

The BOOKER T. WASHINGTON Papers
From Atwell Theodore Braxton¹

Meharry Med. College, [Nashville, Tenn.] Jan. 31, '96

Dear Mr. Washington: I am quite sure you will be, perhaps, the least bit surprised when you read this letter I have hastily prepared to send by Mr. T. N. Harris.² I hope to graduate within a few days and it is my intention to take the state board examination as I intend practicing at Birmingham, Ala. I have an impediment and it is that a young physician cannot pass without an influential friend to help him. Here are the words of one of the oldest white physicians in Nashville

"You cannot hope to practice medicine in Ala., as it is rumored that the physicians have decided that they have about enough Drs. & I have a set of the last questions of the examination given in Bhm, and there is not a prof. of any of the med. col. & Drs. of Nashville that could pass it and in order to pass you must be strongly recommended by a leading physician who has a friend on the board."

I have asked Mr. Harris to look after this matter for me & he will explain matters in full.

I am confident that I could pass without a recommendation on fair questions, but it seems that North Carolina, Virginia & Alabama has adopted this unfair plan after they have found out that a colored man could climb the other bars they put up to keep him out. Respt.

A. T. Braxton

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¹ Atwell Theodore Braxton graduated from Tuskegee in 1892 and then went to Shaw University, Raleigh, N.C., where he was a student and instructor of printing from 1892 to 1894. He graduated from Meharry Medical College in 1896 and established a practice as physician in Columbia, Tenn.

² Thomas Nathaniel Harris graduated from Tuskegee in 1889 and went to Montgomery, Ala., where he taught printing at the Alabama State Normal School and ran a printing business from 1890 to 1894. He then went to Meharry Medical College to study medicine and dentistry, graduating in 1897. He was a dentist in Henderson, Ky., and later a physician in Montgomery before moving to Mobile in 1899.