

The Contributions of George Washington Owens to the Development of Agricultural Education Opportunities for African Americans

Zachary Callaghan & Dr. Gaea Hock

KANSAS STATE
UNIVERSITY

College of Agriculture

Department of Communications
and Agricultural Education

Introduction

George Washington Owens is an important figure in the development of agricultural education opportunities for young African Americans. His impact can be traced to the present, yet no research and few publications mention his significance.

Methods

This study utilized historical research methods. All data was collected through online databases at Kansas State University, Virginia State University, Tuskegee University, National FFA Archives, and the Historically Black Colleges and Universities Library Alliance

Results

Owens was born to former slaves in Alma, KS. He eventually became the first African American graduate of the Kansas State Agricultural College (KSU) and went on to work for George W. Carver and Booker T. Washington at Tuskegee. He started the Agricultural College at what is now Virginia State University and became a state teacher trainer for African American agricultural educators in Virginia. He was a co-founder of the NFA.

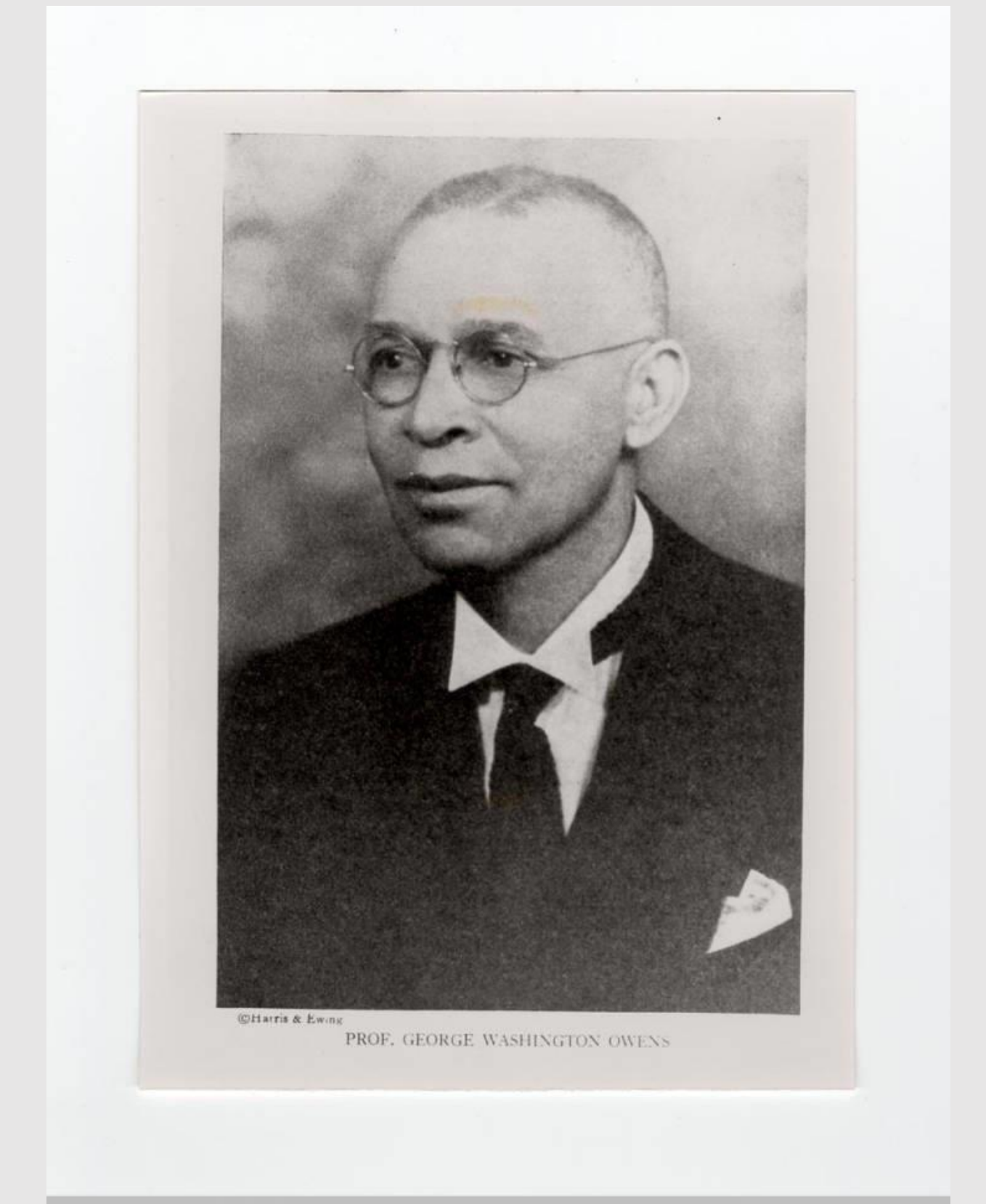
Discussion

Owens was a significant figure in developing agricultural education opportunities for African Americans during a time when they did not already exist.

George Washington Owens had a tremendous impact on the development of agricultural education for **African American students**, particularly in **Virginia** and throughout the **south**.



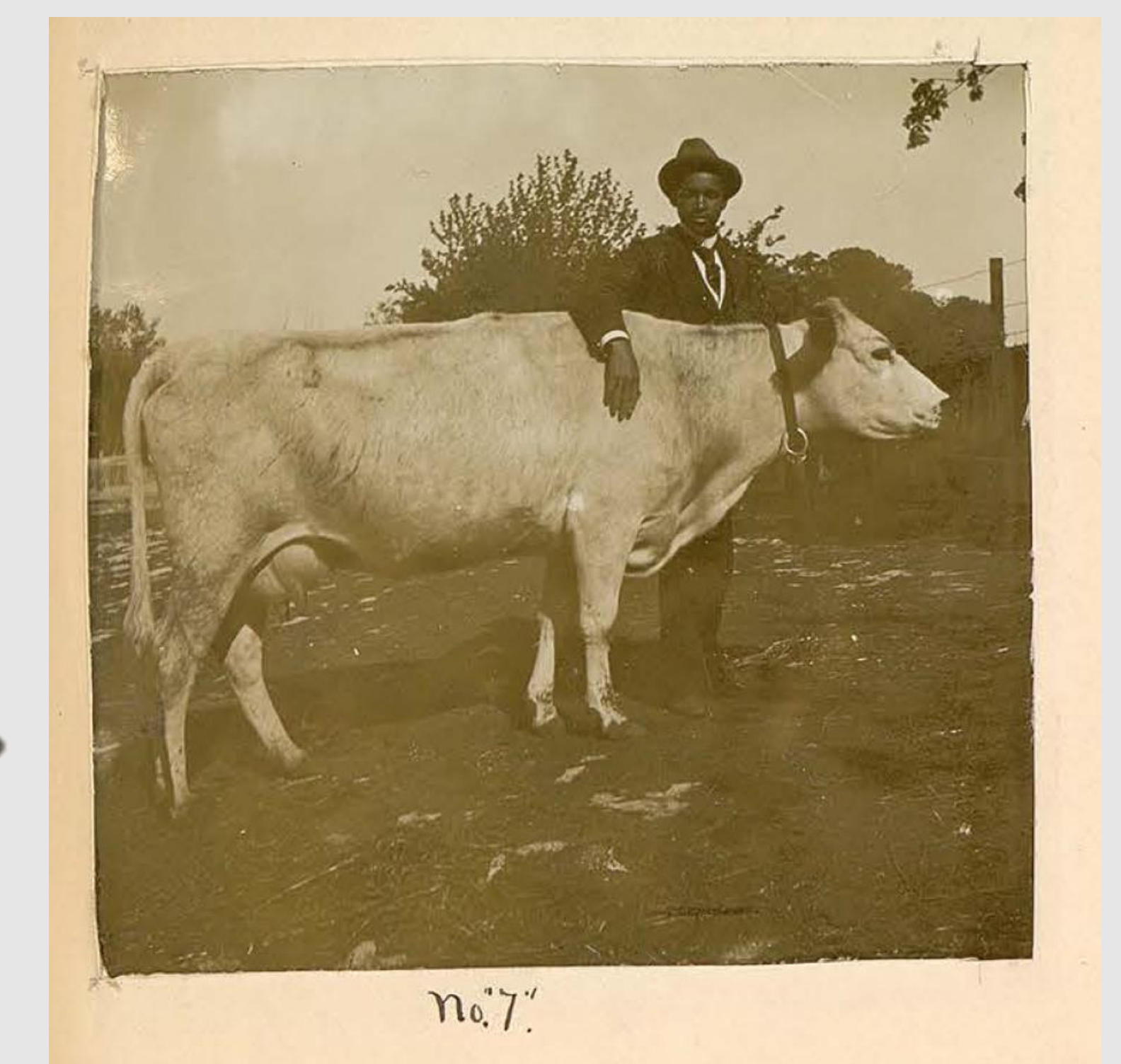
G.W. Owens at KSAC



G.W. Owens at VNI



G.W. Owens teaching a class in gardening at VNI

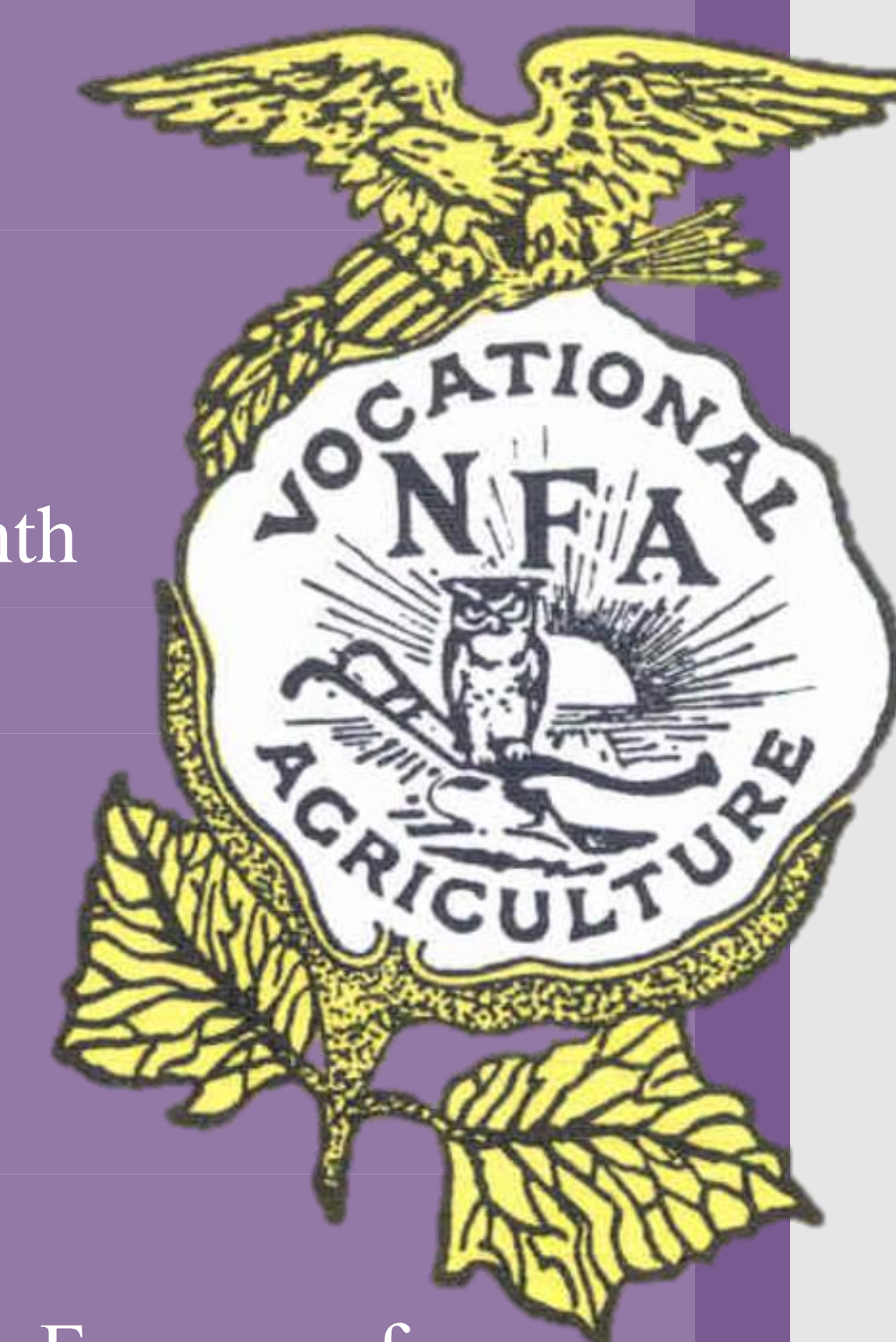


G.W. Owens posing with a dairy cow used in his senior thesis at KSAC

Year Record Excerpt from George Washington Owens Autobiography

Year Record of G.W. Owens Career in Agricultural Education

1875	He was born on a farm near Alma Kansas
1889	Attended District Schools when not working
1889	Took examination for teacher certificate in Wabaunsee County. First colored person to secure certificate.
1896	Enrolled as a Freshman at Kans. State Agr. College Manhattan
1899	Graduated in June 1899 from K.S.A.C. First negro student to graduate at K.S.A.C.
1899	Begin Teaching (sept) at Tuskegee Inst. Ala. Charge creamery
1900	Put in charge Dairy Herd, Tuskegee under Dr. G.W. Carver.
1908	Begin work as Farm Mgr. at Va. Normal and Ind. Institute Petersburg Va.
1908	Taught Agriculture and Managed farm.
-	
1918	Took charge as Vocational Teacher of Smith-Hughes Work
1919	Promoted to State Agr. Teacher Trainer. Smith Hughes Agr Education
1918	Attended summer school at Cornell University summer
1919	Attended special Smith Hughes classes at Hampton Inst. For One month
1920	Begin teaching Nor. Teacher Training at V.N.I.I.
1921	Served at different times as Director of Agr. Department
-	
1928	Started Normal Training Classes
1924	College teacher training classes
1926	Organized Virginia State "New Farmers of Virginia" later called "New Farmers of America" G.W. Owens was founder of same. As teacher trainer, Prof Owens wrote Constitution and By-Laws.
1927	The N.F.A. held its first state rally and exhibit at Petersburg.
1928	The first sectional "rally" held included S. Carolina, North Carolina, and Virginia at A.T. College, Greensboro N.C.
1935	National [NFA] Conference organized at Tuskegee with national program officers, etc.



G.W. Owens posing with other faculty at VNI