

NOVEMBER · 1885

To Samuel Chapman Armstrong

Tuskegee, Ala. Oct. 31 1885

Dear Gen'l: We will pay the note Nov. 15.

I have just returned from a ten day's treatment under Dr. Dorsette and think I am now in a good condition for the year's work. I have been down again since I wrote you.

Matters are going well. Hastily yours

B. T. Washington

Many thanks for the extension.

ALS BTW Folder President's Office Vault ViHaI.

To Samuel Chapman Armstrong

102 W. 37 St N.Y. Nov. 26 85

Dear Gen'l: Soon after our conversation in Phila. I arrived here and found a letter announcing that the Misses Mason¹ had given us \$7000. *Faith* and *hard work* I find will accomplish anything. Yours &c

B. T. Washington

ACS BTW Folder President's Office Vault ViHaI.

¹ Ellen Frances and Ida Means Mason were two unmarried sisters who were among the earliest, most regular, and largest contributors to both Hampton and Tuskegee institutes. Born in the 1850s into a wealthy Brookline, Mass., family that dated its interest in Negro welfare to the girls' grandfather, Jeremiah Mason, the two sisters were left with a large inheritance at an early age. While still adolescents, they began aiding Hampton in 1869 after meeting General Armstrong, and continued to contribute regularly for more than sixty years. In the 1890s they each made semi-annual contributions of \$3,000 to Tuskegee. They owned large homes on Beacon Hill in Boston and in Newport and often opened them for fund-raising activities for Hampton as well as entertaining many Hampton students there. The Mason sisters also supported other cultural and charitable organizations and helped many individual students. Learned in Greek and widely traveled, they compiled together a volume on ancient Athens, and Ellen translated some of Plato's essays. Ida died in 1928 and Ellen in 1930.