

# FERRIS INSTITUTE & HAMPTON INSTITUTE

A collaboration that changed the lives of  
individuals and the direction of a nation

# PROVIDING OPPORTUNITY

"During the past 10 years, the Ferris Institute has enrolled a large number of young men who came to America from some foreign country. Finlanders, Norwegians, Swedes, Danes, Hollanders, Germans, Armenians and Mexicans were among the number. Frequently these young men are fairly well educated in their native tongue. What they wanted was a practical knowledge of the English language. The Ferris Institute welcomes such young people. Special arrangements have been made to meet the demands of these students. The principal aim is to enable these young men and women to read, write and speak the English language correctly. In from three to six months, the majority are able to speak, read and write English with ease and fluency."

*Catalogue of Ferris Institute, 1903-04.*

# MR. FERRIS READS FROM W.E.B. DUBOIS IN 1903

It is reported that Mr. Ferris read to the Ferris Institute Chapter IV, “The Meaning of Progress” from W.E.B. Dubois’ book *The Souls of Black Folk* in 1903, the same year it was published; this was seven years prior to the enrollment of Gideon Smith and Frank Roberts, two of the first African American students to attend Ferris.



**THE SOULS OF  
BLACK FOLK**  
W.E.B. DU BOIS



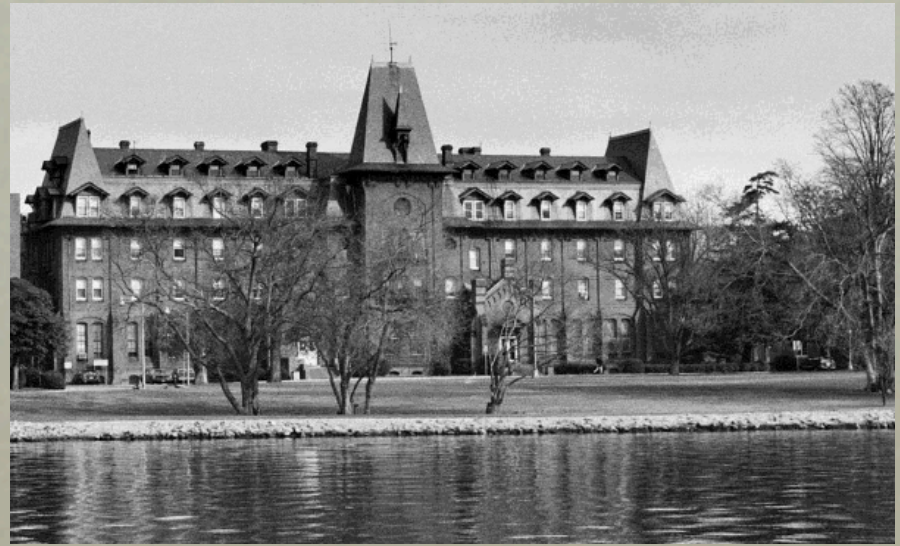
## 1912 SENIOR PHARMACY CLASS

In September 1910, Frank M. Roberts, (top row, third from right), enrolled at Ferris Institute in the Pharmacy program. Gideon Smith is often credited as being the first African American student to attend Ferris, and he may have been; but, Roberts attended Ferris at the same time as Smith. Roberts graduated from the Pharmacy school in 1912. He was from St. Joseph, Michigan, and operated a pharmacy in Detroit for 35 years.

# THE FERRIS AND HAMPTON STORY

From approximately 1910 until Mr. Ferris' death in 1928, dozens of students from the Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute attended the Ferris Institute to take special college preparatory courses before transferring to other schools.

Many of these students played vital roles in the history of the United States.



# MAYBE NOT...

- “Woodbridge Ferris, inspired by Booker T. Washington’s autobiography, “Up From Slavery,” arranged to have **a dozen or** so black students from Hampton attend Ferris. They studied College Prep classes and then transferred to schools such as Michigan State and Michigan. Smith was one of those otherwise **anonymous** students.”
- ~ From the website for Toms Shanahan’s book *Raye of Light*

At this point we will show and discuss the banners for several of the most accomplished Ferris/Hampton students.

## BELFORD V. LAWSON

### FERRIS INSTITUTE 1919-1920



Belford V. Lawson attended Hampton Institute in 1916, and Ferris Institute in 1919-1920. After attending Ferris he enrolled at the University of Michigan. Lawson played on Michigan's 1923 National Championship team. He was the school's second African-American varsity football player (having been preceded by George Lewitt in the 1890s), and the only African American during Fielding H. Yost's coaching tenure. He graduated from the University of Michigan in 1924, and received a law degree from Howard University in 1932.

Lawson is best known as an attorney and civil rights activist. In 1935, Lawson was a co-founder of the New Negro Alliance (NNA) in Washington, D.C., to combat white-owned businesses in black neighborhoods that would not hire African Americans.

He made at least eight appearances before the United States Supreme Court, and he has the distinction of being the first African-American to win a case before the nation's highest court. He won two cases, *New Negro Alliance v. Sanitary Grocery* 1938 and *Henderson v. United States* 1950. He was assisted by Thurgood Marshall.

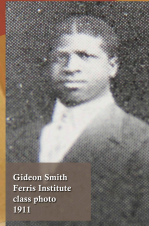
Lawson was a pioneer. He was the first African American to address the Democratic National Convention, the first black board member of Madison National Bank in the nation's capital, and the first African American national president of Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA). He was also an advisor for John F. Kennedy's Senatorial campaign in 1958.

Lawson's home is part of an African American History tour in Washington, D.C.

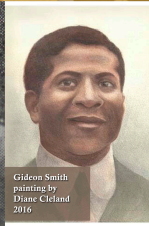


# GIDEON E. SMITH

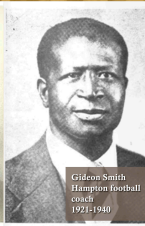
Ferris Institute 1910-1913



Gideon Smith  
Ferris Institute  
class photo  
1911



Gideon Smith  
painting by  
Diane Cleland  
2017



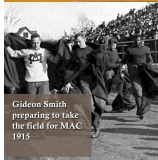
Gideon Smith  
Hampton football  
coach  
1921-1940

Gideon Smith graduated from Hampton Institute in 1910. In that same year, he enrolled in Ferris Institute, where he played football and was in the band. Smith is widely credited as being the first African American student at Ferris.

Smith played college football at Michigan Agricultural College (MAC), which is today known as Michigan State University. This gives him the distinction of being the first African American student athlete at Michigan State. He was among the first African Americans to play professional football; he played in one game for the Canton Bulldogs in 1915, against the Massillon Tigers. Smith made a game-saving fumble recovery in that "state championship" game.

After his graduation from MAC in 1916, Smith was named Commander of Cadets and also served as a chemical science instructor at West Virginia Collegiate Institute, which is today known as West Virginia State University.

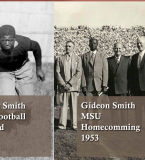
In 1921, Smith returned to Hampton Institute to become the head football coach, a position he held until 1940, compiling a 102-44-12 record, including six one-loss seasons and two undefeated seasons in 1926 and 1931. His 1931 team outscored opponents 187 to 6. He was inducted into the Hampton Athletics Hall of Fame in 2009. Smith was named the American Football Coaches Association's recipient of the 2014 Trailblazer Award. That award was created to honor early coaches at historically black colleges and universities.



Gideon Smith  
preparing to take  
the field for MAC  
1915



Gideon Smith  
Ferris Institute  
football team  
1911



Gideon Smith  
MAC football  
postcard  
1915



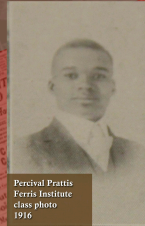
Gideon Smith  
MSI  
Homecoming  
1953





# PERCIVAL L. PRATTIS

Ferris Institute 1916-1917



Percival Prattis  
Ferris Institute  
class photo  
1916



Percival Prattis  
Pittsburgh Courier  
Executive Editor  
c. 1940s



Percival Prattis  
Pittsburgh Courier  
Executive Editor  
c. 1940s

Percival Leroy "P. L." Prattis attended Hampton Institute in Hampton, Virginia, from 1912 to 1915. He attended Ferris Institute from 1916 through 1917 and served on the debate team.

Prattis is best known for his work as a journalist. He began his career in 1919 as the editor of the newly formed *Michigan State News* in Grand Rapids, Michigan. In 1921 he moved to Chicago, Illinois, to become the city editor of the *Chicago Defender*, the most popular African American newspaper in the country at the beginning of World War I.

In 1923, Prattis was hired as city editor of the Associated Negro Press in Chicago, a position which allowed him to travel internationally on assignments. He interviewed or corresponded with John F. Kennedy, Haile Selassie, Eleanor Roosevelt, Malcolm X, Jackie Robinson, W.E.B Du Bois, Richard Nixon, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, Thurgood Marshall, Elijah Muhammad, Langston Hughes, Lyndon B. Johnson, Martin Luther King Jr. and many others.

He moved to Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, in 1936 to take a position with the *Pittsburgh Courier*, an African American newspaper which uncompromisingly called for an end to Jim Crow segregation. Although hired as a city editor, Prattis also had duties as a reporter and was dispatched on international assignments to the Middle East, Far East and post-World War II Europe. In 1956, he became executive director of the newspaper.

In 1947, Prattis became the first African American news correspondent admitted to the press galleries of both the United States House of Representatives and the Senate.

Prattis used his work as a journalist to advance the African American press and to fight against racial injustice. He wrote a letter to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1956, which was published in *The Papers of Martin Luther King Jr.*

In 2014, *Western Pennsylvania History Magazine*, published by Pennsylvania State University, produced a 13-page article chronicling the life and achievements of Prattis.



Percival Prattis  
Ferris Institute  
debate team  
1917 yearbook

Percival Prattis  
meeting with  
Eleanor Roosevelt  
1941

# BELFORD V. LAWSON

Ferris Institute 1919-1920



Belford V. Lawson  
Ferris Institute  
class photo  
1920

Belford V. Lawson  
Attorney and Civil  
Rights activist  
c. 1950s

Belford V. Lawson  
D.C. New Negro  
Alliance  
1934 - 1943

Belford V. Lawson attended Hampton Institute in 1916 and Ferris Institute in 1919-1920. After attending Ferris, he enrolled at the University of Michigan. Lawson played on Michigan's 1923 National Championship team. He was the school's second African-American varsity football player (having been preceded by George Lewitt in the 1890s) and the only African American player during Fielding H. Yost's coaching tenure. He graduated from the University of Michigan in 1924 and received a law degree from Howard University in 1932.

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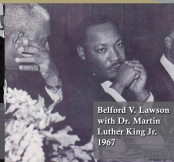
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Belford V. Lawson  
meeting with  
President Harry S.  
Truman  
1949



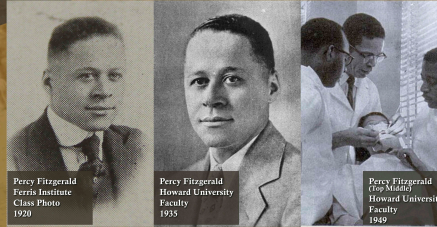
Belford V. Lawson  
with Dr. Martin  
Luther King Jr.  
1957



Belford V. Lawson  
with Sen. John F.  
Kennedy  
1960

# PERCY A. FITZGERALD

## Ferris Institute 1920



Percy A. Fitzgerald attended Hampton Institute in 1917, and graduated from Ferris Institute in 1920. In 1936, he became the second African American to earn a Master's of Science in Dentistry degree from Northwestern University.

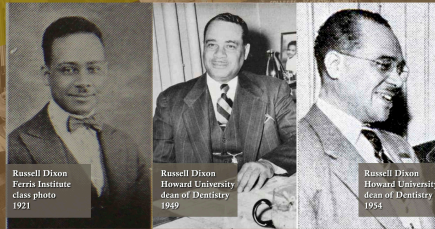
Fitzgerald had a distinguished career in the field of dentistry. He was a professor of dentistry at Howard University for 20 years and was named Dentist of the Year in 1959. Fitzgerald was head of the Prosthodontia Department of Howard University in 1960. Today, Howard University dental students compete for the Percy A. Fitzgerald Outstanding Achievement Award in Clinical Crown and Bridge Award.

Before his dental career blossomed, Fitzgerald was a Supply Sergeant for the 369th infantry, the Harlem Hellfighters, during WWI. They were called the Hellfighters because of their courage and toughness; they never lost a man through capture or a foot of ground to the enemy. Despite their heroism and dedication to the United States, they returned home to face Jim Crow racism and segregation.



# RUSSELL A. DIXON

Ferris Institute 1921-1923

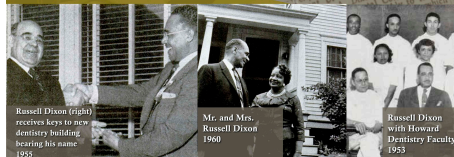


Russell A. Dixon attended Hampton Institute from 1919-1920. He finished his undergraduate education at Ferris Institute in 1923. While at Ferris, he was mentored by the Institute's founder, Woodbridge Ferris, who advised him to continue his education at Northwestern University. Dixon became the first African American to earn an advanced degree in dentistry from Northwestern.

Dixon is best known for his work as Dean of the College of Dentistry at Howard University, a position he began in 1931. During his 35-year tenure, the College of Dentistry developed into one of the foremost institutions of dental education in the United States. In 1960, more than half of the nation's 1,681 African American dentists were graduates of the Howard University College of Dentistry.

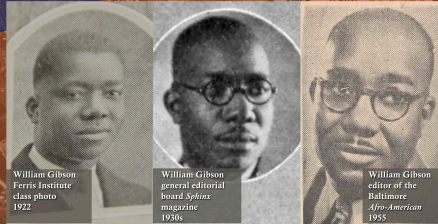
Dixon was a national leader in his field serving as president of the Pan-American Odonatological Association, the National Dental Association, and the Omicron Kappa Upsilon National Honor Society. He was appointed to the Medical and Health Committee of the National Defense Council by Surgeon General Thomas Parran, and he was appointed by President John F. Kennedy to a four-year term as a regent of the National Medical Library.

He received an Honorary Doctorate from Ferris in 1965.



# WILLIAM I. GIBSON

Ferris Institute 1922



William Gibson  
Ferris Institute  
class photo  
1922

William Gibson  
general editorial  
board *Spix*  
magazine  
1930s

William Gibson  
editor of the  
Baltimore  
*Afro-American*  
1955

William “Bill” Gibson attended Hampton Institute from 1917 to 1918, and he attended Ferris in 1922. He earned a bachelor's and a master's degree from Ohio State University. He was also one of the first African Americans to receive a master's degree from the Columbia University School of Journalism.

Gibson was a lifelong newspaper journalist. He began his journalism career with the *Norfolk Journal and Guide* in Norfolk, Virginia. In the 1930s, he wrote articles for *The Crisis* Magazine. He joined the staff of the Baltimore-based newspaper the *Afro-American* in 1927, serving as sports editor until 1936. Gibson covered the Baltimore Black Sox and Hall of Famers such as Jud Wilson and Satchel Paige. Later, he became the managing editor, a position he held until 1952. At that time, he became the executive editor for Johnson Publishing, the company that published *Ebony*, *Jet*, and *Tan* magazines. Gibson also served as director of public relations for Morgan State University and Bennett College. In 1966, Gibson accepted a position as copy editor for the Baltimore-based *News American* until his retirement in 1974.



William Gibson  
managing editor of  
the Baltimore  
*Afro-American*  
1942

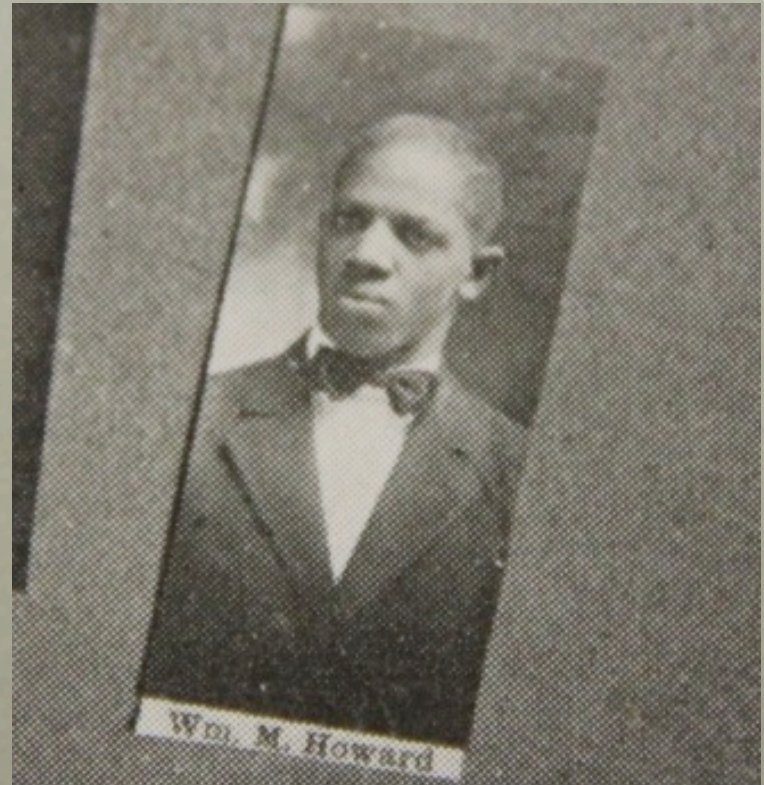
William Gibson  
with Presidential  
candidate Thomas  
Dewey  
1944

William Gibson  
editor of the  
Baltimore  
*Afro-American*  
1948

# OTHER HAMPTON/FERRIS STUDENTS



Bishop Brown, Hampton 1914, Ferris 1915, died of illness in 1918.



William Milton Howard, Hampton 1912, Ferris 1913. A University of Michigan graduate, 1917, became dentist in Detroit.

# OTHER HAMPTON/FERRIS STUDENTS



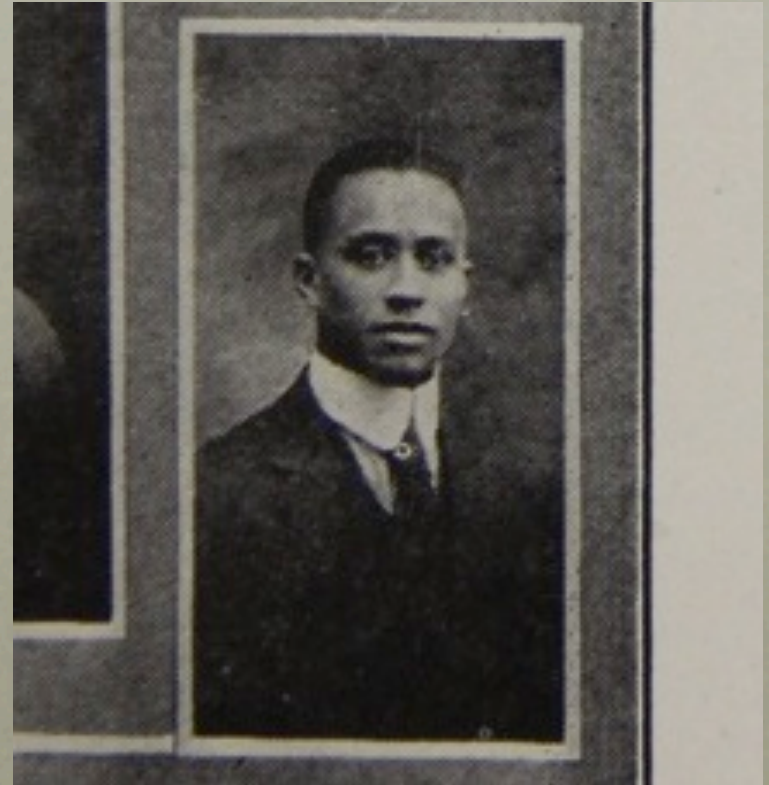
Dr. Arthur James Wells, Hampton 1914, Ferris 1916. He became a dentist in Norfolk, Virginia, listed in *Who's Who in Colored America* 1942 publication.



Paul Singleton, Hampton 1916, at Ferris 1917-1918, Professor of Biology at Virginia State, 1927.

# DR. MACEO CLARK(E)

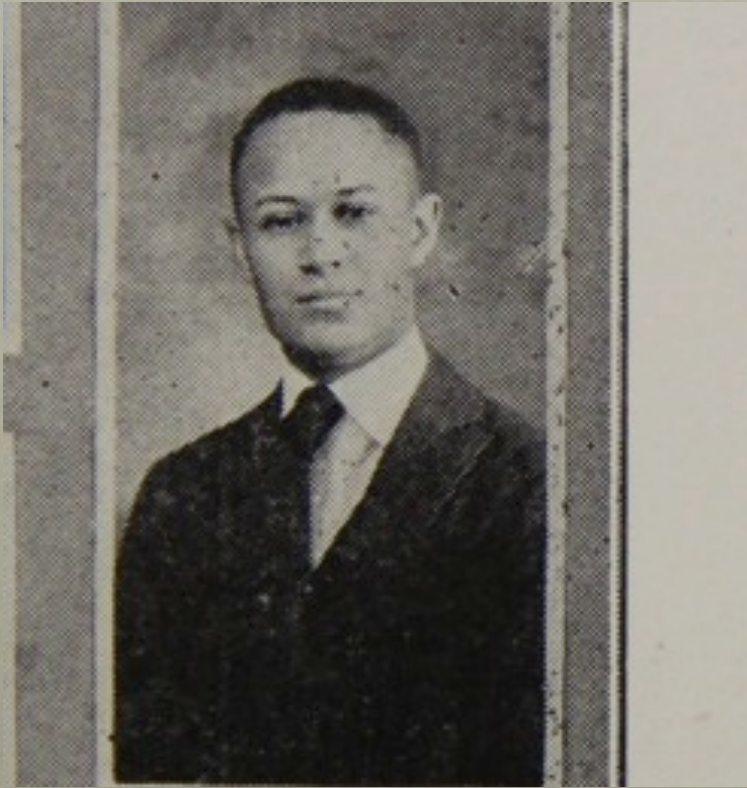
- Maceo Clark(e), Hampton 1916-1917, Ferris 1921.
- He played baseball for the Negro League Washington Potomacs in 1923-1925; also, played with player/manager and Hall of Famer Ben Taylor.
- Clark was a physician in Dayton, Ohio.
- He was elected the 13<sup>th</sup> President of the Dayton NAACP in 1961.
- He served on the Ohio Higher Education Board of Regents from 1966-1975.



Maceo Clark(e), 1921 Ferris class picture.



# OTHER HAMPTON/FERRIS STUDENTS



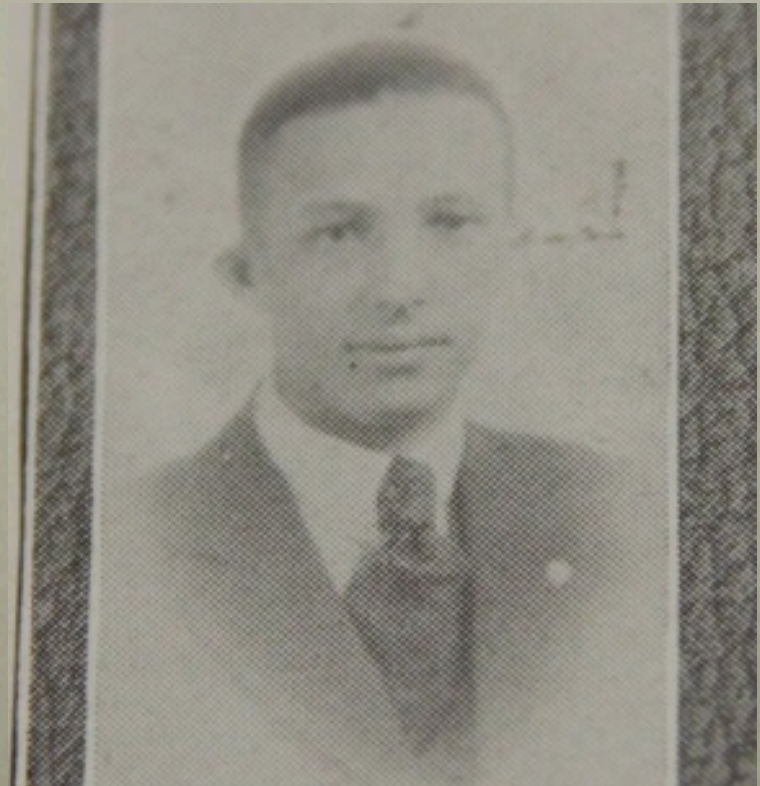
Dr. Lawrence E. Paxton, Hampton 1915-1917, Ferris 1921. He served as Chairman of the Citizens Protective Association and a member of the Roanoke School Board.



Dr. Hannibal D. Clark(e), Hampton 1917-1918, Ferris 1921. There is a *Dr. Hannibal Clarke Scholarship for Dentistry* at Marshall University.

# DR. MACEO A. SANTA CRUZ

- Maceo A. Santa Cruz, Hampton 1919.
- He attended Ferris 1921-1923.
- He graduated from the Howard University School of Dentistry in 1927.
- He was a hero murdered by two white men in Pulaski, Virginia, in 1951, as he defended two young girls who were being harassed.



Maceo Santa Cruz Ferris 1920 class picture.

# NATHANIEL P. MILLER

- Nathaniel P. Miller attended Hampton 1914, and Ferris in 1920.
- Miller graduated from Northwestern University Dental School in 1929.
- Dr. N. P. Miller practiced dentistry in Farmville, Va. for over 50 years.
- He was President of the Farmville chapter of the NAACP.
- Dr. Miller's dental practice facility, The Miller Building, was the meeting place for the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) during the 5 year Prince George County school closings (due to rejection of racial integration).
- In 1969, Dr. Miller became the first African American to be on the Prince Edward School Board.



\$10,000 GIFT to the Howard University College of Dentistry is presented by Dr. Nathaniel Miller (right) of Farmville, Va. to help encourage the study of dentistry. Himself a graduate of Northwestern School of Dentistry, Dr. Miller has been practicing for 45 years. Accepting the scholarship aid gift during the Honors Day

program is Dr. Joseph J. Henry, dean of the H.U. College of Dentistry. Looking on are Dr. Arnett A. Anderson, associate professor, Department of Pedodontics who made the address; and Dr. Thomas J. Pinson, associate dean of the college, who presided. (Cabell Photo.)

Dr. Miller donating \$10,000 to Howard University School of Dentistry in 1969.

# LEO A. ROY

- Leo A. Roy attended Hampton 1911, Ferris 1917.
- Roy was a Carpentry and Mechanical Drawing instructor, business manager, and accountant for Florida A & M 1912-1913.
- He was secretary and special accountant for the Phelps-Stokes Fund and the African Educational Commission. These two groups helped with housing and education of “negroes, both in Africa and the United States, North American Indians, and needy and deserving white students.”
- Roy supervised the vocational education of United States African American soldiers during WWI.
- He was a special accountant, cost accountant, business manager, and office auditor at Chicago University .



## LIEUTENANT LEONARD MCLEOD HAMPTON 1917, FERRIS 1920.

McLeod was a commanding officer of the Hampton R.O.T.C. since its beginning. Lt. McLeod was part of the 17<sup>th</sup> Provisional Training Regiment at Fort Des Moines, Iowa, the first African American officer training program in the United States military. Lt. McLeod taught cadets, (white and black), from Yale, Harvard, Kemper Military Academy, and the University of Alabama in 1919 at Camp Devens in Massachusetts. He came to Ferris in 1920 to take up further study.

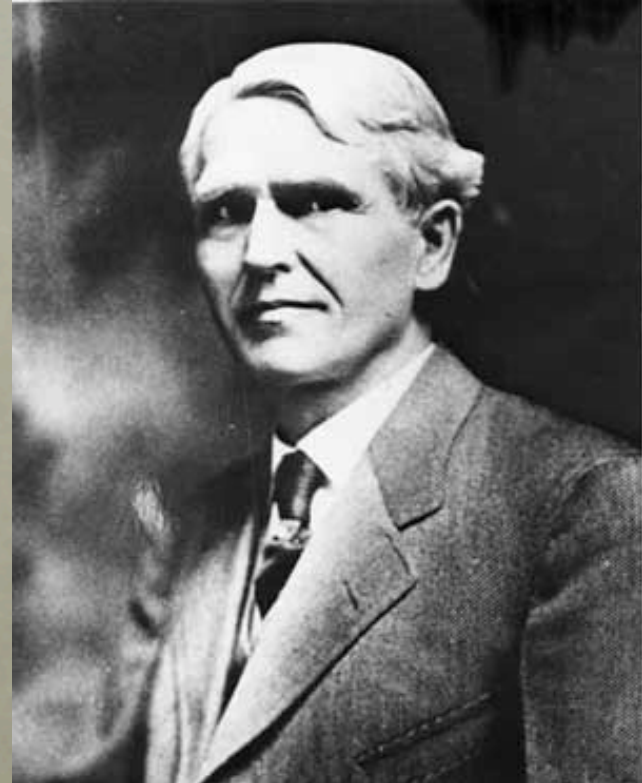


## MICHIGAN EXHIBIT AT LINCOLN JUBILEE 1915

In 1914, Governor Ferris appointed a number of delegates to study the progress and accomplishments of African Americans 50 years after Emancipation. The report was presented at the National Half Century Anniversary of Negro Freedom and Lincoln Jubilee at Chicago, Illinois 1915.

# WOODBIDGE N. FERRIS

“The Ferris Institute is one of the most democratic schools in the United States. It has no color line; it has no age limit; it has no educational requirements for admission. It is open to every man and woman every boy and girl who are hungering for an education.”



Woodbridge N. Ferris

*Michigan Manual of Freedman's Progress.*  
Address by Governor Woodbridge N. Ferris  
1915.

# W. N. FERRIS AND BOOKER T. WASHINGTON



Governor Ferris and Booker T. Washington attended and were speakers at multiple conferences including the Upper Peninsula School Teachers' Association Conference in October 1914. Both leaders were scheduled to attend the National Conference on Race Betterment in January 1914, but Ferris had to attend to the miners' strike in the Upper Peninsula. He read from Washington's *Up From Slavery* at morning exercises in 1910—this was prior to Gideon Smith and Frank Roberts attending Ferris Institute. In 1916, Ferris gave a speech at a NAACP memorial for Washington in Detroit. It was called “Washington's Contributions to Education.”

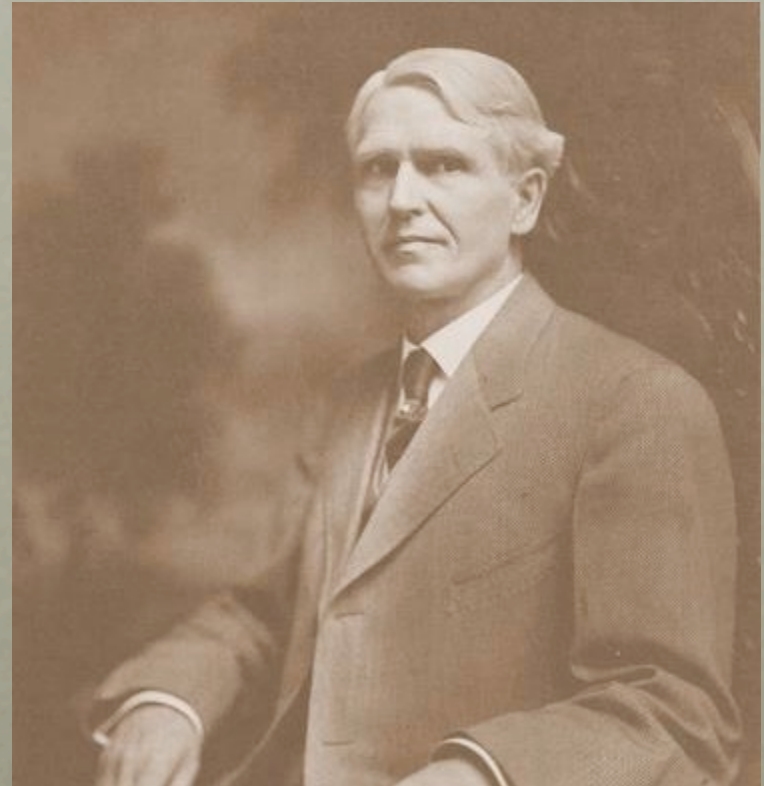


# SENATOR FERRIS AT HAMPTON FOUNDER'S DAY 1928

Remarks made about Mr. Ferris address at the 1928 Hampton Founder's Day event.

“Hon. Woodbridge N. Ferris, U. S. Senator from Michigan, the founder and president of Ferris Institute, Big Rapids, Mich., where a number of former Hampton students have taken special preparatory work. Mr. Ferris gave an address of unusual force, holding his audience in rapt attention, and illustrating his points with pertinent stories which appealed very strongly especially to the youthful members of his audience who will long remember his appeal for the cultivation of the homely virtues.”

~ January 29, 1928



# OTHER FERRIS/ HAMPTON STUDENTS

These nine students attended both the Ferris Institute and Hampton Institute.  
More research is needed to discover their accomplishments.

## First Row

- **Henley Pressey, Hampton 1918-1919, Ferris 1921.**
- **Charles Jackson, Hampton 1917-1918, Ferris 1920.**
- **Virgil L. Haskins, Hampton 1914, Ferris 1920.**



## Second Row

- **Charles L. Pope, Hampton 1918-1919, Ferris 1921.**
- **Oakes A. White, Hampton 1917-1918, Ferris 1923.**
- **Grady Herring, Hampton 1920-1921, Ferris 1923.**



## Third Row

- **Jasper C. Godwin, Hampton 1916-1917, Ferris 1921.**
- **Edward P. Bouldin, Hampton 1916-1917, Ferris 1921.**
- **James J. Bowman, Hampton 1917-1920, Ferris 1922.**



# OTHER POSSIBLE HAMPTON STUDENTS

Overall, 37 students have been identified as having a Ferris/Hampton connection. The nine students below attended Ferris, but it is not clear if they attended the Hampton Institute.

## First Row

- Charles A. Broaddus or Broadus, Louisville, Kentucky, at Ferris 1922-1923.
- Vernon Gray, Muskogee, Oklahoma, at Ferris 1923.
- P. M. Floyd, Philadelphia, at Ferris 1922.



## Second Row

- L. M. Miles, Bridgeport, Connecticut, at Ferris 1921.
- L. C. Dade, New York, NY, at Ferris 1916.
- Charles H. Fisher, Portsmouth, Va., at Ferris 1920.



## Third Row

- Wm. Hearn, Montreal, P.O., at Ferris 1921.
- O. H. Simpkins, Norfolk, Va., at Ferris 1923.
- Mack C. Barlow Jr., Roanoke, Va., at Ferris 1923. (Family owned Dumas Hotel in Roanoke, Va.)



# MORE STORIES TO EXPLORE



ARTHUR C. ANDERSON . . . Bark River

STANLEY BUGAI . . . Cedar

LOUIS H. LOPEZ . . . Quito, Ecuador, S. A.

Luis H. Lopez,  
Ecuador,  
Ferris Institute  
1916

# MORE STORIES TO EXPLORE



Elodie Desmul,  
Banker Program  
Ferris Institute  
1917

BANKER

# MORE STORIES TO EXPLORE

*A friend to all was she.*

WM. HEARN . . . . . Montreal, P. O.  
*A future Booker T.*

E. MARGIRADA . . . . . San Juan, Porto Rico  
*Just here for knowledge.*

DONALD C. GILCHRIST . . . . . Pontiac  
*To act discreet—yet gallant.*

ARTHUR W. SHANNON . . . . . Grand Rapids  
*A wise man with a far away look.*

JASPER GODWIN . . . . . Smithfield, Va.  
*One who made good on the football team.*

WM. BOERNER, . . . . . Mayville  
*His long face is due to the fact that he is short.*



E. Margirada,  
Porto Rico  
Ferris Institute  
1921

# MORE STORIES TO EXPLORE



Eva Casey  
Chicago, Illinois  
Ferris Institute  
1927

Lawrence,

# MORE STORIES TO EXPLORE



BOOKKEEPERS

Unidentified  
African  
American in  
Bookkeeper  
program  
Ferris Institute  
1917



# MORE STORIES TO EXPLORE



COMMERCIALS, CHAMPIONS OF 1917

Unidentified  
African  
American on  
football team  
Ferris Institute  
1917

# WHERE DO WE GO?

- University-wide presentations
- Connecting with current officials at Hampton University
- Investigating other stories—for example, International students came to Ferris before 1900
- Continue researching the story, which means working with a larger number of researchers at Ferris and Hampton
- Pictures, prints, videos....
- Other ideas?