

# Bicycle Racing Stars Pay Tribute To Major Taylor

The Bicycle Racing Stars of the 19th Century paid honor to the late Marshall W. Taylor, better known as "Major Taylor" at Mount Glenwood cemetery, between Thornton and Glenwood, Ill., on Sunday afternoon, May 23. Cooperating were the Olde Tymers A. C., Wabash Ave. YMCA and the Thirty-five Years or More club.

Major Taylor was the champion bike racer in the United States, England, France, Belgium, Holland, Denmark and Australia. He was the first and only Negro to break into professional bike racing 50 years ago. He was born in Indianapolis on November 26, 1875.

He would never race on Sundays thus losing the chance to make several thousand dollars.

## Stages Comeback

He staged a comeback, after 3 years of ill-health caused by a nervous breakdown, in 1908. He broke two world records. He rode to victory in the quarter-mile scratch race in Velodrome Buffalo track, Paris, France. His time was 25 and 2-5 seconds for a world record. He also rode the half mile in 42 and 1-5 seconds for another world record.

Taylor won the championship of America the first time in 1898. He retired in 1910 because of the raw treatment given him by the other riders and sometimes by the promoters.

He came to Chicago in 1930, his finances gone, and tried to make a living by selling his autobiography without much success. One of the members of the Bicycle Racing Stars of Nineteenth Century Assn., formed in 1941, gave him a job.

In 1932, Taylor needed an operation. This white benefactor saw that he had the services of one of the best surgeons in Chicago. The operation failed to save Taylor's life. This same benefactor saw that he was laid to rest.

## In Unmarked Grave

When the association was formed, one of its first moves was to

see what they could do to honor this great rider. Taylor's remains were moved from an unmarked grave, where it had lain for 16 years, and placed in the Memorial Garden of the Good Shepherd at Mount Glenwood cemetery this spring.

Sunday, a bronze plaque with Taylor's sculptured image on his racing bicycle and a fitting epitaph portraying the character and accomplishments of the great Negro gentleman and athlete, will be placed on the grave with fitting ceremonies.

The members of the organization, who raced against him during Taylor's glorious career, the clergy and the cooperating bodies were present.