Farmville, Va. – Democracy's Proving Ground

Farmville, Va., today is a proving ground for democracy.

It is the county seat of Prince Edward County and the U.S. Supreme Court, now weighing the fate of segregated public schools, has the Prince Edward County suit as one of the arguments for decision.

The action of Farmville students at R. R. Moton High School drew nationwide attention when the young people demanded, in open and democratic action, that the town fathers do something about their school.

This was turned into a determined demand for non-segregated school facilities.

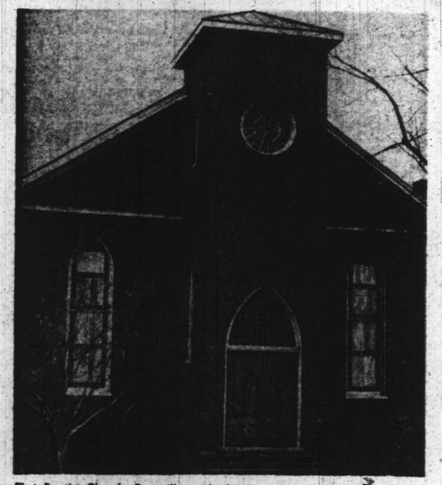
Regardless of the Court's decision the results are manifest in Prince Edward County where a $1,500,000 school is under construction.

The official census lists the town's population at 5,000, but estimates run as high as 7,000 during the school year. Farmville is also the site of Longwood College, state teachers college for white women.

About 42 percent of the county's 15,000 citizens are colored, but employment opportunities, in the Southern pattern, are limited to white persons.

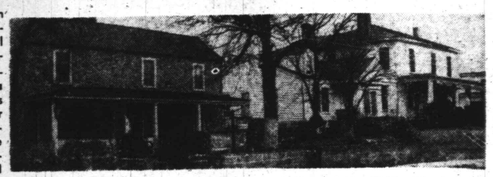
The town has several tobacco factories, shoe factory, furniture factory, and a small garment factory. Also there is a grain mill and several wood-working and construction plants.

Two doctors, Dr. L. L. Jan[illegible] physician, and A. G. Rawlin[illegible] list, Dr. N. P. Miller, servic[illegible]

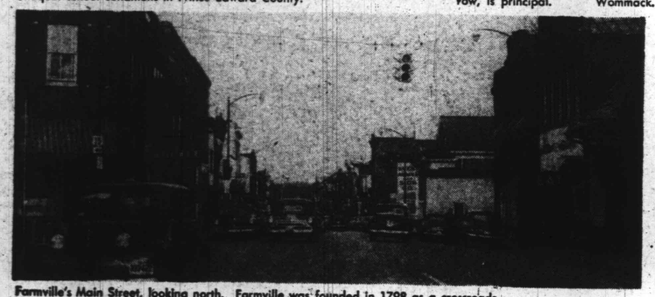


First Baptist Church, Farmville, with the Rev. L. F. Griffin pastor, was the scene of stormy meetings in 1951 when citizens began protesting unequal school conditions in Prince Edward County.

At top, the R. R. Moton High School in Farmville, where in 1951, all pupils refused to attend classes until action was taken on a new school. Parents later sued the state for integrated school facilities. The case is before the Supreme Court. Below, the Moton School faculty. S. F. Griffin, second from left, front row, is principal.



Two popular tourist homes flank the residence of Mr. and Mrs. Phillip Ward. At left is Mrs. Ida Brown's establishment and at right, an inn operated by Mr. and Mrs. Robert Wommack.



Farmville's Main Street, looking north. Farmville was founded in 1798 as a crossroads for stage lines running North and South.. Now Routes 15 and 460 intersect here.

This is the home and parsonage of First Baptist Church for the Rev. Mr. and Mrs. L. F. Griffin.

The Biggest Funeral Ever Held

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is another in a series of great news stories out of the past taken from the AFRO microfilm library. This story of Col. Charles Young's funeral appeared in the May 31 edition of the AFRO, 1923.

ARLINGTON CEMETERY, Va., June 1 (1923) (Staff Correspondent — Taps of the bugler, chanting of the Howard university vested choir, benediction of Chaplain O. J. W. Scott brought to an end the funeral service of the grtatest colored military genius America has produced this far.

With the firing of a volley, the remains of Colonel Charles Young, West Point graduate and hero of a dozen campaigns wtre lowesed by loving hands into its final resting place.

Covered by the branches of a Chestnut tree, and surrounded by the graves of thousands of other officers, who like him and carried the sword, Colonel Young's tomb flanks the peaceful Potomac.

Just across the river in the quiet sunshine of a June day stands the home of Frederick Douglass, a silvee stream between the spirits of two of America's greatest.

Three years ago, (1920) the monster amphitheatre seating 5,000 persons was dedicated to America's heroic dead.

Today it was filled for the first time by colored people from all parts of the United States, who came to pay a tribute to the first of their race ever to reach the rank of colonel in the United States army, a man who many should also have been the first colored general in our army, but for race prejudice.

Ten thousand black men and women filled the seats and spilled over into the colonade surrounding and out into the cemetery. Today, the Arlington National Cemetery was formally dedicated.

Biggest In History

Officials said that this was the fourth time in history that the large amphitheatre had been used for a funeral service. Twice for Confederate soldiers and once for the unknown soldier, of the World War. Never before, they said had such a throng packed the grounds for an individual military funeral.

Colonel Charles Young, highest ranking colored officer in the U. S. Army, in 1923 was given hero's funeral after his body was returned from Lagos, West Africa where he died.

This old photo shows part of the 60,000 people from all sections of the country who lined Washington's streets and crowded Arlington Cemetery's amphitheatre, May 31, 1923, to pay final tribute to Col. Charles Young, who at the time of his death was the only colored man to ever reach that rank in the U.S. Aarmy.

All colored schools in Washmander; United Spanish War ington closed today out of respect to the memory of the distinguished soldier and were well represented at the services in Arlington.

The body arrived at Union Station at 11:30 o'clock, completing a journey of thousands of miles from the wilds of Africa.

When Col. Young died at Lagos, southern Nigeria, January 8, 1922, while on duty as military attache to the Liberian republic, his body was interred with military attache to the British troops.

He had been making a study of the British possession when stricken. By English law a body cannot be exhumed there withing a year.

Last February it was disinterred, car eirdbcoa yxcssrr toa terred, carried by oxcart across many mountains and rivers of savage Africa to tht coast of Liberia and thence taken by tramp steamer to the United States.

Promptly at 11:30 today the military escort took charge of the body at Union Station upon its arrival from New York and proceeded to Arlington Cemetery.

In Procession

The order of the funeral procession was as follows: Platoon of police, parade commander, Capt. Arthur C. Newman, infantry, and staff; Howard University Reserve Officers Training Corps and band;

Company A, 1st Separation Battalion, DCNG; Battalion, senior ROTC; high school cadets, Lieut. Col. Carroll commanding; Chaplain O. J. W. Scott and officiating clergy, the body on caisson, Col. Young's riderless horse, honorary pallbearers;

Mrs. Young and family, officers of the Army, official delegation and other friends; veteran organizations, Community Center Band, Charles Sumner Pst, GAR, John P. Quander, com- Veterans, Walter Davis, department commander;

Charles Tsomas Camp, L. L. Green, commander; and George Berry Camp, Lewis Jones, commander; Gen. Guy V. Henry Garrison, Army and Navy Union J. E. Ennis, commander;

American Legion, Walter Green Post, Baltimore, James Reese Europe Post No. 5 and James E. Walker Post, No. 26; unafilliated veterans in civilian attire and police rear guard.

Fifty thousand persons lined the city's streets and stood silently and reverently as the caisson bearing the body drove past and behind it the colonel's riderless horse covered with a black shroud, the Colonel's boots, reversed, hung in the stirrups.

Colonel's Mother There

While the 3rd Calvary's Band played a dirge, the casket was removed at Arlington by the body bearers, and preceded by the choir of Howard university and the clergy and followed by the honorary pallbearers and the family, was borne through the west entrance of the amphitheater around the right colonade to the aisle where it was placed on the catafalque.

A wreath of poppies from Mrs. Harding and a floral seal of the state of Ohio were noted among the great bank of flowers. Army officers acted as escort for the Colonel's wife and mother.

Colonel Josn T. Axton, white, chief of Chaplains in an address declared that Colonel Young learned well the lessons of the army, to obey promptly and to set the proper example for the men he commanded.

"I knew Colonel Young well," he said. "In our campaigns abroad, when officers met at the close of the day to discuss the campaign, the commanding officer invariably turned to advice from Colonel Young as well as from the other officers, and when he spoke, we always knew that his words were well thought out and backed by the highest authorities."

Major O. W. Scott, another friend of the dead colonel said they had often shared the same tent and drank from the same canteen.

"The race pinned its faith in Colonel Young" he said, "and Colonel Young pinned his faith in the race. The eyes of colored Americans are turned this way today."

After the services here, the procession wended its way to a little knoll overlooking the Potomac where the body was interred. Soldiers and cadets drawn up facing the open grave

(Continued On Page 9)

Photo shows the flag draped casket containin g the body of Col. Charles Young, U.S.A., being carried into the great hall of the City College of New York. Speakers at his funeral included Col. Theodore Roosevelt, assistant secretary of the Navy; Dr. W. E. B. DuBois, James Weldon Johnson and Commander Slade, Young's classmate at West Point and a former superintendent of West Point.

Rites 9 Months Later

Col. Charles Young's funeral was held nine months after his death in 1922.

The events leading up to this strange conclusion went like this:

Colonel Young died in Lagos, Nigeria, West Africa in September, 122. He had been in Nigeria on confidential business while serving as military attache of the U.S. Government in Liberia.

He was buried at Lagos and it was English law that a body could not be exhumed until one year after burial. The rule was waived in the case.

His remains were brought home to the States in May of 1923 and when the body was removed from a ship at New York, 50,000 people lined the streets of Manhattan and thousands attended special services for him at City college.

Dr. W. E. B. DuBois was one of the speakers at these ceremonies which preceded the soldier's mammoth funeral in Washington, D.C., a day later.

Dr. DuBois criticized the War Department for shelving Colonel Young and declared that the officer had died "of a broken heart" because superior officers ended his career's progress because of his color.

The body was taken to Washington where an even larger crowd of mourners paid final homage to the hero.