting them from the highway department," he complained.[236] The Blue Ridge Parkway had been no more cooperative.

Wingeier cautiously predicted slight increases for 1967 and 1968 to 23,000 and 24,000 respectively. But even these limited expectations were found to be overly optimistic as the public stayed away in increasing numbers. In response to concern expressed by the Branch of Statistics Analysis, Superintendent Kowalkowski in December of 1968 offered the following analysis of the situation:

> Visitation to Booker T. Washington National Monument is primarily local, due probably to a number of reasons. The monument is located on a back-country road with no directional signs on any major highways pointing to it. The monument is not widely known. In fact, the individual commemorated by the monument is not of first-rank fame today, and is even held in disrespect by many of his race. People from distant points are generally either unable or unwilling to seek out this monument and go out of their way to visit it.
>
> Visitation at Booker T. Washington National Monument is also primarily of a one-time nature. With no recreational facilities, and with limited and unchanging exhibits, there has been little here to make the average visitor want to return after he has seen the area once.
>
> Given the predominance of the local, one-time visitor, it is not surprising that our visitation has declined following the spurt in 1964-1965, when Smith Mountain Lake brought new people to the area. The visitors who swelled our statistics then are not returning, and not enough others are coming to offset the loss....
>
> Fortunately, we believe that the future trend will be up. To attract interstate visitors, we are now negotiating with the Blue Ridge Parkway for directional signs and publicity there. Certainly, much of the problem results simply from being little-known and hard to find. The increased attention being given to Negro history is sure to bring individuals who had previously not heard of Washington and are interested in learning more about him. But we feel that the ultimate solution will come with the development of our living historical farm, just approved this year. We have already placed

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[236] Memorandum to Chief, Branch of Statistics Analysis, December 7, 1966 (A88).

feature articles on this in local newspapers, and as the farm is put into operation we will be able to offer a dynamic interpretive program that will give visitors something to come back for--in marked contrast to the present situation.[237]

G. The Future

The career of Booker T. Washington National Monument has been a checkered one. Unwanted initially by the National Park Service, wanted little more throughout its first decade by the public, it has so far played a minimal role among the numerous great areas which make up the National Park System.

Without question, the living historical farm concept stands as the turning point for this area. Stagnation is now being replaced by activity, in terms of both physical development at the monument and public interest. Directional signs on the heavily-traveled Blue Ridge Parkway are finally being installed, and the "clustering" of the monument with the Parkway--in process at this writing--can produce increased assistance and support for both development of the area and encouragement of visitation. Looking further ahead, elimination of the present Congressional limitation will make possible the long-awaited removal of the intrusive employee residence and its access road, facilitating interpretation and greatly increasing the esthetic appeal of the monument.

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[237]Memorandum to Regional Director, December 19, 1968 (A88).

Clearly, Booker T. Washington National Monument faces many challenges. But perhaps its greatest challenge lies in the field of interpretation. The monument can fully develop the Burroughs plantation as a living historical farm, and it can greatly increase public use by doing so and by vigorously publicizing it. Herein lies the danger. It will be all too easy for the farm to become merely a pretty pastoral scene--an end in itself--an "attraction." Why bring up the unpleasant subject of slavery at all? And yet this place offers the finest opportunity for relevant social-environmental interpretation to be found anywhere in the National Park System. The way of life and the human relationships that were a part of the Burroughs plantation vividly illustrate both the good and the evil of our heritage. What those people sowed, we are reaping today: the crop--and the weeds.

APPENDIX A

84TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 6963

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 22, 1955

Mr. MILLER of Nebraska introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs

A BILL

To provide for the establishment of the Booker T. Washington National Monument.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*
3 That the Secretary of the Interior is authorized and directed
4 to acquire, on behalf of the United States, by gift, purchase,
5 or condemnation, all right, title, and interest in and to the
6 real property located at Booker T. Washington Birthplace,
7 Virginia.

8 SEC. 2. The real property acquired under the first sec-
9 tion of this Act shall constitute the Booker T. Washington
10 National Monument and shall be a public national memorial
11 to Booker T. Washington, noted Negro educator and apostle

1 of good will. The Secretary of the Interior shall have the
2 supervision, management, and control of such national mon-
3 ument, and shall maintain and preserve it in a suitable and
4 enduring manner which, in his judgment, will provide for
5 the benefit and enjoyment of the people of the United States.
6 SEC. 3. The Secretary of the Interior is authorized to—
7 (1) maintain, either in an existing structure ac-
8 quired under the first section of this Act or in a building
9 constructed by him for the purpose, a museum for relics
10 and records pertaining to Booker T. Washington, and
11 for other articles of national and patriotic interest, and
12 to accept, on behalf of the United States, for installa-
13 tion in such museum, articles which may be offered as
14 additions to the museum; and
15 (2) provide for public parks and recreational areas,
16 construct roads and mark with monuments, tablets, or
17 otherwise, points of interest within the boundaries of
18 the Booker T. Washington National Monument.
19 SEC. 4. There are authorized to be appropriated such
20 sums not to exceed $200,000 as may be necessary to carry
21 out the provisions of this Act.

APPENDIX B

DID WASHINGTON MOVE WHILE ON THE BURROUGHS PLANTATION?

According to best available evidence,[1] Booker T. Washington was born in a cabin to the southeast of the Burroughs house (hereinafter cited as Cabin No. 1). When John D. Robertson took possession of the plantation from Thomas Robertson Burroughs, a son of James and Elizabeth, in 1893, all that remained of this cabin was a portion of the chimney, the rough outline of its foundation, and a dirt floor containing the remains of a potato hole.[2]

Thomas Burroughs told John Robertson that Washington was born in Cabin No. 1, but that this cabin was in such poor condition that Washington's mother moved her family into another cabin located at the southwest corner of the Burroughs house (Cabin No. 2). This cabin was still standing when the Robertsons moved onto the property; it had a wooden floor and a partition running across its width about four feet from the north wall. It was apparently in fairly good condition, being used for a time as quarters for John Robertson's mother-in-law, and was not torn down until around 1922.[3]

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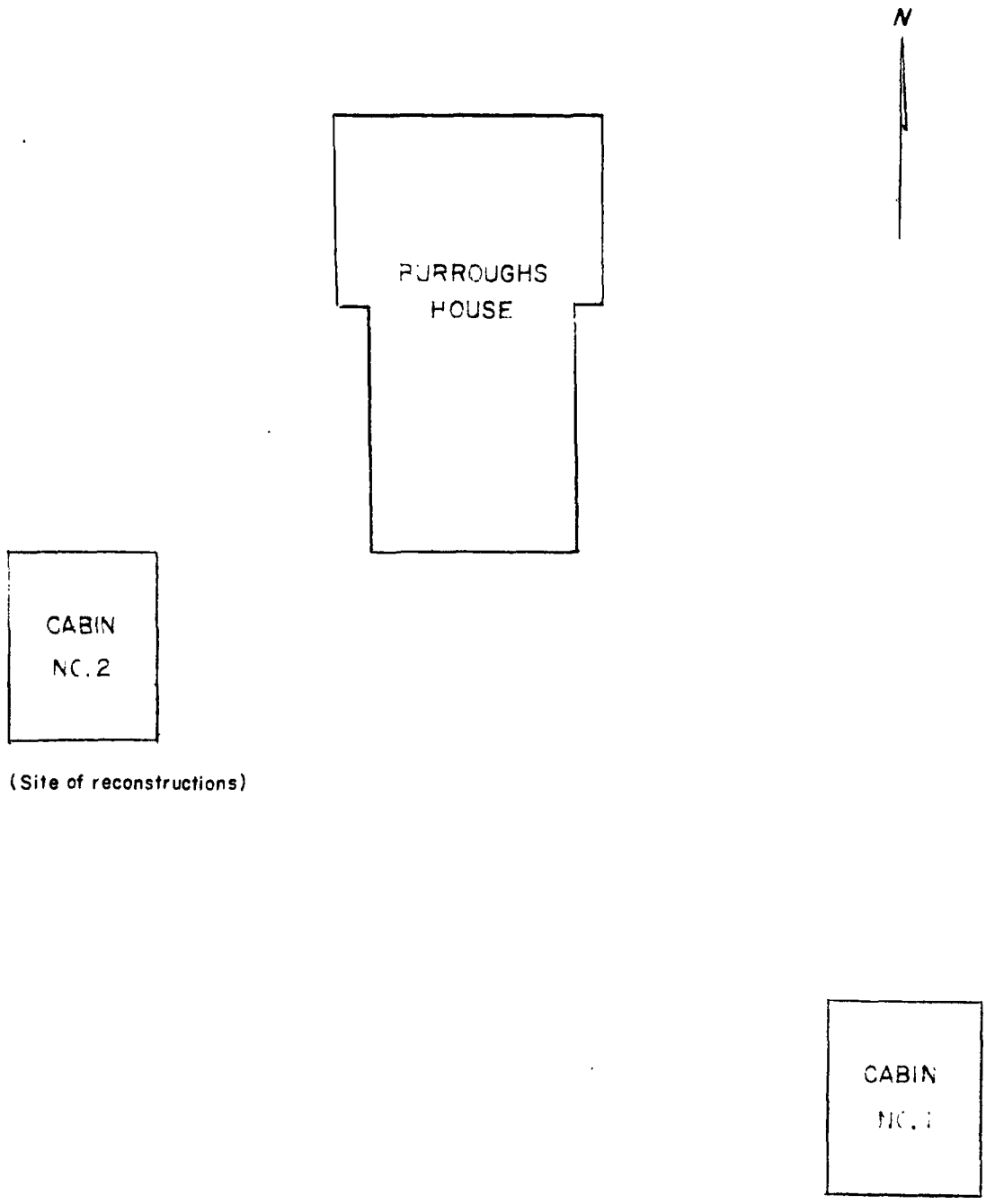
[1]See James J. Kirkwood and Chester L. Brooks, "Reconstruction of Slave Cabin, Booker T. Washington National Monument," Historic Structures Report, June 1959 (H30).

[2]Interviews with Peter and Grover Robertson (sons of John D.).

[3]Ibid.



THE CABIN CONTROVERSY

NOT TO SCALE

BM

If the move described by Thomas Burroughs were made, it would have been made relatively early after Washington's birth; Washington did not recall it, and in fact stated that the cabin in which he was born was the one in which he lived until emancipation.[4] And if such a move were made, and made soon after Washington's birth, it would be almost certain that his description of his birthplace cabin in Up From Slavery--including the dirt floor, the potato hole, the kitchen furnishings, and the numerous holes in the walls--was in fact a description of Cabin No. 2. This would then have been the cabin in which he spent the most impressionable portion of his boyhood on the plantation, and undoubtedly the only one he would have recalled in later life.[5] Upon seeing this cabin again, Washington would naturally identify it as his birthplace, as well as his boyhood home.

However, the Robertsons remembered Cabin No. 1 as being the one with the potato hole, and Cabin No. 2 as having a wooden floor, when they moved to the plantation in the 1890s. In addition, Cabin No. 2 was then in far better condition than would be indicated by Washington's description of his cabin in Up From Slavery. True, both cabins could have had potato holes, with a plank floor and new chinking being added to Cabin No. 2 sometime between 1865 and 1893; but the sporadic nature of the

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[4]Up From Slavery (New York, 1901), pp. 1-2.

[5]See John W. Griffin, Preliminary Report, Archeological Investigations, Cabin Site, Booker T. Washington National Monument, October 29, 1959 (H30). Griffin developed this logical argument to justify the present reconstruction of Cabin No. 2 as the kitchen cabin.

land's tenancy during this period and Thomas Burroughs' court testimony that the land had "gone greatly to ruin" make the possibility of such capital improvements unlikely.

Casting greater doubt on Thomas Burroughs' story concerning Washington's move is Park's account of Washington's visit to the plantation in 1908.[6] In that year Cabin No. 2 was still standing, and yet Washington gave no special recognition to it as a building in which he was born or had ever lived. (In 1900 a picture of this cabin appeared in Washington's The Story of My Life and Work and was designated as his birthplace cabin. However, it was reprinted that same year in Outlook magazine's serialization of Up From Slavery over the caption "The cabin in Virginia in which Mr. Washington, until recently, thought he was born," followed by the photograph of another cabin captioned "The log cabin in which Mr. Washington now thinks he was born.") Park's account of Washington's visit stated that Washington, "...in company with a number of old settlers, was able to locate the kitchen where Mr. Washington was born"--language seemingly more applicable to a ruined building than to one still in good condition and use. The account continued: "One of the old settlers who was something of a wag, remarked that he had read in the newspaper that Mr. Washington was born in a house with a dirt floor. He said he didn't know if they could show him the house, but the floor was still there." This also indicates that Washington's former home was

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[6]Robert E. Park, "Tuskegee's Principal at His Old Home," The Tuskegee Student, October 3, 1908.

no longer standing intact, but that the dirt floor was still there--clearly not a reference to Cabin No. 2 with its wooden floor.

The only evidence that Washington moved to Cabin No. 2 comes from Peter and Grover Robertson, who heard it from their father, who heard it from Thomas Burroughs. Since Thomas Burroughs may not even have been living on the plantation when the alleged move was made,[7] and since he was relating the story to John Robertson some forty years after the supposed event, his reliability is certainly subject to question. This is speculation, but Burroughs also may have simply been telling a harmless little tale to the new owner of his family's property. Washington was just becoming famous following his Atlanta speech in 1895, Cabin No. 2 was still standing, and it would have been inviting to weave a little story around it to tie it in with Washington.

What about Henry Swain's identification of the ruins of Cabin No. 2 as Washington's birth site upon the occasion of Congressman Mitchell's visit to the area in 1937? Swain, a self-proclaimed boyhood playmate of Washington, was at least two years younger than Washington and would have been no older than seven when Washington left the plantation. In 1937, seventy-two years later, nothing was left of Cabin No. 1, and the only cabin remains were those of Cabin No. 2. The two cabin sites were

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[7]See Barry Mackintosh, "The Burroughs Family: Owners of Booker T. Washington" in "The Burroughs Plantation: Background Studies" (National Park Service, 1969).

not far apart, and it is not difficult to understand how the elderly Swain could have chosen the only surviving remains as being those of Washington's cabin.

Clearly, the bulk of the evidence counts against the story that Washington at any time lived in the cabin at the southwest corner of the Burroughs house. What, then, was the function of this building? Park's account of Washington's visit in 1908 stated that "The old dining room, built of squared logs, where young Washington began his first work as a slave, still stands." Washington was quoted as saying on this occasion that "The old dining room...is not nearly as large now as it used to be, or at least as it seemed to be once." It is most likely that this was in fact Cabin No. 2. While the dining room referred to could possibly have been a room in the rear of the "big house," the language in the account would seem to connote a separate building distinct from the house. The large size of the Burroughs family and the small size of their house also make it highly probable that their dining room was this outbuilding. An objection to this conclusion might be raised in view of Washington's statement in Up From Slavery: "...I was required to go to the 'big house' at meal-times to fan the flies from the table...."[8] However, this task was being recalled some thirty-five to forty years later here--a circumstance affording opportunity for many inaccuracies. It is also entirely possible that Cabin No. 2, being so close to the Burroughs house, was considered as a part of the house by the young slave boy.

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[8]P. 9.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

The basic--though less than thoroughly reliable--source for the plantation period is Booker T. Washington's Up From Slavery (New York, 1901), Chapter I. Information in the Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Virginia, includes James Burroughs' deeds of purchase (Deed Book 21, p. 465; Deed Book 23, pp. 394-95), his will (Will Book 12, p. 121), and, most important, the plantation inventory taken after his death in 1861 (Will Book 12, pp. 148-50). The manuscript copy of the United States Census of 1860 lists both the plantation residents of that year (Schedule 1: Free Inhabitants, Northeast Division, Franklin County, Va., p. 69) and the agricultural production of the plantation (Schedule 4: Productions of Agriculture, Northeast Division, Franklin County, Va., p. 17). Letters of John H. Washington and M. F. Burroughs provide pictures of plantation life and conditions from the viewpoints of both slave and master; they are reproduced in Barry Mackintosh's "The Burroughs Plantation: Background Studies"(National Park Service, 1969) along with researched information on the Burroughs family, the local community, and plantation agriculture. In process at the time of this writing is Edwin C. Bearss' "The Burroughs Plantation as a Living Historical Farm," a detailed study of agriculture as practiced by the Burroughs.

Little information is available about the period of the Burroughs' ownership of the land following the Civil War. That which is, is contained in Chancery File 2902, Bedford County Courthouse, Bedford, Virginia, and in the deed conveying the property to the Robertsons (Deed Book 45, p. 204, Franklin County Courthouse, Rocky Mount, Va.).

For the Robertson years, the principal source is the recollections of brothers Peter and Grover Robertson; their memories are also our main source for the supposed appearance of the plantation during Washington's days there. Washington's 1908 visit is covered by Robert E. Park in "Tuskegee's Principal at His Old Home," The Tuskegee Student, October 3, 1908, and by the Roanoke Times article, "Washington Visits Old Home," in the September 27, 1908 issue. Congressman Mitchell's visit in 1937 and the contemporary appearance of the Burroughs house are discussed in Anne S. Joplin's paper, "Old Burroughs Home, Birthplace of Booker T. Washington" (Works Progress Administration of Virginia Historical Inventory, November 8, 1937).

The Phillips years are treated generally in two writings by Sidney J. Phillips: "The History and Achievements of the Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial..." (mimeographed, 1951), and "Facts and Accomplishments of Booker T. Washington Birthplace Memorial," The Tribune (Roanoke), January 29, 1955, pp. 6-7. The Centennial Edition of Up From Slavery, published by the Booker T. Washington Centennial Commission (Booker

Washington Birthplace, Va., 1956) gives additional information about Phillips' organizations and includes a short biography of Phillips. Phillips' plans for the birthplace are discussed in "Hearings before the Committee on Coinage, Weights and Measures, House of Representatives, 79th Congress, 2nd Session, on...H.R. 6528," June 28, 1946 (Washington, 1946). The Southern Letter and the Booker T. Washington Memorial Trade School News, newsletters published by the Birthplace Memorial during its more prosperous years, present a favorably-biased view of its operations, while Dick Sutherland's feature series in the Roanoke World-News offers a critical look at the Centennial Commission (October 21-28, 1957). Franklin County Courthouse records include the charters of the Birthplace Memorial (Charter Book B, p. 25) and the National Monument Foundation (Charter Book B, p. 218), and the numerous deeds concerned with the land transactions of these organizations as cited in this history. The general files left by Phillips when he vacated the area are of importance; they and the items listed above (excepting the Hearings and the courthouse records) are located at Booker T. Washington National Monument.

Sources for the establishment of the monument include Frank Barnes' Historic Site Survey, Booker Washington Birthplace, October 19, 1953, and "Hearing before the Subcommittee on Public Lands of the Committee on Interior and Insular Affairs, House of Representatives, 84th Congress, 2nd Session, on H.R. 6904...," February 3, 1956 (Washington, 1956). Interviews with Chester L. Brooks and Albert S. Wright yielded much information about the early years of the monument. The files at Booker T. Washington National Monument provide the backbone of the monument story; of particular value are the Superintendent's Monthly Narrative Reports (1957-1967), the Museum Prospectus (1958) by Chester L. Brooks and James J. Kirkwood, the Burroughs Plantation Planning Report (1958) by Brooks and Kirkwood, the Historic Structures Report--"Reconstruction of Slave Cabin, Booker T. Washington National Monument"--(1959) by Brooks and Kirkwood, the Master Plan approved in 1964, the Interpretive Prospectus prepared by Albert J. Benjamin in 1964, and the 1968 Interpretive Prospectus by H. Gilbert Lusk. The figures in parentheses following certain footnotes, e.g., "(L58)," refer to file codes at Booker T. Washington National Monument.

PHOTOGRAPHS

PLATE I

The Burroughs house, as modified by the Robertsons. [From Anne S. Joplin, "Old Burroughs Home, Birthplace of Booker T. Washington" (Works Progress Administration of Virginia Historical Inventory, November 8, 1937)].

PLATE I

PLATE II

Original Burroughs cabin. [From Booker T. Washington, The Story of My Life and Work (Naperville, Ill., 1900), p. 28.]

PLATE II

PLATE III

Sidney J. Phillips. (Courtesy of Mrs. Virginia H. Phillips.)

PLATE III

PLATE IV

Phillips cabin replica, wishing well, and "Virginia Cottage."
(BTWNM photo files.)

PLATE IV

PLATE V

The Burroughs house, as modified by Phillips. Cabin replica at right rear. (Courtesy of Mrs. Virginia H. Phillips.)

PLATE V

PLATE VI

Hopkins Hall. (BTWNM photo files.)

PLATE VI

PLATE VII

Looking north from cabin replica, from left to right: Virginia Cottage, Tuck Hall, Memorial driveway, poultry houses, concession stand. (Courtesy of Mrs. Virginia H. Phillips.)

PLATE VII

PLATE VIII

Burch Memorial Building: unveiling of nameplate, April 1, 1951. (Courtesy of Mrs. Virginia H. Phillips.)

PLATE VIII

PLATE IX

National Park Service cabin replica. (BTWNM photo files.)

PLATE IX

PLATE X

Restored tobacco barn. (BTWNM photo files.)

PLATE X

PLATE XI

Visitor center, Booker T. Washington National Monument.
(BTWNM photo files.)

PLATE XI

PLATE XII

The living historical farm: vegetable garden behind cabin.
(BTWNM photo files.)

PLATE XII

GPO 883-519

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, MID-ATLANTIC REGION

WORKSHEET: CLASSIFIED STRUCTURE FIELD INVENTORY REPORT

1. PARK: BOOKER T. WASHINGTON NATIONAL MONUMENT

2. STRUCTURE'S NAME (HISTORIC): SLAVE CABIN

3. OWNER(S) BEFORE ACQUISITION: Booker T. Washington National Monument Foundation

4. H.P.O. NOS.: STATE: 5 LOCAL:

6. STRUCTURE'S ADDRESS: Route 122, northeast of Hardy Chimney, Va.

7. UTM LOCATION(S): (Note: Linear Structures such as roads, long walls, etc. need at least two; sites of over 10 acres need four)

Zone	Easting	Northing
17	612 750	410 804 510

8. ESTIMATED DATE(S) OF CONSTRUCTION: 1960 (by Park Service); privy, 1973

9. ARCHITECTURAL AND/OR HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE:

Built from materials from three log cabins situated within a radius of a few miles, this structure stands on the site of the original slave cabin; stone from the original chimney is included in the present chimney which is also built upon the original chimney foundation; the building is a close replica of the original except for the fact that it is about two feet shorter. Along with the other log structures of this 207-acre 19th Century tobacco plantation, originally owned by James Burroughs, this slave cabin carries some architectural significance in that it has been constructed with the use of traditional techniques developed locally and now on the brink of being lost.

The original slave cabin was occupied by the Washington family because of its proximity to the main house and the fact that Booker's mother served the Burroughs as cook.

10. RELATION TO SCENE:

The cabin is an important element in the presentation of the overall picture of the small plantation with a small number of slaves, and provides the means for indicating the way of life and the possessions of the slave families who helped to run the farms. Under the living history program, plantation-style cooking is carried out in this cabin. The privy was an essential ancillary building to every housing unit.