

# COURAGEOUS African Americans

## Highly Rated but not the Right Color

After exemplary and heroic service in the Civil War, Christian Fleetwood was showered with praise and medals. However when it was time to promote him, the same military turned its back on him. The U.S. Army would have no part in allowing a black man to command white troops.



by Ron Weber

the ready and able supply of African-American volunteers. Interest in the war had started to decline in the North as the white population was becoming more concerned with the fast-moving industrial growth and the economic possibilities that went with a good economy.

Fleetwood's heroism gave great credence to the abilities of African Americans on the battlefield.

With opportunities opening up in the Army, Fleetwood was accepted into Company G of the 4<sup>th</sup> Regiment of the new US Colored

He was remembered as a child who was born to upper middle class free black parents. A newspaperman, William E. Mathews, noted:



Christian Fleetwood

Our first recollection of young Fleetwood was the novel sight of seeing him as a child of four or five years, elegantly dressed in an embroidered jacket and silken hose, the pet and pride of the household.

As a full-grown man he would never see a height of more than five feet four inches. However, Fleetwood's courage made him stand as tall as many a man while he fought for America.

Volunteer Infantry on Aug. 11, 1863. His leadership and organizational abilities were noted immediately and he was promoted to the company sergeant major.

His ability to command became clear after he graduated from Lincoln University when he worked for a Baltimore shipping company and during his off time, founded the Lyceum Observer (1863), the first black-owned and published journal south of the Mason-Dixon line.

Fleetwood lead his troops into 17 different major battles and numerous small encounters with the enemy. His troops proved to be relentless and fearless while on the battlefield. On Sept. 29, 1864, Fleetwood's bravery and "disregard for his own life," during the battle of Chafin's Farm at New Market Heights in Virginia led to something that had never happened before. One hundred percent of all the white officers in his regiment petitioned Secretary of War Edwin Stanton to make Sgt. Christian Fleetwood the Army's first black officer. Sadly this action was denied by Stanton who said, "There was no law under which such a

The Observer was designed to help African Americans better themselves academically and was connected to the prestigious Galbraith Lyceum Society, which served the black elite.

black soldiers. Commanders needed

As the Civil War continued on much longer than expected, the North decided to start enlisting

### Ask Deanna!



**Real People, Real Advice**  
An advice column known for its fearless approach to reality based subjects!

**Dear Deanna!**

I'm a young father who's been claiming a son I thought was mine. I've recently learned of the possibility someone else may be the father. I feel devastated because I look at this baby as my flesh and blood. Should I do anything to stop the paternity results or should I take the risk and find out. I feel as if I won't be able to handle it if the test comes out negative. --Anonymous; Pennsylvania, Penn.

**Dear Anonymous:**

It's impressive to see you exhibit passion and love for your namesake. It's in your best interest financially, spiritually and emotionally to determine through testing if the child is yours. Hope for the best and prepare for the worst as you pray for this child's future. God will give you the strength needed regardless of the outcome and remember that through His work, things happen for a reason.

**Dear Deanna!**

I've finally overcome trust issues when it comes to being open for a relationship. I've met a man who wants to get married but my mind is playing tricks on me. I keep thinking things are too good to be true. Recently my fiancé and I have had a lot of arguments because he's

accusing me of picking fights and finding imaginary faults with the relationship. Am I messing things up on purpose or am I just paranoid? --Renea; Atlanta, Ga.

**Dear Renea:**

You need to calm yourself down and stop sabotaging your relationship. If your instinct is giving you certain feelings and you have measurable things to confirm your doubt, then it's time for a chat with your fiancé. If there's no proof, then you have a commitment issue that needs to be addressed before taking the final step. Lay your cards, fears and doubts on the table and keep it real and keep it moving.

**Dear Deanna!**

On the surface my neighbors appear to be nice people with morals and good character. I met another couple who know them and say they aren't married. We've invited them into our couples group, they go to events with us and we've become close friends. Now I feel they're being deceptive because everyone in our group is married. If they aren't legitimate we don't want them in the group but don't know how to tell them. --Shannon; Portland, Ore.

**Dear Shannon:**

You're not in a playground playing nanny, nanny boo-boo. Unless you communicated to your neighbors that you're a married couples only group then there's no problem. You should consider yourself blessed to have nice people next door instead of loud party animals. Get the chip off your nosy shoulder and ask your neighbors if they're married. Prepare yourself to be insulted if they find you rude, childish or judgmental and decide to kick you to the curb.

Ask Deanna is written by Deanna M. Write Ask Deanna! Email: askdeanna@yahoo.com or 264 S. LaCienega Blvd. Suite 1283 Beverly Hills, CA 90211. Website: www.askdeanna.com

### City Club Diversity Wanted

City Club of Portland, a non-profit civic affairs and public policy organization, has been awarded a multi-year, \$110,000 grant by Meyer Memorial Trust to help fund a staff position geared to expand and diversify the Club's membership.

City Club of Portland was founded in 1916, with the express purpose of giving voice to forward-looking citizens. The Club's original mission as it remains today is to inform its members and the community in public matters and to arouse in them a realization of the obligations of citizenship.

Club leaders expect the new position to dramatically increase civic engagement and strengthen social capital within the Club and the city.

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