

MAY • 1901

¹ Wallace A. Rayfield taught architectural and mechanical drawing in the industrial department at Tuskegee from 1899 to 1908.

From George Foster Peabody

New York City, May 2, 1901

My dear Mr. Washington: While at Waycross waiting between trains I took a drive with a very bright mulatto, who gave me his name as James Murdock, and his residence as 21 James street, Waycross, Georgia. He said that he was only 16 years old, as he understood it, but I think he must be over 20. He seems to be a capable business man, as he has already saved money with which he bought the house he lives in, and another which he rents, six acres of land being included. He owns a hack and a couple of little horses which he takes care of, and is evidently wide awake and keen respecting money matters. He told me that he has a young sister and an older brother, the latter married. I suggested to him that when his sister is a little older he make inquiry respecting her going to Tuskegee and getting a suitable education. I was the more impressed with this because I fear he is in a fair way to have his morals permanently upset, particularly respecting the proper use of property; for I fancy that his good wages, (he told me he was able to make \$35 a week) are in large part because of his being so fully aware that many traveling men who stop over at such places pay larger prices to be taken to immoral houses. This was particularly impressed upon me because he asked me if I wanted to go to a "sporting house" when I told him I wanted to drive around the place.

I do not know whether you have an organization which would reach out for such a young man as this, but if there is anyone near there who could get hold of this young man and have him study nights and realize the moral basis of life, I believe he has some capacity for usefulness. Yours very truly,

George Foster Peabody

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