

## Tuskegee Airmen picture analysis



In this picture we can see the first lady Eleanor Roosevelt aboard an aircraft after a flight with the Chief Civilian Flight Instructor Charles Alfred Anderson during her 1941 visit to the Tuskegee Institute. Airforce Historical Research Agency photo.

### TUSKEGEE ARMY FLYING SCHOOL

In the 1940's, in the United States Military, African Americans were restricted in the types of jobs and positions less important than those covered by whites because of Jim Crow Laws; so on April 3, 1939, President Roosevelt approved Public Law 18, that provided for an expansion of the Army Air Corps.

The Tuskegee Institute founded in Tuskegee, Alabama, by Booker T. Washington in 1881, became the official headquarters of the 99<sup>th</sup> Pursuit Squadron, an all black flying unit, created on January 16<sup>th</sup>, 1941, by the American War Department (from 1941 to 1946 over 2,000 African Americans completed training at the Tuskegee Institute and nearly three quarters of them qualified as pilots).

### CONTENT AND ANALYSIS

Even if we don't know who took this picture we can imagine that the purpose was either political and social. As a matter of fact through this visit to the Tuskegee Institute the First Lady paid her tribute to the institute giving it the rightful importance and highlighting the major role of the school in the social and racial equality's fight.

On the other hand we must notice that this has also a political shade because it underlines the First Lady's activism in social matters; this way she embodies the dear ideal that would help her husband in his policies considering the American voters.