

2013 EDITORIAL REVISITED: In Support of Col. Charles Young to be promoted posthumously; Black colonel was not promoted because white soldiers would have had to salute him

Below is our editorial from July 26, 2013. It is now 2016 and the National Coalition of Black Veterans has yet to receive a promised call from the White House. In an effort to continue to get Col. Young promoted and honor him, a special event will be held at 11:00 a.m. on June 1, 2016 at 1350 Brush Row Road, Wilberforce, Ohio 45384. For further information, contact The Colonel Charles Young Promotion Campaign at 510-467-9242 or email to CNMMMMF@aol.com.

Editorial: Posted July 26, 2013

Col. Charles Young Denied by the Center for Military History

By Arelya J. Mitchell,
 Publisher/Editor-in-Chief
 The Mid-South Tribune
 and the
 Black Information Highway
 www.
blackinformationhighway.com

Long before one president could utter: "Ask not what your country can do for you, but ask what you can do for your country?" Charles Young had already answered the call. Ironically, Col. Charles Young, a legend in his own time Buffalo soldier, was medically discharged from the United States Army in the year John F. Kennedy was born, 1917.

He was proud to be called Colonel Charles Young; he was proud to serve his country, the United States of America. No one could question Charles Young's patriotism, and no one could question that he deserved to move up in the ranks. Until now and by the Center for Military History.

On January 22, 2013 the National Coalition of Black Veterans sent a very compelling letter* to the nation's first African American President requesting that Col. Charles Young receive a presidential proclamation that would bestow

on him the honorary rank of Brigadier General. Written by coalition chairman, Charles Blatcher III who is also founder of the National Minority Military Museum Foundation, and by the museum's chairman, Howard D. Jackson, this letter is a literary masterpiece in Black History and should be read by every Black child and every American child, for the fact that Black History is American History.

Apparently, personnel at the Center for Military History cannot read.

You see, the National Coalition of Black Veterans was not asking anything out of the ordinary concerning a presidential proclamation given posthumously to a soldier, as Blatcher and Jackson so movingly cited with monumental facts in their letter. Presidents Harry S Truman, George H.W. Bush and Bill Clinton had accorded posthumously such proclamations and honorary titles.

However, the response to this letter was so slow in coming that the Coalition enlisted the aid of Cong. Barbara Lee (D-CA) who dispatched yet another letter to the nation's first Black President, requesting that he bestow the rank of Honorary Brigadier General on a man who had served his country for 32 years.

It was after Cong. Lee's letter that the Center for Military History was charged with look-

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ing into the matter.

Fast forwarding: The Center's response to the National Coalition of Black Veterans was not only disrespectful but bordered on a crass naïveté that is repugnant in a 21st Century America, representing the first administration headed by an African American President who also serves as the nation's Commander-in-Chief.

Herein is the response: "... [W]hile Colonel Young did display exemplary conduct and character and made significant contributions to the national defense, there is no evidence that he ever performed duties and responsibilities commensurate with a Brigadier General. Moreover, all evidence indicates that Colonel Young was promoted simultaneously with his peers from West Point."

One has to wonder what evidence would that be for a Black soldier who was only the third African American to graduate from a lily white West Point and who had served his country from

1889 to 1922? One has to wonder if the Center looked at the 'facts' that Col. Young did not receive his promotion because white soldiers did not want to be 'subservient' to a Black man. One has to wonder if the Center looked into the 'politics' of race which used bogus medical claims to force Col. Young into retirement after he requested to be promoted to Brigadier General. One has to wonder if the Center investigated the white officers who put in their requests for transfers so they would not have to serve under a Black Brigadier General or a Black anything for that matter.

And we mustn't forget the hilarious line "...promoted simultaneously with his peers from West Point?" Do tell.

The highly esteemed Center for Military History expounds in classic brush off: "It is worth noting, however, that Colonel Young's official records were destroyed and that CMH has determined it would be impossible to recreate them. The Army is certainly willing to consider any additional, substantive documentation regarding Colonel Young's career that may support a recommendation for honorary promotion. Therefore, I ask that you provide any additional documentation you may have -- such as official military records, commendations, resumes, curriculum vitae, etc. -- to allow a complete characterization of Colonel Young's service."

To which Charles Blatcher III

justifiably responded in his letter of July 8, 2013 to the nation's first Black President and Commander-in-Chief: "Officers were not allowed to command white troops. Their promotion opportunities were limited to the needs of the 9th and 10th Cavalries and the 24th and 25th Infantry Regiments. There was no place in the segregated armed forces for a Black General or full colonel. The date Charles Young was promoted to full colonel was the same day that he was forced into medical retirement from the United States Army. We are certain the Center for Military History is aware of the facts of his service and of the era. We request that you grant the honorary promotion in the name of historical redress and social justice."

Now, what part of these facts cited above does the Center for Military History need to translate with the Rosetta Stone? Why doesn't the Center investigate how the records were destroyed? When were they destroyed? After this man who had served his country asked to be promoted? And then to add stupidity to injury and insult, the Center had the audacity to ask for more proof "to allow a complete characterization of Col. Young's service." Of course, the Center for Military History is aware of the times in which Col. Young lived, but the Center has invoked its SOBPs—that is, its Standard Operating Black

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The legendary Colonel Charles Young: Another look at Black military history

Editor's Note: The article below was originally published in January 2014.

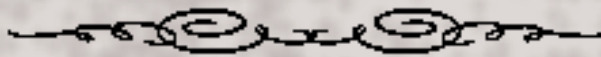
By Katy St. Clair
 Special to
 The Mid-South Tribune
 and the
 Black Information Highway

New information has come to light linking legendary Buffalo Soldier and United States Colonel Charles Young to an early fraternal organization known as The Black Cats, or Beta Kappa Sigma, a little known but exemplary club for men at Wilberforce University in Ohio in the late 1800s.

Charles Young, America's first African-American colonel, earned many honored titles in his lifetime. Born to enslaved parents in Kentucky in 1864, Young went on to graduate from West Point and then devoted his life to proudly serving his country as a Buffalo Soldier. His acumen caused him to rise through the military ranks, from Captain to Major and Lt. Colonel, then achieving the highest honor for a black soldier at the time, full Colonel, in 1918. In addition, Young was the first black Superintendent of a National Park, California's Sequoia National Park. He also served as a military attaché to Liberia and Hispaniola. Along the way he received many honors, including the prestigious Spingarn Medal from the NAACP and various military medals.

The National Coalition of Black Veterans has been working tirelessly to obtain for Col. Young an honorary promotion to

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Procedure—which translates into the tactic that if you ignore a Black person long enough, he'll just go away. To which it should be noted that this Black matter will neither be ignored nor go away.

In his letter, Blatcher further requested that Charles Young should be respected by having the title of Colonel placed before his name on the Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers National Monument, stating: "...The omission of his rank in the title of the National Monument disassociates him from his military history and outstanding service to the nation. As it was stated to me by a fellow senior veteran: 'He was robbed of his promotion opportunity to general during his lifetime. Now it appears he has been robbed of his earned title of Colonel in his death.' We ask that you re-designate the Monument's name to reflect his military association and accomplishments. (Preferable title: Brigadier General Charles Young.)"

In addition to his West Point significance, Col. Young became the first Black military attaché, and was "the first Black soldier promoted to both the ranks of Lieutenant Colonel as well as Colonel," as stated in the Coalition's letter to President Obama.

As a strong advocate of preserving Historical Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), I must point out that Col. Young has too the distinction of having



Col. Charles Young is still being denied justice from the White House. Col. Young was a leader in the historic Buffalo Soldier division of the U.S. Army.

taught at Wilberforce University, the first Black college founded by African Americans themselves; therefore, it is incumbent upon Wilberforce alumni and all graduates of HBCUs to join in the Coalition's efforts give this Black soldier his due.

Others** who have joined these efforts are Lt. General Arthur J. Gregg, Brigadier General Robert Cocroft, Col. Franklin J. Henderson, Captain Joseph Murchison, other notable veterans, historians, and such organizations as Omega Psi Phi

Fraternity (of which Col. Young was a member), 761st Tank Battalion and Allied Veterans Association, The African American Patriots Consortium, and the Congressional Black Caucus Braintrust. (Please see full list below). Also, the Commonwealth of Kentucky House of Representatives and the Kentucky Commission on Human Rights were among the numerous resolutions in support of this campaign.

The January 22, 2013 Coalition letter is one of compassion and is symbolic of Messrs. Charles Blatcher III and Howard D. Jackson being 'officers and gentlemen' in making this request on behalf of Black veterans. I on the other hand will not be a lady in asserting that this matter will not be swept under the rug because of an inadequate Center of Military History which has personnel who cannot do its research in a warranted historical context. Therefore, we are requesting that it is truly now time for all African American organizations to come to the aid of Col. Young. Going all the way from the American Revolutionary War, Civil War, Buffalo Soldier, Tuskegee Airmen, World War I, World War II, Korea, Vietnam, and wars in between, the Black soldier's blood has been disrespected. Blood from those living and dead.

All African American veterans should crisscross military disciplines to right this wrong and

that can be done by calling The Colonel Charles Young Promotion Campaign at 510-467-9242 or email to CNM-MMF@aol.com.

This is the 50th Anniversary of the March on Washington, and Col. Young has not been judged by the content of his character but rather by the color of his skin.

What does Col. Charles Young have to do to get the President's attention: Stand his ground? He's already six-feet under, how much more ground does he need to get a promotion he rightly deserves?

This year also marks the 50th anniversary of America's first Catholic president. Perhaps we can rephrase his famous line to juxtapose with the plight of Col. Charles Young with: "Ask not what this Black soldier can do for his country, but what this country can do for this Black soldier."

*The above editorial and letters are on the Editorial, Letters, Black History, Op/Ed, Black Paper, States, and Military Honorees lanes and can also be downloaded in Adobe PDF format on the Black Information Highway and The Mid-South Tribune ONLINE at www.blackinformationhighway.com. Welcome, Travelers!

**Coalition partners are: The

National Minority Museum Foundation, Oakland, CA; The American Legion-Charles Young Post #398, NY, NY; The Congressional Black Caucus Braintrust, Washington, D.C.; Los Banos Buffalo Soldiers 9th and 10th Cavalry, Los Banos, CA; The USCG National Association of Former Stewards and Mates, Laurelton, NY; The Buffalo Soldiers Memorial Committee-Inland Empire Heritage Association, Riverside, CA; The Association of the 2221 Negro Infantry Volunteers World War II, Ft. Washington, MD; The 9th Memorial United States Cavalry Association, Marana, AZ; The National Association of Black Veterans, Inc., Milwaukee, WI; The African American Patriots Consortium, Inc., Baltimore, MD; The American Legion-Cook-Nelson Post #20, Pontiac, MI; The 9th and 10th Horse Cavalry Association, Los Angeles, CA; The 555th Black Paratroopers Association, Tampa, FL; 369th Veterans Association, Staten Island, NY; The 715 Veterans Association, Laurelton, NY; Montford Point Marine Association, Inc., Limerick, PA; 761st Tank Battalion and Allied Veterans Association, Chicago, IL.; The African American Gallery of the Ethnic Heritage Museum, Rockford, IL; and the Aces Museum, Philadelphia, PA.

Do You Know This About Black History?

Pianist Andre Watts makes his debut at age 16 with the New York Philharmonic in 1963.

Singer Nat 'King' Cole dies on Feb. 15, 1965 in Santa Monica, California.

Dorothy Dandridge, first African American woman nominated for Academy Award for Best Actress dies on September 8, 1965 in Hollywood. Ms. Dandridge was nominated for her role in "Carmen Jones".

Dancer Judith Jamison debuts with Alvin Ailey's Dance Troupe.

The Negro Ensemble Company is formed in New York in 1967.

Singer Otis Redding dies on Dec. 10, 1967 in a plane crash. Redding's "Sitting on the Dock of the Bay" was released posthumously and topped the charts for four weeks in 1968.

In 1967, Aretha Franklin records "Respect," written by Otis Redding.

In 1968, ABC's One Life to Live becomes the first soap opera to feature an African American character, portrayed by Ellen Holly, who plays a black woman passing as white. In 1969, James Earl Jones received a Tony Award for Best Actor for his portrayal in the "Great White Hope".

The Bill Cosby Show variety show debuts in 1969. Also, in 1969, he received his fourth Emmy for a TV variety show. Della Reese gets her own variety show on CBS in 1969.

Rep. Charles Rangel lends support to have Col. Charles Young promoted in honor of the Buffalo Soldier

CHARLES B. RANGEL
13TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
NEW YORK



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

November 16, 2015

Mr. Charles Blatcher, III, Chairman
National Coalition of Black Veteran Organizations
3548 May Court
Oakland, CA 94602

Dear Chairman Blatcher:

As a longtime advocate of veteran causes, and in particular the struggles of black veterans, I have been a supporter of the National Coalition of Black Veteran Organizations for many years. The Organization is the voice of historical redress in how Black service personnel have been historically misrepresented or under-recognized in American History. The organization has raised public consciousness about the importance of the service. I support your organization's advocacy for the honorary promotion of the late Buffalo Soldier - Colonel Charles Young. I am among the thirty-five House Representatives who signed the letter to the White House calling for the Presidential Promotion. I plan to consult with the Congressional Black Caucus to seek further action on the out-standing request.

In the interim, I am calling on the House of Representatives to bestow the Congressional Gold Medal on Colonel Charles Young for his historic service and contributions to our nation. He served during a period in our history when separate was not equal. Opportunities for Black Officers were limited to command over Black Troops. In his stellar military career that spanned over three decades, he became the third Black Graduate of West Point Military Academy; the first Black Military Attaché to a foreign government; the first Black Superintendent of a National Park and the highest ranking Black Officer in the Armed Forces during the majority of his career. We have recently learned he was an accomplished music composer, musician, poet and play-write. He was not just a man of his time. He was a man of all times. Without doubt, he is worthy of the honorary promotion and the Congressional Gold Medal. Both actions would serve to correct the social injustice of the era against a true patriot who served race and country with dignity, pride and honor.

I am calling on Black Veterans and the general public to encourage your congressional representatives to support our call for the promotion and the Congressional Gold Medal for the legendary Buffalo Soldier.

Sincerely,

CHARLES B. RANGEL
Member of Congress

Looking for memories, photos, commentary from those who attended a Historical Black College or University (HBCU)

Email to MSTnews@prodigy.net or BlackInfoHwy@prodigy.net for

Project: HBCU

Also, see The Mid-South Tribune's special edition on the history of HBCUs on the Education lane on the Black Information Highway at www.blackinformationhighway.com

Col. Charles Young: A look at Black military history from page 4

the rank of Brigadier General, an honor he more than earned in his life time, but because of the color of his skin never achieved. Congressman Charles Rangel and Congresswoman Barbara Lee joined by thirty-three other members of Congress have asked President Barack Obama to grant the promotion. The National Coalition of Black Veteran Organizations has commissioned the renowned sculptor Antonio Tobias Mendez to create a bronze maquette of the Colonel on horseback. The coalition has asked President Obama to accept the statue on behalf of the nation for Black History Month.

In 1912, the distinguished Omega Psi Phi Fraternity recognized Young's contributions, and bestowed upon him an honorary membership. The fraternity has often referred to Young as an "Omega Man," but now it looks like his primary association/membership was with another organization prior to his honorary affiliation with the Omegas. A photograph of the Colonel posing with another fraternal organization has surfaced, the Beta Kappa Sigma, at Ohio's Wilberforce University, where Young served as a Professor of Military Science from 1894-1898. In the photograph, he can be seen holding the "B K O" banner as he sits proudly among his peers, known as "The Black Cats." Not very much is known about the photograph, nor even the fraternity, which no longer exists. Ohiomemory.org claims that the organization was never incorporated or recognized by the university, but that it was the

forerunner to every fraternity at Wilberforce thereafter. "The members met at various places, usually an attic room of some member," says the site. "The Black Cat Club" was a club with the purpose of fostering good times among its members." This new information shines a light on not only the history of black fraternities in America, but shows yet another aspect of the life of Charles Young and the men he worked and served beside.

"In retrospect Colonel Young's life was a clear indication of his

"In 1912, the distinguished Omega Psi Phi Fraternity recognized Young's contributions, and bestowed upon him an honorary membership."

belief in the principles of scholarship, leadership, fellowship and service," says Charles Blatcher, III, chairman of the Black Veterans Coalition. He was an extraordinary man both then and now. It is clear why other organizations and the Omegas have sought to identify him with their cause. For the record one thing is for certain, he is a legendary Buffalo Soldier, Educator and Diplomat who has earned a place of respect in American History. Based on his thirty-two years of distinguished military service, the Black Veterans Community claims him and his history for the nation."

For more information on the National Coalition of Black Veteran Organizations they can be reached at e-mail address: cmmmmf@aol.com

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