



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

UA00197

The Isaiah M. Terrell Collection

Compiled by Anna Gaffey,
Revised by Evelyn Davis, June 2024

The Isaiah M. Terrell Collection Finding aid

Collection Overview

Creator: Isaiah M. Terrell

Title: The Principals and Presidents: Isaiah M. Terrell Collection

Dates: 1915-2003

Quantity: 2 folders (.25 linear feet)

Abstract: The Isaiah M. Terrell Collection includes news clippings and photocopies of publications relating to the tenure of Isaiah Milligan Terrell, fifth principal of Prairie View A & M University (then Prairie View State Normal and Industrial College).

Identification: UA 00197

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: Isaiah Milligan (I. M.) Terrell (born January 3, 1859, died September 29, 1931) was an African-American educator who served as the fifth principal of Prairie View A & M University from 1915 to 1918.

I.M Terrell received his Bachelor and Master of Arts degrees from Straight University in New Orleans. In 1881 he was hired as a private school teacher in Anderson, Texas. After teaching one year in Grimes County, he was selected by Fort Worth's Superintendent of Schools, Alexander Hogg, to head the first free public school for African-Americans, called the East Ninth Street Colored School. On February 7, 1883, Terrell married Marcelite Landry, an accomplished music teacher whom he met while both were attending Straight University. They had two sons.

In 1885 I. M. Terrell and twelve other colleagues met at Prairie View Normal School (now Prairie View A&M University) and organized the Colored Teachers State Association of Texas. In 1890, he was named Principal and Superintendent of Colored Schools. The East Ninth Street School was moved to the corner of East Twelfth and Stedman streets in a property trade with the Fort Worth and Denver Railroad in 1906, and renamed North Side Colored High School No. 11. In 1909 a bond election provided funds for a new building,

which opened in May 1910. I. M. Terrell was named principal and served until 1915. In honor of its former principal, the school was named I. M. Terrell High School in 1921. The school at East Twelfth and Stedman streets became an elementary and junior high school in 1938, when Terrell High School was moved to its present location at 1411 East 18th Street. During Terrell's years of service in the Fort Worth public schools, the first fireproof school building in Texas for African-Americans was built.

Terrell was a member of the Mount Gilead Baptist Church in Fort Worth. Founded in 1876, Mount Gilead was the oldest black church in the city and was the largest African-American church of any denomination in Texas. Terrell was superintendent of Sunday school with a membership of 400.

In 1915, Terrell took over the leadership of Prairie View A & M University. Despite the world conflict and the United States' involvement, the school plant expanded significantly. A household arts building, a power and ice plant, and a laundry building were built in 1916, and in 1918 Spence Hall was created to house the Division of Agriculture. The end of World War I brought the first recognized Reserve Officers Training Corps to the campus, and the Cooperative Extension Service was also launched at this time.

Upon the end of his term as principal in 1918, Terrell was made president of Houston College (also known as Houston Baptist Academy) in Houston's Fourth Ward, and served approximately five years. He retired in 1925 from Houston College and then began work to secure funding for the new Houston Negro Hospital (later Riverside General Hospital). At its dedication in 1926, he was made the hospital's first superintendent and in 1928 became superintendent emeritus. Terrell was also a charter member of the District Grand Lodge No. 25 of the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, which he helped to organize. Isaiah Milligan Terrell died on September 28, 1931, in Houston, Texas.

Scope and Contents Note: The collection includes **News Clippings** and **Photocopies** of documents relating to I. M. Terrell and his tenure as Principal of Prairie View A & M University.

Administrative Information

Preferred Citation

The Isaiah M. Terrell Collection, UA00197, 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.

Index Terms

Colored Teachers State Association of Texas.

Prairie View Normal and Industrial College (Prairie View, TX)
 Prairie View (TX).
 Terrell, Isaiah Milligan, 1859-1931.

Inventory

Box #	Folder #	Title/Description	Date	Location
Series One: News Clippings, 1931-2003				
1	1	Prairie View Standard, 2 October 1931	1931	R2/C2/R5
1	1	Prairie View Standard, November 1931	1931	R2/C2/R5
1	1	Houston Chronicle, 2003	2003	R2/C2/R5
Series Two: Photocopies, 1915-1962, undated				
1	2	[Prairie View History], undated	Undated	R2/C2/R5
1	2	Selected pages from <i>Who's Who of the colored race</i> , 1915	1915	R2/C2/R5
1	2	Selected pages from <i>A Sure Foundation</i> , 1923	1923	R2/C2/R5
1	2	Selected pages from <i>Prairie View: a study in public conscience, 1878-1946</i> , 1962	1962	R2/C2/R5