

ETTA BUDD



Miss Etta Budd

*“I am greatly indebted [to her] for whatever measure of **success** has come to me.”*

— George Washington Carver

After finishing high school in Minneapolis, Kansas, George Washington Carver applied to Highland College and was accepted. He went to the school to start classes but was not allowed to enroll because of his race. After a few years of homesteading in western Kansas, he moved to Iowa. In 1890, George enrolled in Simpson College at Indianola and studied art.

George was the only African American student there but was warmly welcomed. He later wrote, “...they made me believe I was a real human being.” His classes included grammar, arithmetic, art, essay writing, **etymology**, voice, and piano.

Etta Budd, his art teacher, soon recognized his talent as an artist. She said, “Painting was in him.” He later wrote, “Miss Budd helped me in whatever way she could; often going far out of her way to encourage and see that I had such things as I needed.”

Miss Budd’s art class provided George with the technical skills that would later enable him to create the painting known as Yucca and Cactus. This painting represented Iowa at the World’s Fair in Chicago.

Miss Budd worried that as an African American artist, it might be hard for George to earn a living. She knew that he loved plants. George often brought plants for her to see that he had cross-fertilized or



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Carver in Art Class, Simpson College, Indianola, IA

grafted. George said “Miss Budd advised me to take up agriculture in order to render a greater service to my people.”

George Washington Carver had to make a tough decision. If he became an agriculturalist he could be of tremendous service to his fellow African Americans. George chose to transfer to Iowa Agricultural College in 1891 to study agriculture. He became the first African American graduate.

Etta Budd greatly influenced George as he made the decision to study agriculture as a better way to prepare for a life of service to other African Americans. He went on to become a famous agricultural scientist and humanitarian.

GLOSSARY

Etymology - the study of the origin of words and of how their meanings have changed throughout history.

TIME LINE • GAINING AN EDUCATION: 1876 – 1896

