

Augusta County Library exhibit highlights African-American soldiers from WWI



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A "True Sons of Freedom" exhibition highlighting the stories of African-Americans from the state who fought overseas will be on display at the Augustas County Library.

The original photographs were reproduced in the Library of Virginia gallery at nearly life-size dimensions. Those on display at the Augusta County Library are smaller in scale, but still allows viewers the opportunity to examine rich details not seen in the original photo postcards. World War I recruitment efforts aimed at African-Americans brought new soldiers into the armed services, providing them with opportunities to travel, to work, and, in many cases for the first time, to face cameras—all outside the restrictions of the Jim Crow South.

These photographs challenge the crude and demoralizing cultural products of an era that often reduced African-Americans to stereotypes and denied them full participation as citizens of the United States. They pose in uniform, some in casual stances, others with a rifle to show their combat readiness. Here were African-Americans presented as they wanted themselves seen.

These photographs will be on display at the Augusta County Library in Fishersville through September.

Digital versions of these photographs are available online at truesons.virginiamemory.com.

The Augusta County Library is located at 1759 Jefferson Hwy, Fishersville, VA. For questions or more information please contact the Fishersville location at 540-885-3961 or 540-949-6354.

