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CIVIL WAR TO CIVIL RIGHTS: DR. THOMAS TYLER WENDELL



Kentucky Historical Society collections

Association in Lexington and with the U.S. Select Service Commission.

In 1928, Gov. Flem D. Sampson appointed Wendell to the physician staff at Eastern State Hospital where he served until his retirement in 1952.

Wendell and his wife, Mary Alice, reared four children in the Lexington area while maintaining strong leadership roles within the civic, educational and religious organizations of Kentucky's African American community. He and other African American doctors in Kentucky provided much-needed medical care to black communities throughout the state, while also bridging cultural divides through civic engagement and medical expertise.

Although Lexington was a segregated city, Wendell was respected in both the black and white communities for his strong leadership and medical knowledge, which helped to dispel stereotypical images of African Americans in the minds of some Lexingtonians.

LEXINGTON — Dr. Thomas Tyler Wendell was a prominent African American physician in Lexington from 1902 to 1952. The son of former slaves, he was raised in Nashville, Tenn.

At the turn of the 20th century, Wendell attended Meharry Medical College to earn both his pharmaceutical and medical degrees.

He was a member of the Alpha Phi Alpha fraternity and worked closely with the Colored Agricultural and Mechanical

The Kentucky Historical Society (KHS) links Kentuckians with their past via archival collections that document people from every walk of life, reaching back to 1509. Letters, diaries, oral histories and photographs, as well as the first and second Kentucky Constitutions, are included. Find these and other KHS collections online at khscatalog.kyvl.org

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