

Sent to Pres. Hayes - for his information  
To be returned to D. G. F. M. 002  
n.d.

The Honorable Board of Trustees of the John F. Slater  
Fund,

Gentlemen:

In accordance with your direc-  
tions I send herewith a sketch of my  
life.

My name is William Edward  
Burghardt Du Bois; I was born at Great  
Barrington, Massachusetts, on the 23<sup>rd</sup> day  
of February, 1868, being the sole issue of  
the marriage of Mary S. Burghardt and  
Alfred Du Bois.

My paternal great-grandfather was  
a French doctor in the West Indies, and  
brought my grandfather and his brother to  
the United States when quite young. My grand-  
father settled in Connecticut and afterward re-  
moved to New Bedford, Mass. He was a boat  
steward by trade. My father was one of many  
children, and a barber by trade. He died when  
I was young.

My ~~maternal~~ mother was a mulat-  
to, the fourth in direct descent from Thomas  
Burghardt, who, when young, was brought from



Africa as a slave to the Dutch in New York state, early in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. He fought in the Revolutionary war. His son Jack Durghardt had several children, among whom was Othello my grandfather. Othello and his wife, Sally Sampman, were both born slaves, but freed at majority. My mother was the youngest of several children, and received a good common-school education.

Both grandfathers and my father had good common educations. Alexandre DuDois, as my grandfather was named, had accumulated some property, but most of it went to his maintenance in his old age. There was some property in my mother's family but none of it reached me. My father saved nothing, and after his death we were often near pauperism. Nevertheless my mother kept me in school until she was disabled by paralysis, when I managed to keep on by means of work after hours and in vacation. In 1884 I graduated from the St. Danington High School, and in the fall of 1885 I went south on the advice of friends, and entered the sopho-



more class at Fisk University. My Mother died in the spring of 1885.

I remained at Fisk three years, graduating with the degree of A.B., in 1888. My vacations were spent in teaching country schools. I now determined to come to Harvard and pursue a course for the degree of Ph.D. On the strength of my recommendations I was appointed to \$250 of Price Greenleaf Aid at Harvard before coming. During the summer of 1888 I worked in a hotel in the north-west, and in the fall entered the junior class at this place. I managed to pay the expenses of the first year by the aid, lecturing, loan fund, and a prize; the next year I was granted a Matthews Scholarship, which added to a series of summer readings and another prize enabled me to finish that year. For the year '90-'91, I was appointed to the H.B. Rogers Memorial Fellowship in Political Science, and re-appointed to the same for 1891-92.

Of the four years spent at Harvard, the first was spent in general studies (e.g. Chem-



istry, Geology, Ethics Economics &c), the second year in Philosophy and Economics, and the last two in History and Political Science. My doctor's thesis has been written and is on the suppression of the slave trade in the United States, including colonial times. My future study will be in political science with special reference to the history of social problems.

Respectfully submitted,

W. E. D. Dubois.



was on Davis

[1892]

May 92

Autobiography

W. E. B. Davis