

JULY · 1914

abiding, God-fearing negro. It's like the time I was a younger man and spoke in a Kentucky town one night. Next morning I looked eagerly in the newspaper in the hope of finding myself considerable of a fellow — perhaps on the first page. But I wasn't there, nor on page 2 nor page 3, but buried in a paragraph at the bottom of page 4.

“It had chanced the night before that a negro had snatched a pocket-book on the street corner. He got page 1 in the morning.”

Chicago Herald, June 30, 1914, 1, 4. The account was written by James O'Donnell Bennett. It was reprinted in the *Tuskegee Student*, 26 (July 18, 1914), 1, 4.

To Seth Low

Boston, Mass. July 1st, 1914

My dear Mr. Low: I am very sorry to report the most disastrous fire in the history of the school. On night before last the barn containing mules burned, and in some unaccountable way the fire was not discovered by the watchman. The worst part of the fire is the fact that 34 mules were burned and 4 others were so injured that I fear they will have to be killed. Thirty-eight pairs of harness were also burned. Leaving out the value of the building, which will not be very large owing to the character of it, the total loss I estimate at something over \$9,000. The building I think will be very largely covered by insurance. I will know definitely very soon how much we shall get back for the building.

I am having a very searching investigation made as to how the fire occurred and why it was not discovered by the watchman. I will report to you the result later. All the buildings and grounds are covered by watchmen with a system of watchman's clocks, and it is inconceivable to me how the fire got such a start and did so much damage without being discovered.

We are right in the midst of our farming. It is most important that something be done to replace these animals. I therefore, have telegraphed Mr. Logan, who has not yet left New York, to get in touch with you at once. I suggest that the local executive Committee at Tuskegee be given authority to deal with the situation temporarily.

As soon as I return to Tuskegee, which will be within a few days, I shall report the matter to you fully, but I have all the essential facts.