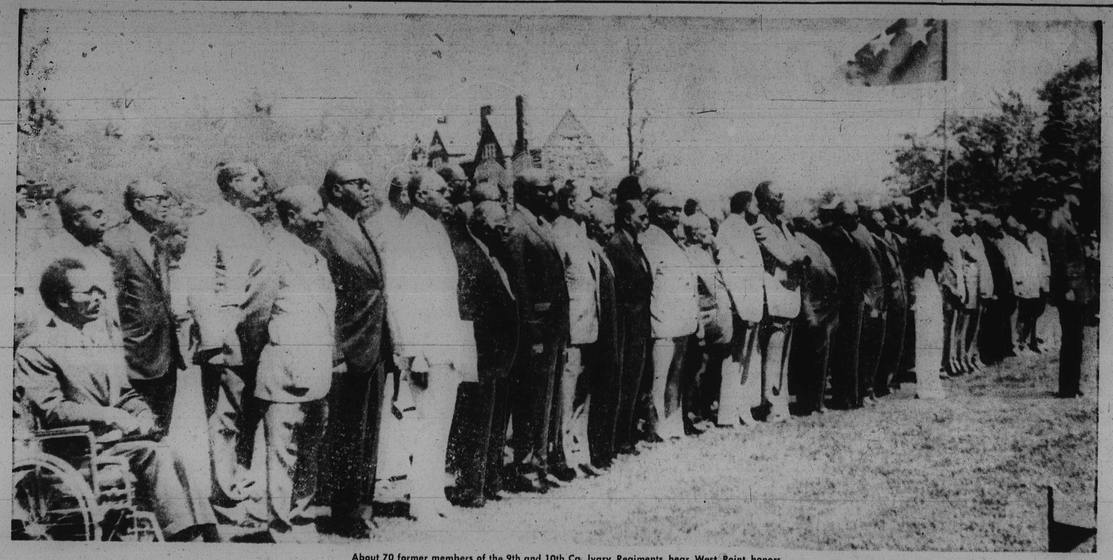


About 70 former members of the 9th and 10th Cavalry Regiments hear West Point honors.

West Point Honors Buffalo Soldiers

ROBERT HIGGINBOTHAM *of Washington*

SILAS H. OWENS *of Washington*

By BOB QUEEN
(N.P. AFRO Editor)

WEST POINT, N.Y. — Shamefully left out of the pages of history, many times mentioned in text books but omitted from the indexes, official army honor and recognition finally came to the 9th and 10th Black Cavalry Regiments when the great Cavalry Plain just inside the U.S. Military Academy gate was re-named and dedicated as "Buffalo Soldier Field."

It was the name applied to these calvarymen by the Indians of the western plains, not so much as to their complexion and hair as some historians claim, but more so based upon their dark skins under the heavy buffalo skin coats that were official army issue during the winter campaigns.

Approximately 75 former memoers of the inactivated 9th and 10th Cavalry regiments, members of their families and many relatives of the men with the regiments that rode to glory during the Indian wars, the Cuban expedition and in the Phillipine insurrection, stood at attention as the West Point band played three ruffles and flourishes.

Close to 500 visitors and guests filled the spectators rows as West Point superintendent Lt. General William A. Knowlton delivered an address praising the "Buffalo" calvary regiments, both during the hostilities involving the Indians and in their days of assignment at West Point beginning in 1907 until their deactivation in 1946.

While there were no living members of the horse soldiers who rode against the Sioux, Cheyennes, Arapahoes, Apaches and numerous other tribes that were fighting for survival more than possible conquest, among the oldest calvarymen present was William Banks, formerly of Lexington, Ky., now living in New York City.

Banks, who retired from Army service after 30 years, joined the 10th Cavalry in 1911, and later served at Ft. Sill, Okla. — The same fort where the Buffalo Soldiers were stationed after the Medicine Lodge Treaty of 1867, serving as "guards" over the Kiowas and Comanches, the latter two tribes suffering the tragedy and humiliation of being driven from the plains.

Banks later joined the 93rd Infantry Division, serving from 1942 to 1943. He stood on the front line of the Buffalo Soldier veterans with Lt. Col. Floyd A. McAfee, an instructor at West Point, an instructor at West Point, from Houston, Tex. and Eulis Steele, a retired major, who was a member of the 10th Cavalry at West Point in 1940 and served at posts in Ft. Leavenworth and Ft. Riley.

Steele, who retired in 1965, has two sons, both graduates of the U.S. Military Academy. 1st. Lt. Gary Steele, now stationed in Panama, and the first black player on the Army football varsity, and Lt. Michael Steele, currently stationed at Ft. Bragg, N.C. He and his wife, Mildred, also have a daughter, Joan, who recently received her M.S. degree in education from Brockport State, N.Y.

Proudly wearing his 10th Cavalry campaign hat, sporting his calvary sword, was be-ribboned Millard Levister of 17 Beekman Ave., Mt. Vernon, N.Y., who joined the 10th Calvary at West Point in 1940, and recently retired from the service.

The 9th Cavalry detachment rode into West Point in 1907 after nearly 40 years of campaigning in the west.

While the 9th and 10th Cavalry played major roles in the constant warfare between the Plains Indians and the U.S., their activities were buried behind the exploits of Gen. George Armstrong Custer and the famed 7th Cavalry that went to its doom at the Little Big Horn on June 25, 1876, or the 1st, 2nd and 4th Cavalry units, the latter, all-white troops.

Between 1867-1891, the Buffalo Soldiers were recorded in the archives as participating in 125 battles and skirmishes, from the plains above the North Platte River to the Texas, plains between the Pecos and Brazos Rivers.

They earned the moniker "Buffalo Soldiers" from the warriors under such chiefs as Yellow Bear of the Arapahos; Tosani the Comanche, and Black Kettle and Little Robe of the Cheyennes.

For the black mounted soldiers there were also campaigns against the Utes and the Kickanoos, with records of individual bravery and heroism, and several instances of superior performance by non-com officers leading patrols.

When the Indians were off the warpath, and when most had been subdued, not by brilliant military strategy — but by sheer numbers of both U.S. troops and the mass of homesteaders trekking Westward, the 9th and 10th Calvary Regiments were detailed to combat the wave of cattle thieves, stage and train robbers and the gun-slingers that made lawlessness a frontier byword.

It was early in 1869 when Satanta, chief of the Kiowas, and Lone Wolf of the Cheyennes, brought their beaten and hungry followers into then newly-constructed Ft. Sill, Okla. In command of the Fort, garrisoned by the 10th Cavalry, was Gen. Bejamin H. Grierson, one of the great cavalarymen of the Civil War.

Grierson, an Illinois grocer and a music teacher, had developed into quite a horse-soldier officer and was chosen to help turn back the front established by one of the most colorful calvarymen of all time, Confederate Nathan Bedford Forrest.

It was a prophetic clash.

Grierson at Kenesaw Mountain, leading 5,000 infantrymen and 1,200 black troops, meeting head-on with Forrest: a one-time Memphis slave-dealer and wealthy enough to organize and finance a calvary unit out of his own pocket.

The battle at Kenesaw Mountain ended with heavy federal losses, and was not considered a victory — but one of the stepping stones to Grant's massive and victorious drive on Vicksburg, Miss.

But it was Grierson's experience with black soldiers that finally placedi him in command of the Buffalo Soldiers, as the men who fought the war settled down to the next big task of clearing the Indians off the western plains. A colonel during the war, he was made a general in the western campaigns.

He was among the almost unpopular group of high-ranking federal officers who praised the valor and loyalty of the black soldier in battle.

There was one occasion at Ft. Sill, when the famed Civil War general who had scorched the earth on the march to Atlanta, William Tecumsah Sherman, turned up to order the Kiowas wiped out if they didn't settle down. He was facing the Kiowa Chief, Santana, when the Indian, angered, threw back his blanket and reached for a pistol.

Sherman made a sign and the doorway and windows were suddenly full of black 10th Calvarymen, all with the hammers drawn on their carbines.

As the 9th and 10th blazed their way into the shadows of history, it is interesting to note that another white general who later carved a niche in the educational progress of black America, was at the same time pow-wowing with Cochise, chief of the Chiricahua Apaches around the Dragoon Mountains and Chiricahua Mountains — Otis O. Howard, of New England, who lost an arm at the Battle of Fair Oaks, and later founded Howard University in Washington.

It was Howard too, who was head of the force in the grim and unrewarding pursuit of the Nez Perce band under Chief Joseph. Eluding cavalrymen over half of the west, Joseph was captured and his followers made it into Canada with the help of the Sioux.

It was after the first battle of Wounded Knee, which was the last grand stand of the plains Indians on the battlefield in 1890, that the 9th and 10th Calvary were deployed into other theatres of war.

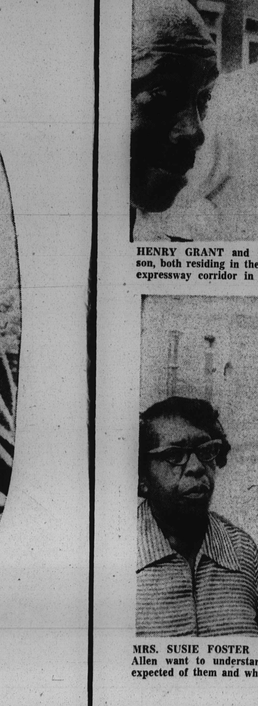
Both regiments were in the frontal attack in the war with Spain in 1898, and it was the 10th that rescued Teddy Roosevelt's "Rough Riders" in the attack on San Juan Hill, and were also involved in the siege of Santiago.

The 9th Cavalry was dispatched to the Phillipines, and the 10th sent back to border duty in the south-west. They accompanied Gen. John J. Pershing into Mexico in pursuit of the Mexican bandit-hero, Pancho Villa, that ended in an American setback in northern Mexico.

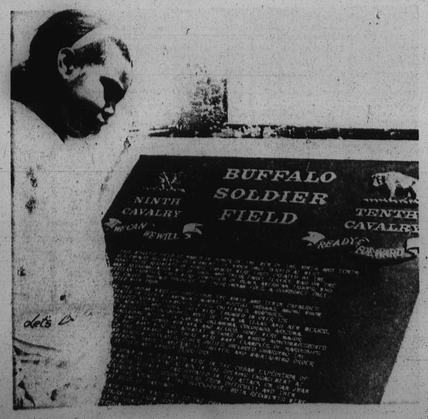
In 1907, a detachment of the 9th Cavalry rode into ths U.S. Military Academy at West Point where they were engaged in riding instruction and mounted drill on the current athletic field that was then known as Cavalry Plain.

In 1931, it was replaced by the 2nd Squadron of the 10th Cavalry that remained until deactivated in 1946.

The real story and glories of the black 9th and 10th Cavalry Regiments submerged until Sunday, May 19, 1973, when Cavalry Plain became "Buffalo Soldier Field."



MILLARD LEVISTER, 10th, 1938
From Mt. Vernon, N.Y., he wears hat, carries sword.



Lynet Montgomery reads inscription on plaque honoring soldiers

High school yearbook cites counselor

GREENVILLE, S.C. — The 1973 edition of "The Nautilus," Yearbook for Greenville Senior High School, has been dedicated to Mrs. Xanthene S. Norris, first staff member to be so honored since schools were unified in 1970.

Mrs. Norris, a graduate of Spellman College who has a masters' degree from Furman University, was described as "a highly dedicated professional in the performance of her work," by Dr. Max Skidmore, the principal.

"She places the good of students in the forefront of her mind and is diligent in her efforts on their behalf," he continued.

"She has excellent relationships with other professionals and has worked to promote harmonious relationships among students and adults," concluded Skidmore.

The "Nautilus" staff also commented on Mrs. Norris' "genuine interest in students" in their message of dedication.

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Her interest in students "shows concern and willingness to listen," declared the staff. You take the time to know the students you come in contact with.

"Your participation in many cultural activities outside school reveals a community-minded personality.

"Because of your personal involvement and interest in them, students have come to know you as more than a faculty member," the statement continued.

"You guided the development of the class of 73 and because of this, "The its book to you, Mrs. Xan-Nautilus" staff dedicates thene Norris."

WILLIAM BANKS
10th, 1911, of New York

S.C. state gets $1,000 gift

ORANGEBURG, S.C. — Allied Chemical Corp. of Columbia, S. C., has presented $1,000 to the Chemistry Department of South Carolina State College.

AN ISOLATED NEIGHBORHOOD, boarded up and awaiting demolition forces, frightens residents who have no place to go. (ABOVE and right) Del. Troy Brailey is surrounded by citizens who have a story of desolation and dispair to tell.
(AFRO Staff Photos by Fletcher Roberts)

HENRY GRANT and Grant Johnson, both residing in the path of the expressway corridor in the area of Leadenhall and Sharp Sts. reveal all they want is justice as home owners forced to move.

MRS. SUSIE FOSTER and James Allen want to understand what is expected of them and what they can expect before the bulldozer wipes the area clean.

Problems We Face Today

Everything is changing in old South Baltimore

Some 200 South Baltimore residents gathered at the ancient landmark Leadenhall Baptist Church last week to talk with city officials. The problem they face is hanging over their heads day and night, the destruction of their homes to make way for the Expressway. The problem is a serious one since they are not clear on where to go, what they will use for money and what they will find if and when they leave the only home they have ever known.

This problem comes as result of Progress, changing times in a city that has suddenly become old, worn out and tired.

There are other problems. Here House of Delegates Member Troy Brailey, a champion of Baltimore's many little people, discusses the problems that face our citizens today.

It has been six years since South Baltimore first heard, "Our homes are going to make room for the Expressway. The Expressway is coming through. We've got to move."

Days, months, years went by and somehow, a resident reveals, "We thought maybe it wouldn't happen so we went on living as usual."

Meantime, like a hurricane had come, they looked up and the whole block behind them was swept clean of longtime friends and relatives. Overnight they moved and now the houses are boarded up.

Del. Brailey told citizens who are left, the law provides they be compensated by the city for their homes. They are supposed to be given guidance in relocation and advised as to how much money they can expect for moving.

OTHER QUESTIONS

While chatting with the sorrowful neighbors who are still left Del. Brailey found he was required to answer other questions that puzzle nearly everyone in these days of change.

Why has the city of Baltimore no interest in what happens to people? The Expressway, traffic, cars, and everything but homeowners are the only thought.

Taxes, jobs, pay, food, thousands of other things disturb citizens in the time of change.

WORSE DEPRESSION

Del. Brailey feels any question which concerns economics and the black population is answered with, "heading for disaster."

He says, "I foresee a depression, worse than the one we are in and it will hit us first. If this occurs (and it will unless a miracle happens,) our people will lose their jobs first. We are still at the bottom of the seniority list. We are still in the bracket of "last hired, first fired."

"Hundreds of us who lose our jobs will never work again, not because we do not want to but because you simply will not be able to find a job. This means they will have to look to Welfare for existence.

"Mergers between many of the large U.S. firms will result in loss of more jobs in the next three years.

CIVIL RIGHTS LOST

"Many of us think we have it made, that we do not need a Civil Rights Movement anymore. We think we have it made. It is difficult to get NAACP life membership or any membership in rights organization.

"We have forgotten we would have been nowhere except for the Civil Rights Movement.

"Therefore, we are losing our rights, the ones we gained in the 1950's and 1960's. We have not kept pressing as we should and they are slipping away under our very noses."

EDUCATION NEEDED

Del. Brailey urges young people, "Do not lose one moment. Get as much education as possible, as soon as possible. We are far into the age of science and technology. Merely a high school diploma will not do.

"To compete in the job market today, you must specialize and be far better equipped than the white man.

"Also, learn a trade. Employment agencies, both state and federal have more calls for persons who can handle a trade than they do teachers."

STAY OUT OF JAIL

Del. Brailey accents the fact that young people today must think of the future. A police record today will hinder you when you go for a job in later years, he cautions.

"Don't follow the crowd. The crowd is not constructive. The crowd can help no one. It is necessary to develop your potential alone. No one can do it for you."

FOOD PRICES

Del. Brailey interprets President Nixon's move to halt rising food prices as "a move he made after prices had reached the sky."

BLACK POLITICAL POWER

The legislator points to political power as the most important method of swinging the fate of the black man back to where he would like for it to be.

He states, "The black community is using its political power, neither wisely nor to its fullest extent.

"We should be able to move the mayor and the governor or any public agent to do more for us. We are divided. If we could get together, our more than 50 per cent of the population in Baltimore could get anything done.

"We must become registered to vote to the last man.

"We would then be able to vote out the man who fails to give us proper housing, all our rights, jobs and decent wages.

"We could overnight direct the way our future should go if we used the power of our votes. We are over 50 per cent in nearly every large city.

"Baltimore could lead the nation as an example of fair government if we used the power of our votes."

RAYMOND COOK and Mrs. Mildred Moon have other questions that needs answers; What does the future hold for the average citizen? What about jobs? Will we lose the rights we have gained or will we continue to see progress as first class citizens?

J. A. LUCAS wants to know about food prices now at an all-time high. What can a man expect this winter? With this nation's wealth, why should anyone starve? Where does a working man's tax money go? Why pay and have to beg for help?

Carl Murphy scholarship winner works at City Desk

MISS ARLENE BLACKWELL
Carl Murphy Scholarship winner

EDITOR'S NOTE: Miss Arlene M. Blackwell, June 1973 graduate of Douglass High School, won the Carl scholarship named for the late publisher. For the past two weeks, she has served as cub reporter on the Baltimore AFRO city desk).

Two years of diligent effort mixed with journalistic aspirations, were rewarded on June 4, 1973, when Arlene Margie Blackwell won the Carl Murphy Family Journalism Award during the Douglass High School commencement exercises.

"I stepped onto the Civic Center stage awed, but not really nervous until I read my name on the program as being the Douglass journalism award recipient, then it all seemed unreal," Miss Blackwell told the AFRO. She worked her way up on the journalism staff of the Douglass Courier from reporter to editor-in-chief.

"I entered Douglass in the ninth grade wanting the opportunity to be a part of its newspaper staff and waited two long years to do so.

She continued, "I didn't realize I'd come this far in such a short period. I thought one had to achieve astronomical goals to receive the Carl Murphy Family Journalism Award."

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Miss Blackwell, 18, indulges herself heavily with writing and reading. Bowling is another hobby, but it takes a back seat to what she calls, "my first loves," reading and writing.

At six feet and three-quarter inches, she prefers casual attire to heels and stockings.

From a family of five daughters born to Margie Edith Blackwell and Hurley Delfield Blackwell, Miss Blackwell shares her love with her sisters.

They are, Mrs. Cynthia Finney, employed at Rosewood State Hospital; Miss Theresa Blackwell, employed with Gas and Electric Co.; Miss Jacqueline Blackwell a junior at Western High; and Pamela Blackwell, a fourth grader at Alexander Hamilton Elementary School No. 145.

Now living with her grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. George Gantt, Miss Blackwell reveals to the AFRO that her grandmother is one of her biggest supporters.

Her father is a foreman employed by C. R. Daniels Corp.

Her mother is a licensed practical nurse, as is her grandmother who is employed at Chesapeake Manor in Towson. Her grandfather is a retired Bethlehem Steel worker.

The family attends Whitestone Baptist Church.

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In the fall, Miss Blackwell will head for Sante Fe, New Mexico, to enroll in St. John's College. She plans a future in clinical psychology and philosophy. She wil complete her undergraduate work in Liberal Arts and proceed to fulfill ultimate goals.

"I know that seems a round-about way to the end, but I know it'll be well worth the trip," Miss Blackwell said.

Fascinated by the human mind she decided on clinical psychology. In this way she feels she can best help people. "If, she says, I get their minds together, they'll be able to get themselves together."

She concedes, she might make journalism a career at a later time.

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Reading the AFRO from the time I was able, she believes makes the award that much more precious. Winning the distinguished journalism prize from my hometown paper gives me the deepest sense of satisfaction and accomplishment."

Recently meeting AFRO vice president-treasurer Mrs. Elizabeth Murphy Moss and observing reporters at the city desk, Miss Blackwell observed, "There is no question in my mind as to how the AFRO reached its 81st successful year."

Senegal minister urges African common market

KAMPALA, Uganda — Abdul R. Jia, a Senegalese minister of state, proposed an African Economic Community on a recent visit here.

President Leopold Senghor, he said, is building a bridge between French- and English-speaking countries and took Senegal into the recently-formed West African Community.

This concept, Jia declared, will do much to correct the state in which the colonial powers left the continent's economy.

Gen. Idi Amin replied that continental nations can profit from exchanging many commodities which they now import from overseas and should emulate the Common Market.

Thanking Senegal for hosting a dozen teachers, the general noted that people learn faster when they know they are on their own. The British aid cutoff has spurred redoubled Ugandan effort, he said.

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He said he hoped to see all continental business and official matters in the hands of Africans instead of those of imperialists.

Urging Senegal to adopt his policies, General Amin said, "By giving the economy into the hands of your people, you will create more job opportunities for them."

Both leaders struck a "nationalist" note of working for and protecting the interests of Africa.

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