

WHAT'S IN A NAME?
FOOTBALL, FIGHTING MEN, AND ALL THAT "JAZZ"

TEACHER SUPPLEMENT



FLORIDA A&M UNIVERSITY RATTLERS

Florida A&M University's mascot, the Rattler, has evolved over time. In the mid 1920's they were known as the "Jazz Birds" when Franz A. "Jazz" Byrd served as athletic director and coach. His "name and vigor embodied the school spirit so much" that the school adopted it as a nickname. A New York native, Byrd returned home after three years to care for his ailing parents.

After his departure, the school was briefly known as the Tigers, but it was a common mascot at the time and caused confusion. School president JRE Lee changed the name to the Rattlers. One reason dates to the college's early days where, when the land was cleared for construction, left nothing but "palmetto trees and rattlesnakes."

Another theory is that Lee wanted a mascot "that would 'strike' fear and elicit immediate respect from opponents."

Source The FAMUAN



Could knowing another piece of history
give greater insight into why FAMU might
have chosen the Rattler as a mascot?

PRIMARY SOURCE 1

The all-Black 15th Regiment of the New York National Guard was called into service during World War I. Here, recent recruits are awaiting transport to training camp.

Source Library of Congress



PRIMARY SOURCE 2

Military bands were used a recruiting tool in World War I. The leader of the 15th's band was Lt. James Reese Europe, a well-known musician who had toured Europe prior to the war. Europe introduced ragtime and jazz styles to the more traditional marches and played popular tunes for soldiers as well.

Source United States National Guard



PRIMARY SOURCE 3

When the 15th arrived in France, they were initially assigned to act as stevedores or cargo handlers. The United States Army was segregated. Black soldiers often performed support jobs that did not require them to be armed because many Americans did not want to fight in combat alongside Black soldiers.

Source United States Army



PRIMARY SOURCE 4

When not working on the docks, the 369th band also played at hospitals and Red Cross or YMCA events to boost morale among the soldiers. The band is credited for bringing jazz to France where it created a sensation. It ushered in what became Paris' Jazz Age in the 1920s.

Source United States Army



PRIMARY SOURCE 5

In 1917 German forces were advancing west, and the French army, which was already integrated, gratefully absorbed the 15th into service in the 161st French Infantry Division. They became known as the 369th Infantry Regiment. They were among the first Americans on the front lines in World War I and would go on to serve longer in combat than any other American.

Soon other Black regiments joined them in service to the French Army. They wore American uniforms but adopted the French style combat helmet as their own.

In the French Army, the soldiers were treated no differently than the rest of the French Army. The French people welcomed them and appreciated them for their fighting spirit as well as their music.



PRIMARY SOURCE 6

The Black soldiers of the French 161st were feared by the Germans. They referred to them as the "Black Death." Despite their long service and fierce fighting in the trenches, they were not treated equally when they were around American soldiers. German prisoners were allowed to eat before them, and they had to ride on the Jim Crow car on transport trains.

Courtesy National WWI Museum and Memorial 1980.118.0

Listen on YouTube ([25:56](#)) and [35:15](#) or [Edpuzzle](#)

Beveridge: I had often heard that the 92nd Division was a feared division. The Germans feared the men, because they were black soldiers.

Sweeney: That's right and when they shot at them, they said they'd never come in contact with the black soldiers, they said they'd turn back and they'd just keep on coming. We had an outfit out of New York, 372nd - the Rattlesnake Division - was a very fine group of soldiers.

Beveridge: Was that this insignia here, with the rattlesnake?

Sweeney: Yes, the Rattlesnake Division they were out of New York, and they were made up too of former soldiers. I'm trying to think of the man who led them. They had a band up there. They established themselves over there.

....

Beveridge: Did your unit have a band?

Sweeney: Oh, my lord yes.

Beveridge: Did they play pretty good music?

Sweeney: They played fine music. That's one of the most beautiful sights that anybody has ever seen, I believe you call it guardsmen. That's when all the units - field hospitals, ambulance companies, machine gun companies, the infantry companies - a certain amount of the 92nd Division all assembled at one place and passed in review. That's one of the most beautiful sights to see the American flag unfurled and see those soldiers at that time. That's one of the most impressive things that I remember, and it makes you proud that you are an American citizen. It makes you proud that you serve - not withstanding the fact of all the injustices. Being denied the opportunity of- being in a Jim Crow car, letting the German soldiers eat before we did - but still America is a great country. I felt even at that time, after the war was over, if the war was ever to happen again, I would go back and fight again.

Interview transcription Robert L. Sweeney, WWI Veteran
[Courtesy National WWI Museum and Memorial](#) 1980.118.0
Listen on YouTube ([25:56](#)) and [35:15](#)

PRIMARY SOURCE 7

Members of the division were awarded the Croix de Guerre by French government for distinguished service involving acts of heroism in combat.

Here, Leslie McVey is shown wearing the Croix de Guerre on his chest and the Rattlesnake insignia on his left shoulder. A native of Flatonia, Texas, McVey made his way to Harlem and joined the 15th Division

Photograph of Cpl. Lawrence McVey

Courtesy Smithsonian National Museum of African American History and Culture



PRIMARY SOURCE 8

After the war, the 369th returned home to New York to thunderous praise and were cheered on by thousands of Americans, black and white, as the regimental band led them up 5th Avenue.

Source United States Department of Defense



PRIMARY SOURCE 9

Source United States Department of Defense



PRIMARY SOURCE 10

Source United States Department of Defense



PRIMARY SOURCE II

Source New York Times 2-18-1919 pages
1 and 6

"O, You Black Death!"
Shouts of "Oh, you Henry Johnson," and "Oh, you Black Death," resounded every few feet for seven long miles, followed by condolences for the Kaiser's men. Johnson made a big hit at Sixtieth Street where officials and member of the Mayor's Committee, including William Randolph Hearst, were in the reviewing stand, but up in Harlem, where the reviewers looked over the parade from a stand at 130th Street and Lenox Avenue, he threw the population into hysterics.

The welcome to the Harlem regiment reached its maximum at the uptown stand, where the negroes on their own ground greeted their own boys. For blocks along Lenox Avenue each way from the reviewing stand, the sidewalks were packed like a subway train at the rush hour. The windows were filled with faces, and the roofs were held in force. Thousands of flags fluttered, American flags, service flags, "Welcome Home" banners, square pieces of bunting with a composite of the flags of all the Allies. "Welcome to our Victorious Boys" was painted in huge characters on a field of white on a building opposite the stand.

Thousands and thousands of rattlesnakes, the emblem of the 369th, each snake coiled, ready to strike, appeared everywhere, in buttonholes, in shop windows, and on banners carried by the crowd.

Scores of little black boys appeared in the grand stand and on the sidewalks in full uniform with rattlesnakes on their shoulders, tiny editions of their gallant fathers, and many young women wore costumes adapted from service overcoats and hats.

PRIMARY SOURCE 12

Source United States Department of Defense



PRIMARY SOURCE 13

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PRIMARY SOURCE 14

Colonel Hayward could not make himself heard more than a few feet away when he said there were no better soldiers than the men of the 369th, and that no soldiers had ever got a bigger welcome in their home town. Reporters for two negro newspapers, in despair at not being able to hear, jumped upon chairs at the ringside and gesticulated until Colonel Hayward moved toward them and finished the speech for their benefit.

Grover Whalen, the Mayor's Secretary, presided over the ceremonies at the armory, after which the men returned in trains to Camp Upton, to be mustered out within a day or two. Lieut. Col. Lorillard Spencer, wounded six times by machine-gun bullets and sent home some time ago because of his hurts, was in charge of the convalescents during their stay in this city and in the parade.

Some of those who reviewed the troops were Governor Alfred E. Smith and Mrs. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. William Randolph Hearst, ex-Governor Charles S. Whitman, the members of the Board of Estimate, with the exception of the Mayor; Grover Whalen, Major Gen. Thomas J. Barry, Rear Admiral Albert Gleaves, Secretary of State Francis Hugo, Rodman Wanmaker, and Emmet C. Scott, representing Secretary of War Baker.

One of the unofficial welcomers was Henry C. Frick, who stood at a window in his house, at Seventy-third Street and Fifth Avenue, cheering and waving an American flag. At another window in Fifth Avenue was Mrs. Vincent Astor and a group of women, waving flags.

When Colonel Hayward reached a point opposite the grandstand in Harlem John J. Lyons presented him with a resolution written by Nicholas Murray Butler, on behalf of residents of Harlem, saying:

PRIMARY SOURCE 15

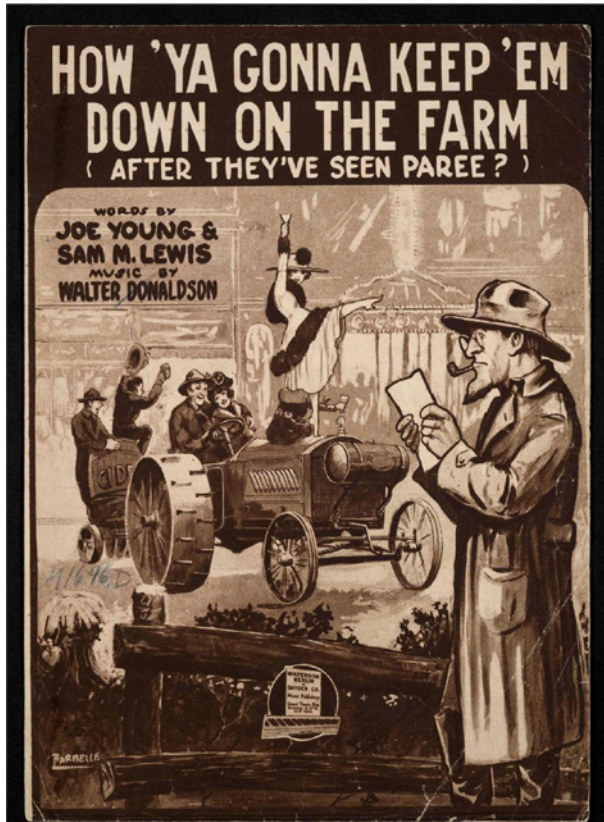
" The residents of Harlem from which the 369th Infantry was so largely recruited wish to give a special and hearty greeting to Colonel Hayward and the officers and men of the old Fighting 15th who have made so fine a record for patriotism and courage on the soil of France.

" No American soldiers saw harder or more constant fighting and none gave a better account of themselves, whether in the Champagne, at Château-Thierry, at the Saint Mihiel salient, or in the Argonne. When fighting was to be done this regiment was there. Two Governments have given this regiment special citations for bravery in action, and among the officers and men are many who have won for themselves exceptional distinction in the service of their country."

PRIMARY SOURCE 16



PRIMARY SOURCE 17



2

How 'Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down On The Farm?
(After They've Seen Paree)

Words by
SAM M. LEWIS
and JOE YOUNG

Musical notation by
WALTER DONALDSON

Allegro moderato

Piano

Voice

"Ben-ben, Ben-ben, I've been think-ing; Said his wif-ey dear;—
"Ben-ben, Ben-ben, You're mis-tak-en; Said his wif-ey dear;—

"Now that all is peace-ful and calm,— The boys will soon be back on the farm;—
"Once a farm-er, al-ways a joy,— And farm-ers al-ways stick to the hay;—

Mis-ter Ben-ben, start-ed wink-ing, And slow-ly rub-bed his chin;— He
"Moth-er Ben-ben, You not tak-in', Tho' you may think it strange;— But

pulled his chair up close to moth-er, And he asked her with a grin;—
"Wine and som-en play the mis-chief, With a boy who's loose with change;—

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1919 G1F
Shirley Eastman
AUG 3 1946
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Chorus

3

How 'ya gon-na keep 'em, down on the farm,— Af-ter they've seen Pa-ree?—
How 'ya gon-na keep 'em a-way from Broad-way, Jazz-in' a'round,— And paint-in' the town?—
How 'ya gon-na keep 'em a-way from barn? Tho's a mys-ter-ry;—
They'll nev-er want to see a rake or plow,— And who the deuce can pay-ees a cow?—
"In-sar-lin' Ben-ben when he meets his sis,— He'll kiss his cheek and hol-der "oo-la-lal!"—

How 'ya gon-na keep 'em down on the farm,— Af-ter they've seen Pa-ree?—
How 'ya gon-na keep 'em down on the farm,— Af-ter they've seen Pa-ree?—

655-2

U.S.

JIM EUROPE'S JAZZ WILL LIVE FOREVER

ELEVEN records of this world's greatest exponent of syncopation just off the press. The tunes that helped Col. Hayward's fearless fighters over the top—the tunes that first told Paris that the war was over—the tunes that British Royalty moved its feet to and started the British people on a Jazz which English newspapers say "Has driven dull care away." Europe has "gone west," as the doughboys say, but his jazz on Pathé Records will live forever.

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No.		Size	Price
22080	{ How 'Ya Gonna Keep 'Em Down on the Farm? (One Step). Chorus sung by Lt. Noble Sissle Arabian Nights (One Step)	10 inches	\$.85
22081	{ Darktown Strutters' Ball (Medley) (Fox Trot) Indianola (Fox Trot)	10 inches	.85
22082	{ Broadway "Hit" Medley. Intro. (1) I've Got the Blue Ridge Blues; (2) Madelon; (3) Till We Meet Again; (4) Smiles Ja Da (Fox Trot)	10 inches	.85
22085	{ Moaning Trombones (One Step) Memphis Blues (Fox Trot)	10 inches	.85
22084	{ Little David Play on Your Harp. (Negro Spiritual.) Lt. Noble Sissle and Lt. Jim Europe's Singing Serenaders Exhortation. (Jubilee Song.) Creighton Thompson and Lt. Jim Europe's Singing Serenaders	10 inches	.85
22086	{ Plantation Echoes (Coates). Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band"). Vocal Chorus by Singing Serenaders Hesitating Blues (Handy) (Fox Trot). Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band")	10 inches	.85
22087	{ Russian Rag (Cobb) (Fox Trot). Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band") St. Louis Blues (Handy) (Fox Trot). Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band")	10 inches	.85
22089	{ Mirandy (Sissle-Europe-Blake). Lt. Noble Sissle, Tenor, accompanied by Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band") On Patrol in No Man's Land (Sissle-Europe). Lt. Noble Sissle, Tenor, accompanied by Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band")	10 inches	.85
22103	{ Jazz Baby (Sissle-Europe-Blake). C. Creighton Thompson, Baritone, accompanied by Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band") When the Bees Make Honey (Donaldson). Lt. Noble Sissle, accompanied by Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band")	10 inches	.85
22104	{ All of No Man's Land is Ours (Sissle-Europe). Lt. Noble Sissle, Tenor, accompanied by Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band") Jazzola (Robinson-Morse). Lt. Noble Sissle, Tenor, accompanied by Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band")	10 inches	.85
22105	{ Roll, Jordan, Roll. Lt. Jim Europe's Singing Serenaders Ev'rybody Dat Talks 'Bout Heaven Ain't Goin' There. Lt. Jim Europe's Singing Serenaders	10 inches	.85

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HOW YA GONNA KEEP 'EM DOWN ON THE FARM?

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22086	Exhortation. (Jubilee Song.) Creighton Thompson and Lt. Jim Europe's Singing Serenaders Plantation Echoes (Coates). Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band"). Vocal Chorus by Singing Serenaders	10 inches	.85
22087	Hesitating Blues (Handy) (Fox Trot). Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band") Russian Rag (Cobb) (Fox Trot). Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band") St. Louis Blues (Handy) (Fox Trot). Lt. Jim Europe's 369th U. S. Inf. ("Hell Fighters' Band")	10 inches	.85
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Recorded March 1919 – Noble Sissle, Vocal