

A faded, grayscale portrait of Louis George Gregory, an African American man with glasses, wearing a suit and tie, serves as the background for the page. The text is overlaid on this image.

# Louis George Gregory

Louis George Gregory was among the elite group of highly educated African Americans whom W.E.B. Du Bois called the “talented tenth.” As an attorney at the U.S. Treasury Department, Mr. Gregory became active in political and cultural life in the nation’s capital. In 1905 the *Washington Bee*, a local black newspaper with a national reach, lauded him as “one of the most gifted writers and speakers in this country.”

As a young lawyer, Louis Gregory supported the social activist ideas of W.E.B. Dubois and the Niagara Movement (later the N.A.A.C.P.). The Movement stood for:

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*... manhood suffrage, equal civil rights, equal economic opportunity, free compulsory elementary education and access to high schools and colleges, legal and penal reform to end racial discrimination, fair treatment by both management and labor unions, and abolition of Jim Crow accommodations.*

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In Louis Gregory’s support for ideas considered radical at the time, he favored agitation to remove the wrongs suffered by his people. In its *Declaration of Principles*, the Movement aired its grievances:

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*We repudiate the monstrous doctrine that the oppressor should be the sole authority as to the rights of the oppressed. The Negro race in America, stolen, ravished and degraded, struggling up through difficulties and oppression, needs sympathy and receives criticism; needs help and is give hindrance, needs protection and is given mob-violence, needs justice and is given charity, needs leadership and is given cowardice and apology, needs bread and is given stone. This nation will never stand justified before God until these things are changed.*

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In the coming years, Louis continued to advocate for racial justice. But, through the influence of the Baha’i teachings, he came to believe that the solution to America’s racial issues existed in the establishment of the Faith he now accepted—and which he began to tirelessly promote as a race amity worker. Distinguished and educated, he labored unwaveringly over the next 40 years for the cause of racial unity through a Baha’i perspective.

Dedicating his entire life to spreading the Baha'i message of racial amity, Louis traveled throughout the United States and often in the South, reaching thousands of people in schools, colleges, churches, forums, and conferences. Reflecting his passion for racial harmony, he wrote in one of his many articles:

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*The two races little understand each other. Apprehensions, imaginations, prejudices, resentments, fears, hatreds destroy confidence in each other's good intentions and create a wall of separation which is generally thought impassable.*

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After violent racial hostilities broke out in Washington DC, he appealed:

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*The danger of the situation is extremely grave. This city which is a nation's pride has already been disgraced by rioting and lawlessness on the part of mobs, during which shots were fired even within a block of the White House, and scenes of like are continually threatened. The feelings of many people are bitter and intense. Wherever in the world today there is hatred of class for class, nation for nation, race for race, tragedy lurks. Its outbreak may be delayed, but unless sentiments are changed it cannot be prevented.*

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**Abdu'l-Baha referred to Louis Gregory as "That pure soul has a heart like unto transparent water. He is like unto pure gold. That is why he is acceptable in any market and is current in every country".** — 'Abdu'l-Baha on Louis Gregory, 1920

When Louis Gregory passed from this world in 1951, [Shoghi Effendi](#) sent a telegram that recalled his true worth:

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*Profoundly deplore grievous loss dearly beloved, noble-minded, golden-hearted Louis Gregory, pride example Negro adherents Faith, keenly feel loss one so loved, admired trusted ... African continent will glory his memory.*

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Compiled by Sue St. Clair  
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