

Long before Rosa Parks refused to sit at the back of the bus thus sparking the largest social movement in history, the civil rights movement, there was someone else who did the same 11 years earlier.

It was 1944. A young black soldier got on a bus to go into town. Walking towards the back where all blacks were required to sit, he saw someone he knew midway through and decided to sit with her. Seeing this, the driver stopped the bus and asked the man to move to the back. As Rosa Parks would do 11 years later, the man refused. When the bus reached the station, a white woman called the MP's and the man was arrested and forced to go to trial for disrespect to a superior officer and disobeying orders.

Nine men were on the jury that day. One was black. You don't have to be a genius to know that the black man wasn't chosen foreman of the jury.

The man's superior officers all took the stand and all, without exception, held this man in high regard. Then it was time for the soldier himself to take the stand.

One of the inspiring things he said was the following:

*"My grandmother was a slave. She told me a nigger was a low, uncouth person, and pertains to no one in particular; but I don't consider that I am low and uncouth. I am a Negro, but not a nigger."*

In spite of the odds against him and the fact that most lied against this man, he was acquitted and found not guilty thus avoiding jail time and a possible dishonorable discharge.

I guess it just wasn't his time to be the one to spark the civil rights movement as Rosa Parks did 11 years later.

But his story doesn't end here. Even though he didn't spark the mass movement for civil rights at that time, he would go on 3 years later to put a huge crack in it.

For you see, this young soldier who wouldn't give up his seat, who was arrested and tried simply for being black, this young man, Jackie Robinson, went on to be the first in major league baseball history to break the color barrier by signing and playing for the Brooklyn Dodgers in 1947.

