What I Learned about African-Americans[1]

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Focusing on Preston Taylor, Samuel R. Cassius, Sara Lue Bostick, and Annie Tuggle, Foster provides a glimpse into the complexities of race, culture, and theology experienced by these black leaders from the time of American slavery to the civil rights movement. The paper was drawn from material written by Lawrence A. Q. Burnley, Edward Robinson, and Douglas A. Foster and published in The Stone-Campbell Movement: A Global History *(Chalice, 2013).*

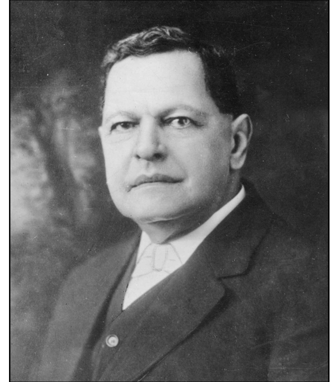
Over the past seven years, the writing team of the global history of the Stone-Campbell Movement has discovered many largely unknown stories of faith, determination, and accomplishment. The contexts of these stories are often striking—at times inspirational, at others tragic—and that is certainly true with the story of African-Americans in the Stone-Campbell Movement. My focus will be on the life and work of four black leaders: Preston Taylor (1849–1931), Samuel Robert Cassius (1853–1931), Sara Lue Bostick (1868–1948), and Annie Clay Tuggle (1890–1976).

The legal enslavement of human beings was ended in the United States by civil war and national legislation—culminating in 1865 with the 13th amendment to the U.S. Constitution. After Reconstruction, however, the racism and race hatred seared into the worldview of the nation's white majority were institutionalized by state laws and Supreme Court decisions that created one of the most thorough and brutal systems of racial separation and exploitation in history. Preston Taylor and Samuel R. Cassius were born into the system of enslavement and experienced Reconstruction—a time of hope for a free black citizenry. Sara Lue Bostick was born at the beginning of Reconstruction, but all three witnessed at its end the creation of legal apartheid, set in place by the self-styled southern "redeemer governments" and implemented nationally by Supreme Court decisions like Plessy v Ferguson in 1896 that set in stone the "separate but equal" doctrine meant to disguise and justify segregation and the subordination of black citizens. Annie C.

[1] This article is adapted from an address presented at the Stone-Campbell Journal Conference, April 13-14, 2012, at Lincoln Christian College, Lincoln, Illinois.

Tuggle, born in 1890 into the full blown Jim Crow segregationist system, would live to see the beginning of the Civil Rights Movement and the cry for American Christians to act out the ideals of justice and equality they professed.

Preston Taylor 1849–1931



Preston Taylor was born in Shreveport, Louisiana, November 7, 1849, possibly to parents enslaved by a member of the family of President Zachary Taylor. Sometime before the Civil War he moved with his parents to Kentucky. According to several accounts, around 1853 when Taylor was four years old, he heard a black Baptist preacher, Rev. London Ferrill, preach at the First Baptist Church of Colored Persons in Lexington, Kentucky. Ferrill made such a powerful impression on the child that he told his mother that he was going to become a preacher. Baptized at age nineteen in Louisville, Kentucky, Taylor began his preaching career that very night. In response to the question "Total years and months of service to the Churches of Christ," on his 1925 application to the Disciples Pension fund, he wrote, "Every day since July 30, 1869."[2]

In 1873, while serving as minister for the Colored Christian Church in Mt. Sterling, Kentucky, Taylor helped organize the first black Stone-Campbell national organization—the National Convention of the Churches of Christ (NCCC). The NCCC immediately formed an advisory committee to work with the white General Christian Missionary Convention on black-related issues, and in 1879, appealed to the white body to share leadership with the NCCC on matters related to black evangelism and education. The General Convention did meet with the committee at least once, but then formed its own "Board of Negro Evangelism and Education," after which it apparently ignored the NCCC and its advisory committee.[3]

In 1879 Taylor began writing "Our Colored Brethren" in the *Christian Standard*, the first regular column in a Stone-Campbell paper to highlight the

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[2] Information found in Preston Taylor biographical file at the Disciples of Christ Historical Society and includes material from his "Commission on the Ministry Information Schedule," the program for Taylor's funeral service, and obituaries from the *Nashville Banner* and *Nashville Tennessean* newspapers reproduced in the *Christian Plea*. See also Todd W. Simmons, "Preston Taylor: Seeker of Dignity for Black Disciples," *Discipliana* 60 (Winter 2000) 99; and Zachary Hutchins, "Summary of Biography of London Ferrill, Pastor of First Baptist Church of Colored Persons, Lexington, KY," Documenting the American South, at http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/ferrill/summary.html.

[3] Lawrence A. Q. Burnley, *The Cost of Unity: African-American Agency and Education in the Christian Church, 1865–1914* (Macon: Mercer University Press, 2008) 215-216.

activities of African Americans. This gave him visibility as a leader in both the black and white communities. Despite its lack of support for the National Convention of the Churches of Christ, Taylor agreed to serve the General Convention as national evangelist for blacks from 1883 to 1886. A major burden for Taylor was the need to establish a ministerial training school for blacks in Kentucky, and he urged the General Convention to help. With the General Convention's approval, Taylor helped begin Christian Bible College in 1886, supported almost entirely by donations from black churches.[4]

When funding was not sufficient to keep the school open the next year, the General Convention agreed to help, but only if it was given full control of the school. John Jenkins, white Superintendent of the General Convention's department of "Missions and Schools among the Colored People," investigated the school's status and reported, "the negro race has not yet reached the plane of civilization that will admit of co-education when the college is in [the] charge of one of their own color." The General Convention closed the school in 1892.[5]

The educational policies of Christian Woman's Board of Missions Superintendent of Negro Education Joel Lehman especially angered black leaders. His assumption was that blacks were incapable of or unsuited for academic education beyond an elementary level. Instead, they should receive "industrial education," that is, instruction in some kind of manual trade, so they could live lives that "contributed to the needs of society." Black leaders, on the other hand, wanted at least one school that offered "a standard college curriculum where our leaders, especially those entering the ministry, may be adequately equipped for their work."[6]

In 1886 Taylor moved to Nashville, Tennessee, where he ministered at different times in two black Christian Churches, Gay Street and Lea Avenue. In 1917 Taylor led in establishing a successor to the National Convention of Churches of Christ, the National Christian Missionary Convention (NCMC). In his inaugural address as president of the new organization, Taylor was direct with his audience, which included Joel Lehman as well as the white presidents of the CWBM and the ACMS. White Disciples had largely ignored and remained separate from their black brothers and sisters. Disciples Year Books gave no figures for the number of colored churches and members, despite the estimate of six hundred congregations and

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[4] R. B. Neal, "The Colored Bible School," *Gospel Advocate* (October 10, 1888) 1.

[5] John W. Jenkins, "Colored Schools and Missions" (report presented to the Board of the General Christian Missionary Convention, 1889), quoted in Burnley, *The Cost of Unity,* 217; Hap C. Lyda, "A History of Black Christian Churches (Disciples of Christ) in the United States through 1899" (PhD dissertation, Vanderbilt University, 1972) 124-125; John C. Long, "The Disciples of Christ and Negro Education" (PhD diss., University of Southern California, 1960) 145-147.

[6] Joel B. Lehman, "Manual Training for the Negro Youth," *Missionary Tidings* (July 1902): 78; "The Work among Negroes," *Missionary Tidings* (December, 1909) 365.

four hundred ministers. He accused Disciples of sometimes having "set the pace in heartless, unnecessary and silly racial discrimination."[7]

However, Taylor most strongly attacked the attitude of the white Disciples toward education for black leaders. White leaders consistently blocked schools of academic higher education, not only as unnecessary for blacks, but as detrimental to them and to white society. Joel Lehman, sitting in the audience, must have felt his face flush, because he had insisted that industrial education for blacks was essential for the well being of Southern whites. Black schools, Lehman had insisted, must do "no injustice to the Christian white people," ensuring that students were "humble and deferential." Unless blacks were "properly" educated, he said, their degeneration would undermine white society.[8]

Taylor then reached the height of his argument.

> The Disciples of Christ, strange as it may seem, need the colored people, . . . as the acid test of Christian orthodoxy and willingness to follow the Christ all the way in his program of human redemption. For if the white brother can include in his religious theory and practice the colored people as real brothers, he will have avoided the heresy of all heresies.

He concluded with a ringing endorsement of the Stone-Campbell plea.

> I . . . reaffirm my faith in the simple religion of Christ and in the Disciples of Christ as the most faithful exponents of him. . . . the Disciples of Christ have the message of salvation for my people, as for all people, for all time. It is this conviction rather than any encouragement or achievement, that has held me fast when otherwise I might have faltered.[9]

That first 1917 assembly of forty-one leaders who gathered in Nashville, Tennessee, for the organization of the NCM Convention included Sarah Lue Bostick, leader of the black CWBM, but it did not include a leader who had already spent decades preaching for the SCM—Samuel Robert Cassius.

Samuel Robert Cassius 1853–1931

Samuel Robert Cassius (1853–1931) was born in Prince William County, Virginia, May 8, 1853, the son of an enslaved African named Jane and her master James Macrae. Following the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, Jane and Samuel joined thousands of refugees who flocked to Washington, D.C. There, a

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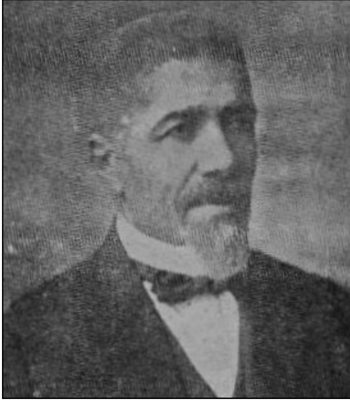
[7] Preston Taylor, "The Status and Outlook of the Colored Brotherhood," in *Report of the First General Convention of Christian (Colored) Churches in the U.S.A., held at Nashville, Tennessee August (sic)* 5th *to* 9th, *1917* (Nashville: n. p., 1917) 23.

[8] Lehman, "The Work among Negroes," 365.

[9] Taylor, "Status and Outlook," 24.



white schoolteacher taught Cassius not only secular subjects, but also the New Testament.[10]

It was not until after he moved to Brazil, Indiana, in the early 1880s and found a job as a mineworker, however, that Cassius first heard a preacher from the Stone-Campbell Movement. The minister so convinced Cassius that he immediately responded to the invitation though he was the only black person in the audience. With the encouragement of two white Illinois preachers, Hiram Woods and W. R. Jewell, Cassius quit his job in the mines and began a life of ministry.[11]

Cassius began reading Stone-Campbell literature, including the Campbell-Purcell and Campbell-Rice debates and, like Preston Taylor, became thoroughly convinced of the truth of the Movement's doctrinal positions. Like Taylor, however, Cassius strongly opposed the pervasive racial discrimination he experienced in this "true church."

After attending the meeting of the General Christian Missionary Convention in Louisville in 1889, he wrote a scathing letter to the *Christian-Evangelist* protesting the appointment of John W. Jenkins as superintendent of colored missions—the same John Jenkins who closed Preston Taylor's Christian Bible College in Kentucky four years later. The report of the meeting, Cassius complained, implied that blacks were so inferior intellectually and spiritually that it was impossible to find a black man "with enough common sense to do evangelistic work among his own people." He insisted that there were black preachers every bit as fit to do the work the Convention had commissioned Jenkins to do.[12]

Tired of the discrimination he experienced preaching in Iowa, Cassius moved in 1891 to Oklahoma Territory, believing blacks could be free of racial prejudice there. By 1895 Cassius had begun expressing his own dream of a school to train black youth in industrial trades and religion and began a paper in 1897, the *Industrial Christian*, to promote the school and raise funds. The following year he published a booklet soliciting donations for the "Tohee Industrial School." Cassius informed readers (especially potential white supporters) that the school would be a tool to evangelize blacks, whose religion generally, he asserted, was not what the Bible taught. He intended to combine the industrial school model of Booker T.

[10] Edward J. Robinson, *To Save My Race from Abuse: The Life of Samuel Robert Cassius* (Tuscaloosa, AL: University of Alabama Press, 2007) 11-16.

[11] Ibid., 20-21.

[12] Samuel Robert Cassius, "A Colored Brother's Protest," *The Christian-Evangelist* (November 14, 1889) 726.

Washington with strong religious instruction, an idea that would theoretically have appealed to whites in the Stone-Campbell Movement.[13]

Yet Cassius was a "race man"—dedicated to confronting ideas, people, and institutions that threatened the well-being of his race. Despite his desire to raise funds for the school, his racial views came through clearly in the booklet. His strong sectarian commitment to Stone-Campbell theology was also evident. He published a map of the world on which he had marked in black what he described as areas "that are either under Catholic dominion, sectarianism (not part of the Stone-Campbell Movement) or heathenism," which was practically the entire map! "By helping me to build the Industrial School, you will help to wipe some of the dark places off the face of the United States."[14]

He began his argument for support with what must have seemed to whites an odd approach. The white race, he explained, had intermarried with all kinds of races, so much so that the amalgamation had resulted in the race's inability to reproduce, insanity, and religious fanaticism that tended toward Catholicism. He praised Alexander Campbell in a long anti-Catholic section.

> . . . Alexander Campbell, that great man of God—[was] sent not to start a new religion, but to show men that they were going slowly but surely away from God and heaven, and drifting surely into Catholicism and hell; . . . that man's voice in the wilderness of sin and sectarianism was so loud and far-reaching that it arrested the attention of every denomination, and brought them back to the Bible and God. As a result, Catholicism received a blow from which it has not yet recovered (but if you folk do not stop stealing Catholic days and worship, you will soon be where Alexander Campbell first found you—that is, if you are not there now).[15]

Despite the drift, Disciples were the only ones with true religion and therefore had to take the initiative to educate American blacks, whose religion was "full of sentiment and emotion, full of dreams, signs, wonders and death-bed statements." In what seems to be an appeal to the parts of the movement who rejected missionary societies, Cassius asserted that this education was not going to be done by Boards of missions, including the Christian Woman's Board of Missions that had assumed the "Negro Work" from the American Christian Missionary Society. This body's "consecrated women weep their eyes out over the condition of the child wives of India, the poor, persecuted women of Greece, and the poor, ignored women of China, and turn up their pretty noses at the poor negro women of America."[16] His proposed

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[13] S. R. Cassius, *Negro Evangelization and the Tohee Industrial School* (Cincinnati: Christian Leader Print, 1898).

[14] Ibid., 5.

[15] Ibid., 9-10.

[16] Ibid., 14.

Industrial School would be the solution. Cassius received enough funds for a rudimentary building but could not secure ongoing support, operating only from July through November of 1899.

As already stated, Cassius's experience with conventions and missionary societies made him deeply ambivalent about them. He consistently attacked society leaders

> who preach the goodness of God, and pray about loving one another, and being one in Christ, but . . . scorn me on account of my race and color, and tell me that their people will not tolerate me as an equal. I am compelled to say to all such, "Thou hypocrite!" Do you believe the Bible when it says that God is no respecter of persons, or that God made of one blood all men?[17]

In 1909 he led in the formation of a black society free from white control—the Missionary Executive Board of the Colored Disciples of Oklahoma, which he served as president for two years. Finally, however, Cassius came to oppose all such organizations—not because they were "unscriptural," but because the whites who controlled the white societies refused to trust black evangelists in leadership roles or to support separate black societies. The blatant racism of the white leadership turned him against the organizations.[18]

Cassius's last major literary work was the 1920 book *Third Birth of a Nation*. It was a response to the racist movie "Birth of a Nation" by D. W. Griffith that glorified the Ku Klux Klan, and to the books *The Negro—A Beast* and *The Clansman*. He struck hard at the racial oppression found even in the churches. "A religion that does not blend all mankind in one common family is not the religion of the Bible." Yet he just as strongly attacked interracial marriage as contrary to God's will. If everyone simply took the word of God as their rule of faith and practice,

> Christians would not be afraid of social equality injuring their home, because the grace of God would cast out all fear. I would not be afraid that some white man would marry my daughter, or that my son would want to marry some white man's daughter; they would believe the Bible and would know that God was opposed to the mixture of the races he separated. [In] this nation we would live together and be happy, but we would not dishonor God or make his son's sacrifice of non-effect by doing those things that he commanded should not be done.[19]

White members of Churches of Christ would have said a strong amen to his condemnation of interracial marriage or miscegenation, and his strong sectarian

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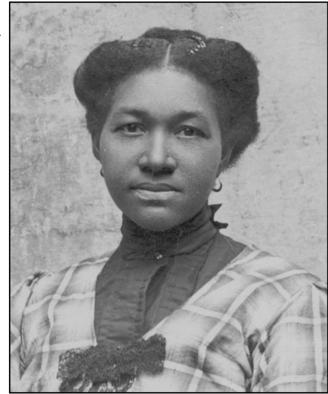
[17] Samuel Robert Cassius, *The Letter and Spirit of Giving and the Race Problem* (c. 1898), quoted in Edward Robinson, ed., *To Lift Up My Race: The Essential Writings of Samuel Robert Cassius* (Knoxville, TN: University of Tennessee Press, 2008) 74.

[18] Robinson, *To Save My Race from Abuse*, 61-64, 75-76.

[19] Elder S. R. Cassius, *The Third Birth of a Nation (Revised and Enlarged)* (Cincinnati: F. L. Rowe, 1925) 83.

loyalty to the doctrines and practices of the Stone-Campbell Movement. Yet his remarks describing whites as degenerating into a mongrel race and accusing white men of being responsible for miscegenation (the mixture of races by interbreeding) must have been equally offensive to white readers. Still, Cassius was convinced of the truth of the gospel as he had accepted it in the Stone-Campbell Movement and continued his advocacy for social and religious equality of the races, yet with strict barriers on intermarriage until his death in 1931.

Sara Lue Bostick 1868–1948



A recent biography of Annie C. Tuggle (discussed below) by Edward Robinson, a member of the global history writing team, is titled, *I Was under a Heavy Burden*. The heavy burdens Sarah Lue Bostick and Tuggle bore included, like those borne by Taylor and Cassius, racial discrimination and rejection by those who opposed their commitment to an exclusivist Stone-Campbell theology. But an additional burden these two shared was the complex restrictions placed on them because of their gender. This fact is reflected even in the relative paucity of materials available for study of the two.

Born Sarah Lue Howard near Glasgow, Kentucky, in 1868, she moved to Arkansas in 1888, possibly to attend college. There she met and married Mancil Bostick, a cotton famer and deacon in the Pea Ridge Christian Church, in April 1892. Though there is no clear evidence that she was formally ordained, she became widely known in both black and white churches for her work for the Christian Woman's Board of Missions, her preaching, and her fund raising for Southern Christian Institute in Edwards, Mississippi; Jacob Kenoly's school in Liberia, West Africa; and Jarvis Christian College in Hawkins, Texas.[20]

In 1896, Bostick organized the first black auxiliary of the CWBM in Arkansas, and by 1900 had begun five more. In 1901 Bostick brought these six auxiliaries together to form the black Arkansas Christian Woman's Board of Missions. The following year the white Arkansas Christian Woman's Board of Missions somewhat anachronistically and presumptuously appointed Bostick "Organizer" of black auxiliaries.

In 1907 the women of the black Arkansas Christian Woman's Board of Missions voted to create a national black CWBM, the Negro Christian Missions Board, and

[20] Much of the biographical material for Bostick is taken from Bertha M. Fuller, *Sarah Lue Bostick: Minister and Missionary* (Private Printing, 1949).

elected Bostick president. She traveled extensively giving leadership to black auxiliaries and advocating the cause of missions in black and white congregations.

In 1918 she published a booklet that provided detailed reports of her travel to raise funds, organize auxiliaries, speak at conventions for the previous several years. Her report for 1908 included traveling 1760 miles, spending sixty-two days in the field, adding fifteen new members to auxiliaries, securing thirteen subscribers for the CWBM's *Missionary Tidings* and the black paper *The Gospel Plea*. Her travel and other expenses came to just under $30.00; she received $9.00 from the white Board, and $11.90 from the Colored Board. She was able to raise $7.60 for missions while on the field.[21] She did not complain about having to spend her own money, but in the last paragraph of the booklet she described what she had had to do to survive, explaining that it was the love of Christ that had compelled her to act:

> I sold books a year or two, taking in sewing, raised chickens and made garden, and always tried to make my own money for the church. Never missed but four missionary meetings in my life. My fare was paid once to the National Convention and once to the Conference.[22]

Though Bostick received very little support from white CWBM leaders, she was becoming known in Disciples circles. When the CWBM assumed management of Southern Christian Institute in Edwards, Mississippi, the national body called on Bostick to help raise money for the school. She used her networks of black CWBM auxiliaries to do this and to recruit students for the school.

Black Christians in Texas in the 1910s could make no headway in securing support for a school, partly because a similar effort in 1893 had resulted in the fundraiser leaving with the money. The white CWBM would help, but only if they controlled all funds and the operation of the school, which black leaders rejected. Rather than let the effort die, white CWBM organizer Bertha Mason Fuller invited Bostick to come to Texas and reconcile the two parties. Bostick accepted and was largely responsible for the founding of what is today Jarvis Christian College in January 1913.[23]

Like many white leaders in the CWBM, Bostick's speaking on behalf of missions made her the first known African-American woman preacher in the Stone-Campbell Movement. She assisted her husband on evangelistic missions from the beginning of their marriage. She and Mancil established the Mt. Sinai Christian Church in North Little Rock where she remained a member until her death in

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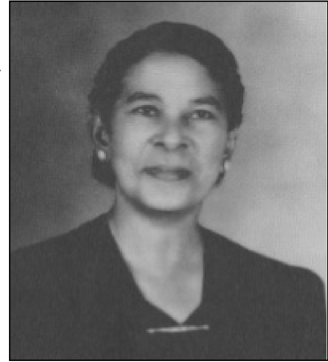
[21] Sarah L. Bostick, "Beginning of the Missionary Work and Plans in Arkansas. 1896," (n.p., 1918) 3.

[22] Ibid., 14.

[23] Fuller, *Sarah Lue Bostick*, 8; Fran Craddock, Martha Few, and Nancy Heimer, *In the Fullness of Time: A History of Women in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)* (St. Louis: Chalice, 1999) 50. See also Burnley, *Cost of Unity*, 241.

1948. Bostick, unlike Taylor and Cassius, did not confront the white establishment about their racial views and actions, but always spoke kindly of them in public. Despite her success at raising funds for the Christian Woman's Board of Missions and schools she loved, she died in poverty. In her will, however, she gave $100.00 each to Southern Christian Institute and Jarvis Christian College, and $50.00 to her home congregation.[24]

Annie Clay Tuggle 1890–1976



Born in west Tennessee in 1890 into a devout Methodist home, Annie Clay Tuggle became strongly convinced of the doctrinal positions of Churches of Christ [A Cappella] in 1908 while spending the summer with her sister and her husband who were members of that stream of the Stone-Campbell Movement. This began a lifelong commitment that shaped her profoundly and, along with her strong personality, gave her an influence among black Churches of Christ that increased until her death in 1976.

Though she had limited access to education in her early years, she was committed to being a teacher and spent much of her life as an educator and supporter of education for black Christians. Her first efforts were with the Silver Point Academy founded in 1907 in Tennessee by George Philip Bowser who was a "race man" in many ways like Cassius. After receiving a high school education there, Tuggle accepted the role of fundraiser for the school. She urged members of black Churches of Christ to imitate Booker T. Washington's persistence and courage by supporting the Silver Point School's mission to educate the heads (academic), hands (industrial), and hearts (theological) of African Americans.[25]

Tuggle did not believe that organizations such as the CWBM were scriptural. Neither did she believe that a woman should speak in church gatherings that included both men and women. Nevertheless, at a time when travel was difficult for any African American, and even more so for a female African American, she accepted the role of fundraiser for G. P. Bowser's Silver Point Christian Institute, a task that required her to travel extensively throughout the southern states in pursuit of donors. To her great sorrow, however, the needed support did not materialize, and by 1918 the school had closed.

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[24] Deborah Phelps, *Wisdom of Women Study Guide—Volume 2* (International Disciples Women's Ministries, 2011) 22.

[25] Edward J. Robinson, *I Was under a Heavy Burden: The Life of Annie C. Tuggle* (Abilene, TX: Abilene Christian University Press, 2011) 38-41.

Her next experience was with a school begun by a white member of Churches of Christ, A. M. Burton, in 1920. Burton wrote Tuggle, who had returned home to west Tennessee after the close of Silver Point, asking her to teach and raise funds for the new Southern Practical Institute that would be in Nashville. She immediately accepted, and had great hopes for the school's future.

Burton had appointed G. P. Bowser as principal of the new school, and a white leader, C. E. W. Dorris as superintendent. When Dorris insisted that the students enter their own school through the back door, as was the custom across the South, Bowser was outraged. This was nothing short of racist humiliation, Bowser insisted. He resigned, and most of the students left with him, resulting in the school's closing after less than six months. Though this was another massive blow to Tuggle, she stayed in Nashville, finished her college degree at Walden College, graduating as valedictorian of her class at age thirty-three, and continuing to look for a place to serve.[26]

Twenty years after the closing of Southern Practical Institute, A. M. Burton began yet another school for blacks in 1940, Nashville Christian Institute. Tuggle taught and helped administer the school for a while before moving to Detroit in 1944, part of a move North by many southern blacks. There she published the first of her two books, *Our Ministers and Song Leaders of the Church of Christ*, which is a treasure trove of photos and information on black leaders in Churches of Christ. In many cases, this book has the only photos and historical information available today for many important leaders of early black Churches of Christ.[27]

As had been the case with Sarah Lue Bostick, Tuggle had gained the notice of both black and white leaders in Churches of Christ because of her faithfulness, her hard work, and her willingness to take a chance for causes she strongly believed in. As Edward Robinson points out, if she had been part of a black denomination like the Church of God in Christ, she would have been known as a "church mother," one who advised ministers, disciplined wayward church members, and served as spiritual guide.[28] As early as age twenty-eight, black evangelist Marshall Keeble asked her to intervene with the leadership of the white congregation sponsoring his gospel meeting when they wanted to end it due to opposition by local troublemakers. She was astounded, she said, that Keeble would ask, in light of her race and gender. But she went, and the white leaders listened. It was this kind of thing that happened throughout her life that led Tuggle to give her 1976 autobiography the title *Another World Wonder*.[29]

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[26] Ibid., 42-43.

[27] Annie C. Tuggle, *Our Ministers and Song Leaders of the Church of Christ* (Detroit: Annie C. Tuggle, 1945).

[28] Robinson, *I Was under a Heavy Burden*, 70.

[29] Annie C. Tuggle, *Another World Wonder* (n.p., Annie C. Tuggle, 1973).

Conclusion: Four "Learnings"

I close with four "learnings" from this material, though there are certainly more.

1) The churches of the Stone-Campbell Movement almost universally embraced the evil system of racism, racial separation, and subordination as right and acceptable to the gospel. We were no different from every other predominantly white religious body in America.

2) The four black church leaders in this study were doggedly committed to the doctrinal rightness of the Stone-Campbell Movement, and despite their sense that racial discrimination was wrong, remained in these churches, experiencing a double (and with Bostick and Tuggle triple) level of oppression as black and "religiously narrow."

3) Some black leaders confronted and condemned white racism and privilege. But even they were damaged psychically and spiritually by a system that relentlessly told and showed them that they were not real citizens, not fully men or women, and that they really did not belong in American society. This can be seen especially in Cassius's strange concoction of anti-miscegenation rhetoric and descriptions of the black race as stronger than the mongrel white race, surely in an effort to elevate his own self-concept.

4) And yet, black leaders accomplished significant things for the kingdom of God despite the cultural, educational, and economic barriers placed in their way by their own white brothers and sisters, and the patronizing attitudes and lack of real fellowship.

History is not trivia. Neither is it simply information. Especially for Christians, history has a transformational function. May this information prove transformational in developing a spiritual historical consciousness as part of our spiritual maturity. SCJ