

P. W. TURNER  
BIRMINGHAM, ALABAMA

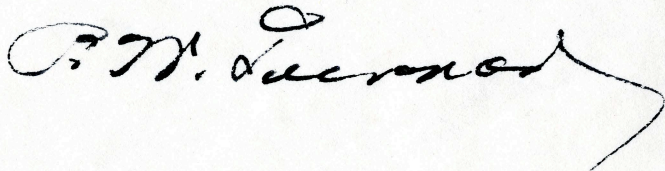
March 25, 1943

Dr. Francis Pendleton Gaines, President,  
Washington and Lee University,  
Lexington, Kentucky.

Dear Dr. Gaines:

There is a rumor in Birmingham that negro soldiers are now students at Washington and Lee. As a former student of Washington and Lee I should like to know if the United States Government has offered this insult to the memory of Robert E. Lee and to the people of the South.

Yours very truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "P. W. Turner", with a long, sweeping tail extending to the right.

PWT:aw



22a  
March 29, 1943

Mr. P. W. Turner  
Birmingham, Alabama

My dear Mr. Turner:

I am glad you wrote to me for the facts concerning the remarkable story that seems to have been circulated in some parts of the country.

Last fall we rented to the United States Government certain of our buildings to be used for the Army School for Special Service (the old morale branch of the Army). This is a highly professional school, all the students being commissioned officers; and the administration, instruction, disciplining, and features of student life are as separate from our own school as if the institution was in another state. Since this is the only school of its kind in the United States, and since the War Department felt that Negro units should have some of the morale training of this specialized nature, one school had four Negroes in its student body. I am informed that there are no Negroes in the present school.

The relationship of Washington and Lee to this school is exclusively a rental matter. We have no more responsibility for their students, or control over them, than we would have over the customers who might enter a store building which we had rented to a tenant.

I hope this statement will be a sufficient answer to your question, but if there is any point which I have not made clear, please write me.

With best wishes, I am

Cordially yours,

Francis P. Gaines  
President