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traveling in a stage coach and cars the remainder of the journey, I at length found myself in the city of Richmond, Virginia. I also found myself without friends, money or a place to stay all night. After walking about the city till midnight, and I had grown almost discouraged and quite exhausted, I crawled under a sidewalk and slept all that night. The next morning, as good luck would have it, I found myself very near a ship that was unloading pig iron. I applied to the captain for work, and he gave it, and I worked on this ship by day and slept under the sidewalk by night till I had earned money enough to continue my way to Hampton, where I soon arrived with a surplus of fifty cents in my pocket. I at once found General Armstrong, and told him what my condition was and what I had come for. In his great hearty way he said that if I was worth anything he would give me a chance to work my way.

At Hampton I found buildings, instructors, industries provided by the generous; in other words, the chance for me to work for my education. While at Hampton I resolved, if God permitted me to finish the course of study, I would enter the far South, the Black Belt of the Gulf states, and give my life in providing as best I could the same kind of chance for self-help for the youth of my race that I found ready for me when I went to Hampton: And so in 1881 I left Hampton and started the Tuskegee Normal and Industrial Institute in a small church and shanty, with one teacher and thirty students. Since then the institution at Tuskegee has gradually grown, so that we have today over 1,000 students, 88 officers, 26 industries, 42 buildings, 2,267 acres of land, and $300,000 worth of property.

Booker T. Washington

Tuskegee, Ala., October, 1899