

Charles Young Buffalo Soldiers National Monument

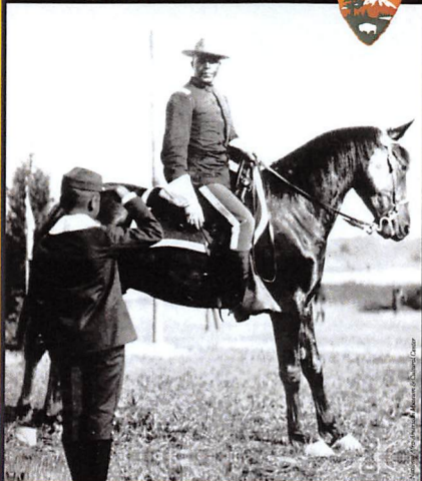


Image by the National Museum of African American History & Culture

497 Mile Ride

Wilberforce to D.C.

Something to Prove

In June 1917, the Army promoted Charles Young to the rank of Colonel but declared that he was physically unqualified for leading troops in World War I. He believed he was healthy and the Army did not want him in leadership because of his race. Young formally objected and made a journey from Wilberforce, Ohio to Washington, D.C. to prove he was healthy enough to lead troops in Europe during World War I. He did this at age 54, after the Army denied his first request for a command. He rode 497 miles on horseback to prove them wrong. Even after proving to the Secretary of War that he was able to command, Young still could not persuade the U.S. Army to give him a command in Europe. Although, his ride did not grant him exactly what he desired, it showed his strength in patriotism and his ability to stand against the odds.

To learn more, visit: www.nps.gov/chyo

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