



*Special Collections/Archives Department  
John B. Coleman Library  
Prairie View A&M University*

UA0012

The E. L. Blackshear Collection

Compiled by Anny Gaffey, August 2013

Revised by Evelyn Davis, May 2023

## **The PVAMU Principals and Presidents Collection Finding aid**

### **Collection Overview**

**Creator:** Special Collections/Archives Department staff

**Title:** The PVAMU Principals and Presidents Collection: E. L. Blackshear Collection

**Dates:** 1897-1981

**Bulk Dates:** N/A

**Quantity:** 2 folders (.25 linear feet)

**Abstract:** The Edward L. Blackshear Collection includes event programs and photocopies of publications relating to the tenure of Edward Lavoisier Blackshear, fourth principal of Prairie View A & M University (then Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College).

**Identification:** UA 0012

**Use Restrictions:** Written permission must be obtained from the Special Collections/Archives Department and all relevant rights holders before publishing quotations, excerpts, or images from any materials in this collection.

**Language:** The materials are in English.

**Repository:** Prairie View A&M University

**Biographical Note:** Edward Levoisier (Lavoisier) Blackshear was an African American educator and administrator. He would serve as the fourth principal of Prairie View Agricultural and Mechanical University (Prairie View A&M University) from 1897 to 1915.

Edward L. Blackshear was born on September 8, 1862, in Montgomery, Alabama. He was the son of slaves, Adlene Pollard and Abram Vandiver. Blackshear's mother worked as a maid for the Pollard family. The family would help Blackshear learn how to read and write. He would be educated through the Montgomery public school system. Blackshear attended the city's first school for African American youth.

In 1880, at 18, Blackshear received his Bachelor of Science from Tabor College in Iowa. After receiving his degree, he would begin teaching in public schools. During this period, Blackshear experienced health issues. In 1882, he would relocate to Waco, Texas. In Waco, he would work as a telegraph pole laborer for the Texas-Midland Railroad.

Following regaining his health, Blackshear would start back on his journey as an educator.

### Selected Chronology:

1883: Blackshear was hired as a professor at Paul Quinn College. He would teach at Eighth Ward School in Austin, Texas. Blackshear would serve as the appointed principal of Wheatsville School.

Summer of 1884: Blackshear would serve as the appointed principal of Normal School for Black Teachers in Goliad, Texas.

1888: Blackshear would serve as the appointed principal of Central Grammar School.

1892: Blackshear would be the supervisor of all African American schools in Austin, Texas.

In August of 1896, Texas Governor, Charles A. Culberson, would appoint Edward L. Blackshear as the fourth principal of Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College. He succeeded President Laurine C. Anderson.

During Blackshear's tenure, he would aid in significantly improving and growing the university's curriculum and physical plant. In 1901, the twenty-seventh Texas Legislature authorized the university to offer a four-year course of study in four divisions: Education, Home Economics, Mechanical Arts, and Agriculture. Students would receive a Bachelor of Science and diploma to recognize their completion of their chosen curriculum. In 1903, he would present the university's first three Bachelor of Science degrees. In 1912, Blackshear aided in the creation of the university's first newspaper, The Prairie View Standard. While serving as the principal of Prairie View State, he would be able to continuously develop the university by working with state legislation.

The university's physical plant received several additions during Blackshear's tenure. In 1909, two male dormitories, Foster Hall and Luckie Hall, opened. In 1911, the university opened a combination auditorium/dining hall. Lastly, in 1912, Crawford Hall, a women's dormitory, opened to female students.

While serving as the principal of Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College, Blackshear made several significant accomplishments apart from the university. In 1902, he would receive a master's degree from Tabor College. From 1903 to 1904, Blackshear served as president of the Teachers State Association of Texas (TSTA). In 1913, he would become the appointed president of National Negroes Farmers' Congress in Birmingham, Alabama.

In 1915, the Board of Directors would reelect Blackshear as principal of Prairie View State. On June 12, 1915, he would resign from the position, serving for 18 years. Following his departure from the university, Blackshear would become the head of government extension work in Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Kansas. On December 12, 1919, Edward L. Blackshear would pass away at age 57. He would be buried in Hempstead, Texas.

Following his death, Blackshear's legacy continues to live on. He is one of Prairie View A&M University's prominent figures. Throughout the years, he has received several recognitions. In 1936, Gregorytown School was renamed Blackshear School in Austin, Texas. This school would be the first amongst several named in his honor. In 1948, The

Edward L. Blackshear Stadium (Blackshear Field) would open and become home to the Panther Football team. The stadium would function under the former president's name for 66 years. The university would create a scholarship in his honor, the Edward L. Blackshear Scholarship.

Sources: None.

### Scope and Contents Note

The Edward L. Blackshear Collection consists of **Papers** and **Photocopies** of documents relating to Blackshear and his tenure as Principal of Prairie View A & M University.

### Arrangement

The collection is arranged in chronological order.

### Administrative Information

#### Preferred Citation

The Edward L. Blackshear Collection, UA0012, Special Collections/Archives Department, John B. Coleman Library, Prairie View A&M University

**Related Material:** Related material may be found in the Special Collections/Archives Department Vertical Files. Ask a member of the SCAD staff for assistance. A photograph of Professor Blackshear can also be found in the Mabel Kilpatrick Papers (R3).

### Index Terms

Blackshear, Edward L. (Edward Levoisier)

Prairie View Normal and Industrial College (Prairie View, TX)

African American educators.

Educators – United States.

Employees – Administrators.

Prairie View (TX).

### Inventory

Box #	Folder#	Title/Description	Date
<b>Series 1: Papers</b>			
1	1	Untitled	1905
<b>Series Two: Photocopies</b>			
1	1	Untitled	
1	2	Untitled	
1	3	Untitled	

1	4	Untitled	
1	5	Untitled	
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