

ADDENDUM

To Thomas McCants Stewart

Tuskegee, Ala., February 26th 1892

My dear Sir: I have received your letter and in reply would say that I am sure we do not feel like excusing you on the ground you mention.¹ Of course if your legal business calls you in New York on the week of our Commencement we shall have to submit. You must not let Dr. Derrick scare you out with his stories of Southern railroads. Every wide-awake, intelligent colored man like yourself who comes into the midst of the white people and speaks to them and looks them into the face gives them an object lesson of what the colored people are capable of doing and goes further to break down prejudice than anything else, but I assure you from New York to our place you will not have the slightest trouble on the Pullman Car. I have travelled over that route for 10 years in the Pullman Car and have never had the slightest intimation of any unpleasantness. You can get into a Pullman in New York and come to our place without any change of train, and you can do the same in returning and not a word said. You will be surprised to see how liberal the white people are here owing to the influence of this institution.

I now have the authority to extend the invitation. I certainly hope you will not refuse it. Your speech will be widely reported in Northern and Southern newspapers and you will have an audience of three or four thousand people, including some of the best white and colored people in the State. Enclosed please find stamp for reply. Yours truly,

Booker T. Washington

TLS Scrapbook T. McCants Stewart Papers DHU.

¹ See above, 3:214. Stewart did not speak at the Tuskegee commencement of 1892, but he was the speaker the following year.