

# Fourteen Black Classicists

an exhibition created by  
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THE CATHOLIC  
UNIVERSITY  
OF AMERICA



College of Arts and Sciences



Edward Wilmot Blyden  
(1832-1912)

## Edward Wilmot Blyden (1832-1912)

Blyden was born in the West Indies in 1832. He was brought to the United States by Reverend John P. Knox to study theology. When three seminaries refused him admission because of his race, he emigrated to Liberia in 1850. He became professor of classics at Liberia College and then served as its president from 1880–1884, before embarking on a career as a diplomat. In 1880, he became the second black member to join the American Philological Association.



William Lewis Bulkley  
(1867-1933)

## William Lewis Bulkley (1867-1933)

Bulkley was born in Greenville, SC in 1861. After graduating in 1882 from Claflin University in Orangeburg, SC, Bulkley taught Greek and Latin there from 1886–1899. He also served as the university's vice president. In 1893, he was the first person of African descent to earn a Ph.D. in Latin from Syracuse University. He belonged to the American Philological Association from 1895–1900, and in 1909, he became the first black principal of a white high school in New York City (P.S. 125). Bulkley devoted himself to racial uplift and helped found the National Urban League.



Frazelia Campbell  
(1849–1930)

## **Frazelia Campbell (1849–1930)**

Born in Charleston, SC, Campbell graduated from the Institute for Colored Youth in Philadelphia in 1867. She later taught Latin, German, and Spanish there before becoming the principal of the school's Female Department. When the Institute discontinued its academic work, Campbell accepted a similar position at Allen University in Columbia, SC.



Helen Maria Chesnutt  
(1880–1969)

## **Helen Maria Chesnutt (1880–1969)**

Chesnutt was born in Fayetteville, NC in 1880. She earned her B.A. from Smith College in 1902 and her M.A. in Latin from Columbia University in 1925. Chesnutt taught Latin at Central High School in Cleveland, where she inspired her notable pupil, Langston Hughes. In 1932, she co-authored *The Road to Latin*, a textbook that went on to have multiple print runs. She belonged to the American Philological Association from 1920–1934.



William Henry  
Crogman (1841–1931)

## **William Henry Crogman (1841–1931)**

Born in 1841 in the Leeward Islands, Crogman spent his early years as a sailor. After years of self-directed study, he received his degree at Atlanta University in 1873. He then became Professor of Greek at Clark University, where he taught for more than 40 years, and where he served as president from 1903–1910. He was a member of the American Philological Association from 1898 until his death in 1931.



John Wesley Gilbert  
(1863–1923)

## **John Wesley Gilbert (1863–1923)**

Gilbert was born in 1863 in Hephzibah, GA to an enslaved mother. After studying at Paine College, he earned B.A. and M.A. degrees in Greek at Brown University. In 1890, he was the first black man to attend the American School in Athens, Greece, where he helped chart a map of Eretria, (*American Journal of Archaeology*, 1891). He taught Greek at Paine College until his death in 1923.





Richard Theodore  
Greener (1844–1922)

## **Richard Theodore Greener (1844–1922)**

Born in Philadelphia, PA in 1844, Greener was the first African American graduate of Harvard College (1870) and later served as dean of the Howard University School of Law. Prior to Harvard, he attended Phillips Academy and Oberlin College. After 10 years as a teacher and professor, he pursued a career as a lawyer and diplomat. In 1875, he became the first black member of the American Philological Association.



James Monroe Gregory  
(1849–1915)

## **James Monroe Gregory (1849–1915)**

Gregory was born in Lexington, VA in 1849. He studied for a time at Oberlin College and graduated from Howard University with high honors in 1872. He was the first executive officer of the American Association of Educators of Colored Youth, and, after teaching in the Preparatory Department at Howard for several years, he was made professor of Latin in 1875. He was the fourth black member of the American Philological Association.



Wiley Lane (1852-1885)

## Wiley Lane (1852-1885)

Born in Elizabeth City, NC in 1852, Lane was a Phi Beta Kappa graduate from Amherst College in 1879. In 1883, he became the first black man to be appointed Professor of Greek Language and Literature at Howard University. Lane died suddenly in February of 1885, a month before his scheduled departure to study at the American College of Modern Greek in Athens. His untimely death was widely lamented, and Frederick Douglass was among his eulogists.



George Morton  
Lightfoot (1868-1947)

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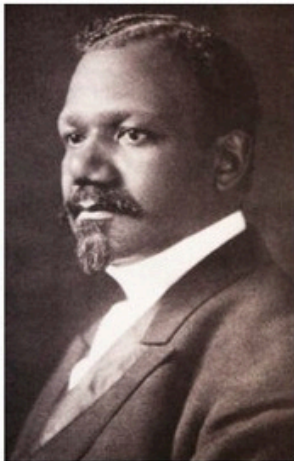
Born in Culpeper, VA in 1868, Lightfoot earned a B.A. from Williams College in 1891. In 1912, he became professor of Latin at Howard University. With a thesis on Roman satire, he earned an M.A. in 1922 from the Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C. As the founder of Howard's Classical Club, he set up a special program for Vergil's 2000th birthday in 1930.



Reuben Shannon  
Lovinggood (1864–  
1916)

## **Reuben Shannon Lovinggood (1864–1916)**

Lovinggood was born in Walhalla, SC in 1864 amid great hardship. He graduated with honors from Clark University in 1890. In 1895, he was called to Wiley College in Marshall, TX to develop the classics program. He later served as president of Samuel Huston College in Austin, TX and established a classics program there in 1910.

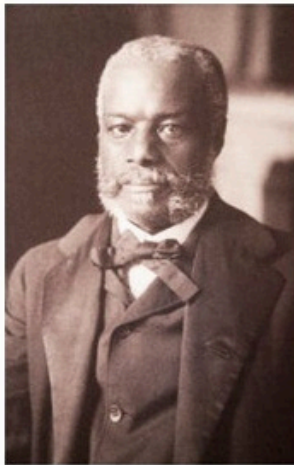


Lewis Baxter Moore  
(1866–1928)

## **Lewis Baxter Moore (1866–1928)**

Born in Huntsville, AL in 1866, Moore received his B.A. in 1889 and his M.A. in 1893 from Fisk University in Nashville, TN. In 1896, he became the first African American to earn a Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania. His dissertation was entitled “The Stage in Sophocles’ Plays.” He taught Latin, pedagogy, psychology, philosophy, and education at Howard University and served as the Dean of Howard’s Teachers’ College.





William Sanders  
Scarborough (1852-  
1926)

## **William Sanders Scarborough (1852-1926)**

Scarborough was born a slave in 1852 in Macon, GA. After studying at Atlanta University, he earned his B.A. and M.A. from Oberlin College. His textbook, *First Lessons in Greek*, drew national attention when it was published in 1881. He was a member of the American Philological Association for 44 years, where he presented over 20 papers. In 1884, he joined the Modern Language Association as the first Black member, and he served as president of Wilberforce University from 1908–1920.



Daniel Barclay Williams  
(1861–1895)

## **Daniel Barclay Williams (1861–1895)**

Born in Richmond, VA in 1861, Williams graduated from Worcester Academy in Massachusetts in 1880, after which he matriculated at Brown University. In 1887, he became Professor of Ancient Languages and Instructor in Pedagogy at Virginia Normal and Collegiate Institute. Known today as Virginia State University, this was the first state institution in Virginia to offer a classical education to African American students.