



CVA

Panel

IN WHITES'S
ARMY

BLACK
SHAVETAEL

Black Spartans (1907-1948)

Curators

Carli V. Lowe, University Archivist
Kate Steffens, Special Collections Librarian

Artist

Yeab Kebede ('22, Digital Media Arts)

Graphic Designer

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Exhibit Curators Statement

"Black Spartans (1907-1948)" represents ongoing research in SJSU Special Collections & Archives identifying documentation of Black experiences throughout SJSU history. This exhibit is the first of several installments.

Much of the information we have comes from the Spartan Daily student newspaper and the La Torre yearbooks. With too few exceptions, Black Spartans' stories are not told in their own words but from the perspectives of their majority white classmates. This is reflected in the language and focus of the articles. We invite you to read critically.

The Black Spartans featured in this exhibit pursued their educational goals while contending with institutionalized racism and other major crises of the 20th century: two World Wars, the influenza pandemic of 1918, and polio. Locally, "the deed to virtually every home in San Jose" included restrictions against Black and Asian residents known as "restrictive covenants" (Spartan Daily, February 16, 1948, page 2). On campus, blackface and minstrel shows were a regular part of student events.

"Black Spartans (1907-1948)" is an invitation to the community to join us in surfacing these stories, ensuring these histories are preserved and presented in a way that honors these students' lives. Contact us at special.collections@sjsu.edu to participate.

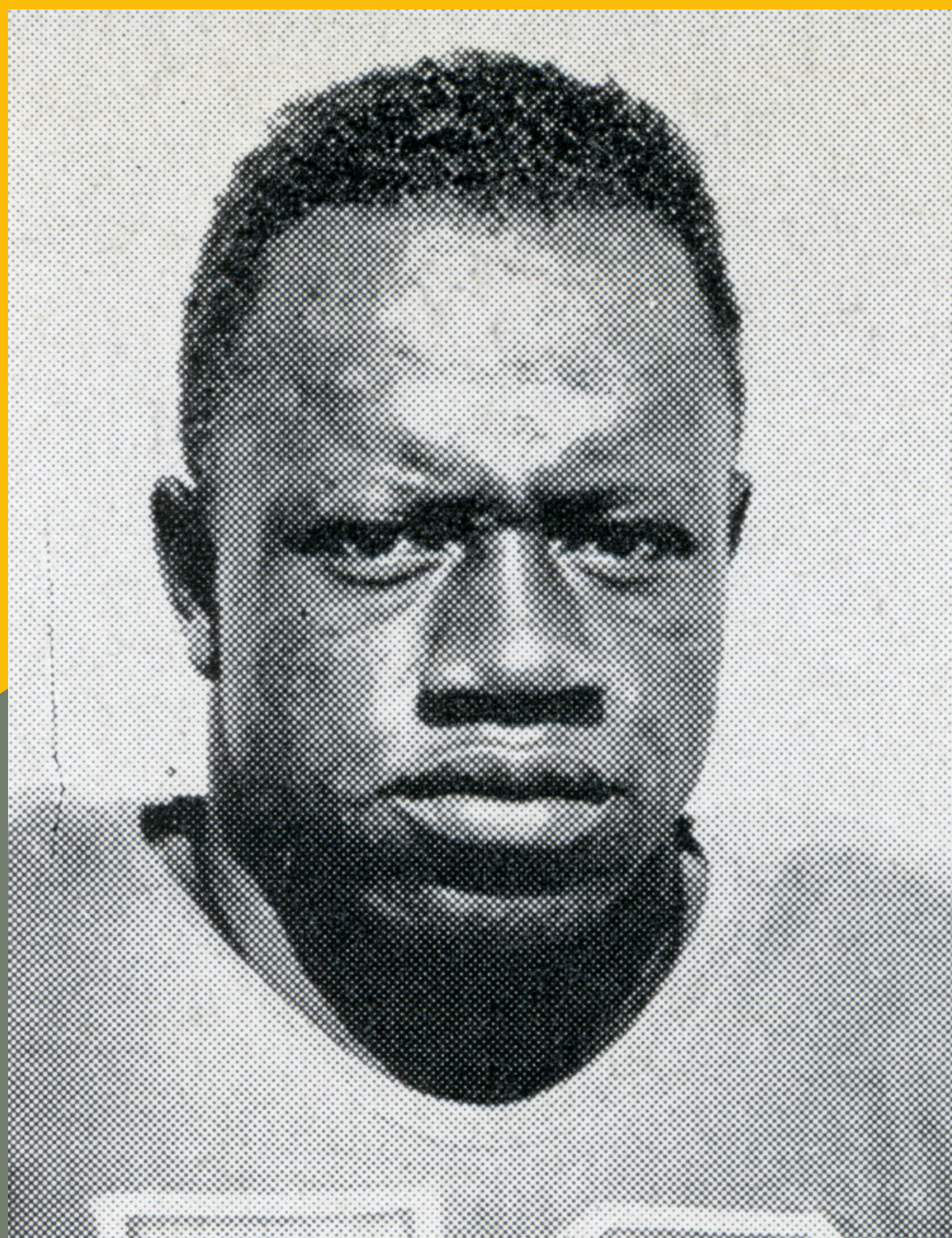
Carli V. Lowe - University Archivist
Kate Steffens - Special Collections Librarian

Artist Statement

The "Black Spartans (1907-1948)" exhibition is a homage to Black culture and history at San José State University and the Bay Area at large. Until recently, the significance of Black bodies in Bay Area history (as well as U.S. history) was overlooked. Unless it was associated with the struggles of civil rights leaders, athletes, or celebrity-personas, the story of a graduate from a state school wasn't valued because we weren't part of the mainstream culture. As a Black Spartan myself, I was deeply connected to these individuals that started out just like me. I saw a reflection of myself and my community throughout the process of making these mixed media portraits and came to realize how important it is to know your history because it becomes a catalyst for knowing who you are.

My work explores the intricacy of identity and the role culture, tradition, and history play. These portraits are embodiments of our Black Spartans, they are visual representations of the colorful and captivating lives they led. Through this work, I hope to influence other artists and individuals to take part in researching and finding out the infinite layers of what it means to be Black. Our history is beyond our struggle. We are the blueprint.

Yeab Kebede
'22 Digital Media Arts



Edward Homer Soulds attended San Jose State College from 1941-1942. He competed in several sports, including football, boxing, and wrestling. In 1941, Soulds was honored with a Service Award for wrestling. In World War II, he was a Lieutenant in the U.S. Army Air Corps, and went on to become a Lieutenant Colonel during further service. Soulds is the author of the book “Black Shavetail in Whitey’s Army” which describes his 20 years in the military and his experiences with racism while serving his country. He went on to work for the California Youth Authority and California Human Resources Development.

NOVICES DISPLAY TALENTS

Tucker, Lundberg Provide Slugfest Before Large Crowd

Battle royals to fit all phases of the manly art of self-defense featured the novice bouts last night.

Best bout of the evening for thrills and punching power came to a sudden end in the final round when Usher Tucker stretched Swede Lundberg, 175-pounder, as the gong sounded. Tucker was awarded the decision after Lundberg carried the fight to him in the first round.

Another "best" was chalked up by Howard Giurich and Dave Siemon, 145 pounds. Both hit the canvas more than once, but Siemon landed the cleaner punches to cop the duke.

Bob Payne and Bill Triplett proved two of the better boxers on the card and employed more science in downing their men. Payne, 135 pounder, won over the ever-grinning Al Yim. Triplett fought off a last round rally by Ted Andrews, 165 pounder, after building up an early lead with a stabbing left.

From the opening bout, when Bob Webber, stretched Don Thorup in the second round of their

120 pound class battle, to the final bout when Heavyweight Walt Mazzone lost to Bob Ashcraft, the scraps thrilled the packed gym.

The comedy bout of the evening occurred in the 165-pound class. Ed Soulds, floored George Hobbs no less than nine times with some long range punching, featuring a wicked left. Hobbs came to life at the end of the final round, however, and buckled Sould's knees, but too late to do anything further about it.

Bill Harris and Bud Rideout engaged in a free slugging match in the 127 pound division which could have gone either way. The judges awarded Rideout the decision.

The above proved to be the better bouts of the evening.

NOVICE TOURNEY RESULTS

120—Webber (TD) KO Thorup (EH) 2nd.
127—Rideout (SK) dec. Harris (TD)
127—Fahn (PE) TKO Head (EH) 2nd.
135—Hill (PE) dec. Towne (EH)
135—Payne (TD) dec. Yim (HC)
145—Siemon (EH) dec. Giurich (HC)
145—Murdock (SK) dec. Peebles (PE)
155—Minter (PE) dec. Bramble (Areo Cl.)
155—McCarty (330 Cl.) dec. Mitchell (EH)
165—Soulds (PE) dec. Hobbs (330 Cl.)
165—Triplett (SK) dec. Andrews (HC)
165—Hubbell (TD) KO Lovett (Areo Cl.) 1st.
175—Sarkisian (SK) dec. Smith (TD)
175—Tucker (HC) dec. Lundberg (EH)
Hvwt.—Cummings (TD) dec. Wilson (Areo Cl.)
Hvwt.—Hammill (EH) dec. Heatwole (330 Cl.)
Hvwt.—Ashcraft (PE) dec. Mazzone (SK)

Spartan Daily

January 26, 1940

Edward Soulds wins a decision over his opponent in a novice boxing match.

RIGHT HALF: A varsity candidate last season but not able to quite make it, negro Ed Soulds starts today. Soulds is one of the ruggedest men on the field. Followed by Dierker and Felse. A made-over end, Bert Robinson will be in for the Home Guard. Robinson has shown loads of ability and is fast. Followed by Cornett and Klinger.
EDGE TO HOME GUARD.

Spartan Daily

May 23, 1941

Edward Soulds plays in a starting position on the football team.

Service Award Winners

FIFTY UNSUNG HEROES, TEN MANAGERS HONORED WITH GROUP PICTURES

198 Athletes Receive Some Form Of Honor For Athletic Efforts

Fifty Athletes of San Jose State have been announced by Graduate Manager Frank Carroll as winners of service awards. These unsung heroes were the ones that lacked only a few minutes of play from receiving their varsity letter.

Carroll also announced that 10 managers had received awards for their services.

This brings the total number of letters, numerals, and service

awards given out for the spring and winter quarters of 1941 to 198.

Usher Tucker got service awards in two sports. He was a first baseman on Walt McPherson's nine and played on the same mentor's golf squad.

Following is the list of service and manager award winners:

SERVICE AWARDS

BASEBALL—Deward Toarmino, Lou Ales, Chet Carsten, Jack Raine, Carl Stubenrauch, Phil Nell, Harold Johnson, Usher Tucker, Wayne DeSelms, and Bob Mays.

WRESTLING—John Peebles, Knute Pederson, Karl Kuhl, Charles Smith, and Ed Soulds.

GOLF—Usher Tucker, Chuck Boster and Dale Wren.

TENNIS—Dick Urhammer, Ernie Rideout, Jack Kemper and Kieth Wilson.

SWIMMING—Claude Horan, Bill Iliff, Ken Aderman, and Elton Hoffman.

BOXING—Bob Payne, Tony Nasimento, Dave Siemon, Hugh Manley, Russ Hofendahl.

TRACK—Sam Miller, Jay Coleman, John Eikenberry, Crayton Groeling, Wayne Rose, Floyd Wheat, Bill Talcott, Fred Kmetovic, Ben Bramble, Bill Wilson, Stan Webb, Karl Evans.

BASKETBALL—Deward Tornell, Fred Kmetovic, Vic Robinson, Charles Sturz, Don Texdahl, Bill Crowley, Earl Paullus and Bert Stokes.

MANAGERS

BASEBALL—Morris Turner, Soph Manager.

WRESTLING—Bob Bareuther, Jr. Manager.

Spartan Daily

May 29, 1941

Edward Soulds wins a Spartan Service Award for wrestling.

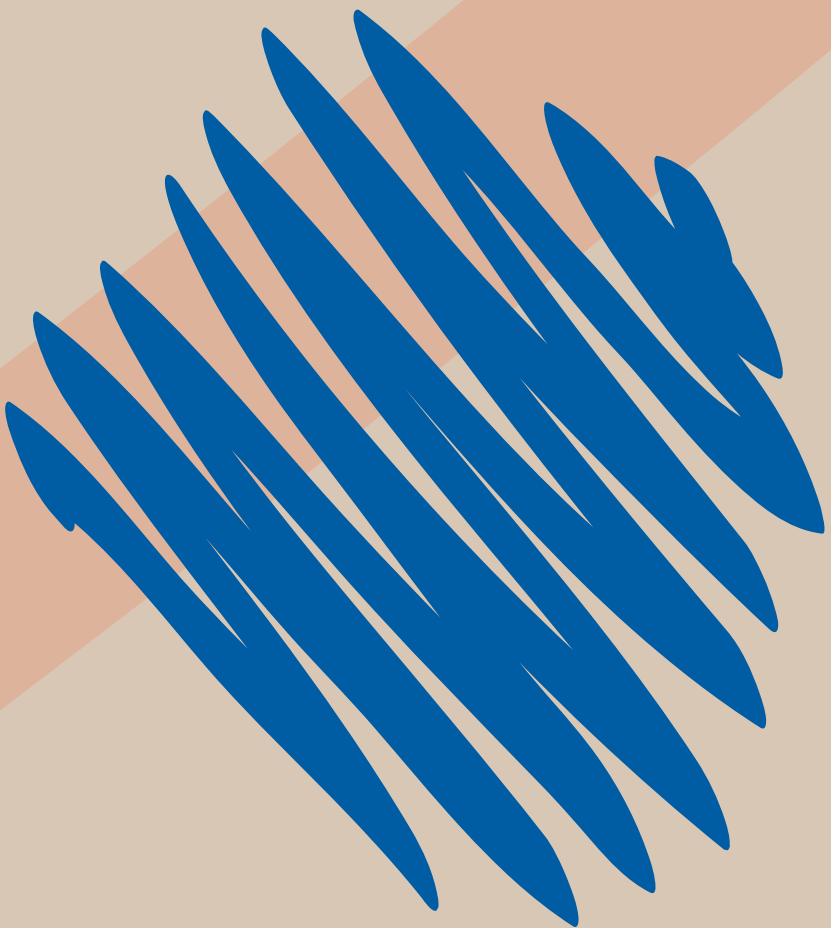


Olson, Soulds, Riddle, Peoples, Hines, Smith, Kawamoto, Delia Maggiore, Bareuther.

La Torre Yearbook

1941

Edward Soulds is pictured as a member of the wrestling team.

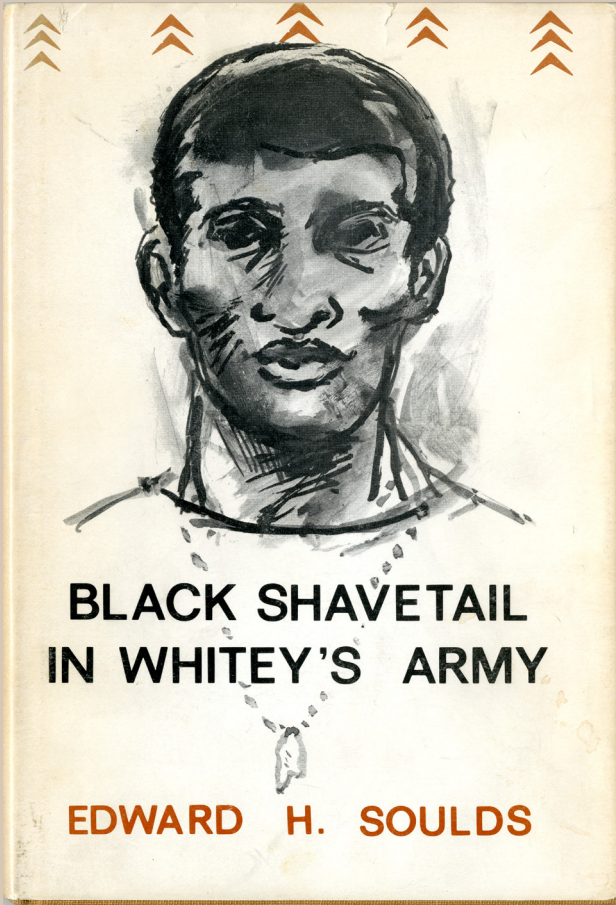


La Torre Yearbook

1940

Edward Soulds is pictured as a member of the football team with fellow Black Spartan Woody Gibson.





To: NAT
With best wishes and
sincere regards to
an esteemed fellow
worker.
E.S.

Chapter 1

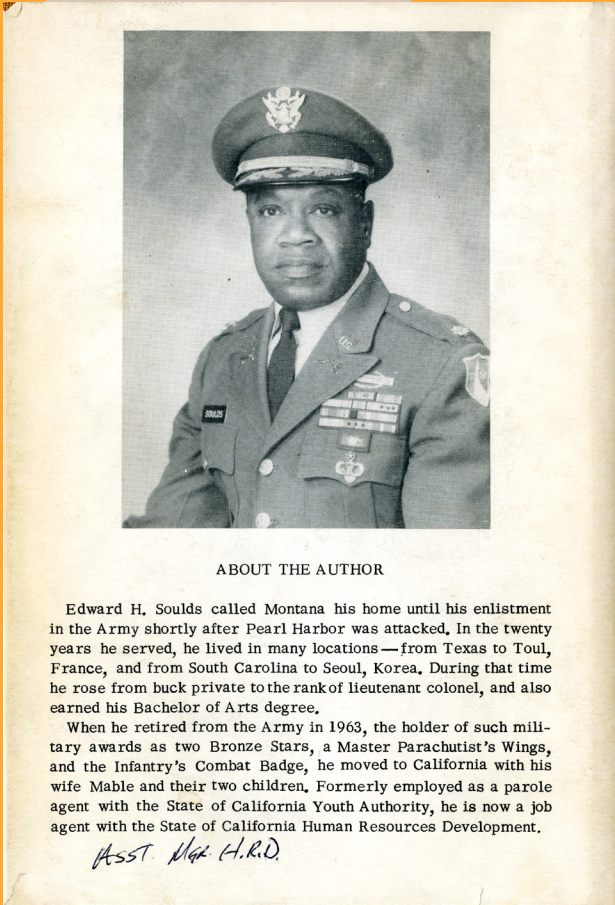
THE CALL TO ARMS

The ominous clouds of war had enshrouded the major portion of Europe and could be seen on the horizon but at a distance from American shores. Then suddenly and without forewarning, in the cool of early morning, Pearl Harbor was hit by the Japs—December 7, 1941. Because I felt that our involvement was imminent, I had dropped from attendance at San Jose State College in November and taken a job at South San Francisco ship building yards. This was a deliberate move on my part to evade military duty by hoping that I would be declared essential to the national defense effort. This move was to no avail, because after two and a half months on the job, I received greetings from Uncle Sam to join the party. On being hired at the shipyard, my immediate supervisor, in a joking manner, predicted that I'd be drafted within three months because I was single, young and in good health.

Therefore, receipt of the greetings didn't bother me, but I didn't want to enter the service as a draftee because I heard that they fared rather poorly. To beat this, I decided to shop around and enlist in a branch of service of my choice.

I quit my job the next day after receiving my draft notice, and reported bright and early to the Army Recruiting Station to join the army airforce (at this time the army had control, in that, the airforce was not yet a separate branch). It didn't take the recruiting sergeant long to tell me that Negroes weren't being accepted into the airforce as yet. Undaunted, I next tried the navy recruiters. Success at last; I could be accepted; however, only as a steward. I took

9



SOULDS, EDWARD H. Lt. ✓

U.S. Army Air Corps

19th Co. 4th Bn. 2nd S.T.R.
Hermony Church Area
Ft. Benning , Georgia 12/42

Co. A, 364th Inf.
Camp Van Dorn, Miss. 10/18/43

Serv. Co. 368th Inf. APO 93
c/o P. M. San Francisco, Calif 8/29/44

5-11
BX 2 1187 over— P ✓

San Jose State College, World War I
and World War II Collection

Black Shavetail in Whitey’s Army

1971

Edward Soulds publishes a book about his experiences in the Armed Forces.

