

COPY

30 April 1948

For Page 70

Mr. P. Bernard Young  
The Norfolk Journal & Guide  
711 East Olney Road  
Norfolk, Virginia

Dear Mr. Young:

I greatly appreciate your thoughtfulness in returning to me from your photographic files the Scene at Wertz Field adjoining the campus of the West Virginia State College.

This picture, dated September 16, 1939, portrays, among other things, the first successful approach of the Negro citizen to participation in federally sponsored training in aeronautics. This was a Civil Aeronautics Administration Program of Civilian Pilot Training, the first in a Negro college. It led to similar units in six or eight other colleges; the establishment of the Tuskegee Army Air Field and its program of advanced flying; the 99th, 100th, and 332nd Fighter Units, and their war records in Italy; the 447th Medium Bomber Group, and their present establishment at the Lockbourne Army Air Base at Columbus, Ohio; and the current policy and practice of completely integrated pilot training now being conducted by the United States Air Forces at Randolph Field, San Antonio, Texas.

From small beginnings . . . . .

In this photograph appears in the left foreground, with arms folded across his back and wearing a gray hat, President John W. Davis, who has continued his service to the government up to participation with you on Monday of this week in the National Defense Conference on Negro Affairs as called by Secretary Forrestal. I appear to his left, slightly behind and looking to my left. At the fence wearing dark glasses is Mr. Hector Strong who became a flight instructor at Tuskegee. Appearing with the young lady in the immediate foreground is Mr. T. Harper Bryan who served with war time electronics at a number of installations and continues now with a large firm which holds strategic contracts. Pilot trainees and technicians appear further out on the field with the planes.

It appears well to put these notations in your files now that the photograph has been returned to me. Again many thanks.

Sincerely yours,

James C. Evans  
Advisor to the  
Secretary of Defense

cc: Pres. Davis

COPY