

AFRICAN AMERICAN MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

THE
CIVIL WAR
(1861 - 1865)



INTRODUCTION

- On December 21, 1861, Congress authorized the Medal of Honor award to honor soldiers in the Civil War.
- It is one of the most prestigious military awards in military history.
- There were 180,000 blacks who took up the call to fight for the Union.
- Approximately Twenty-six blacks received the Medal of Honor for valor in combat during the Civil War.



1ST SERGEANT POWHATAN BEATY

5TH U.S. COLORED TROOPS

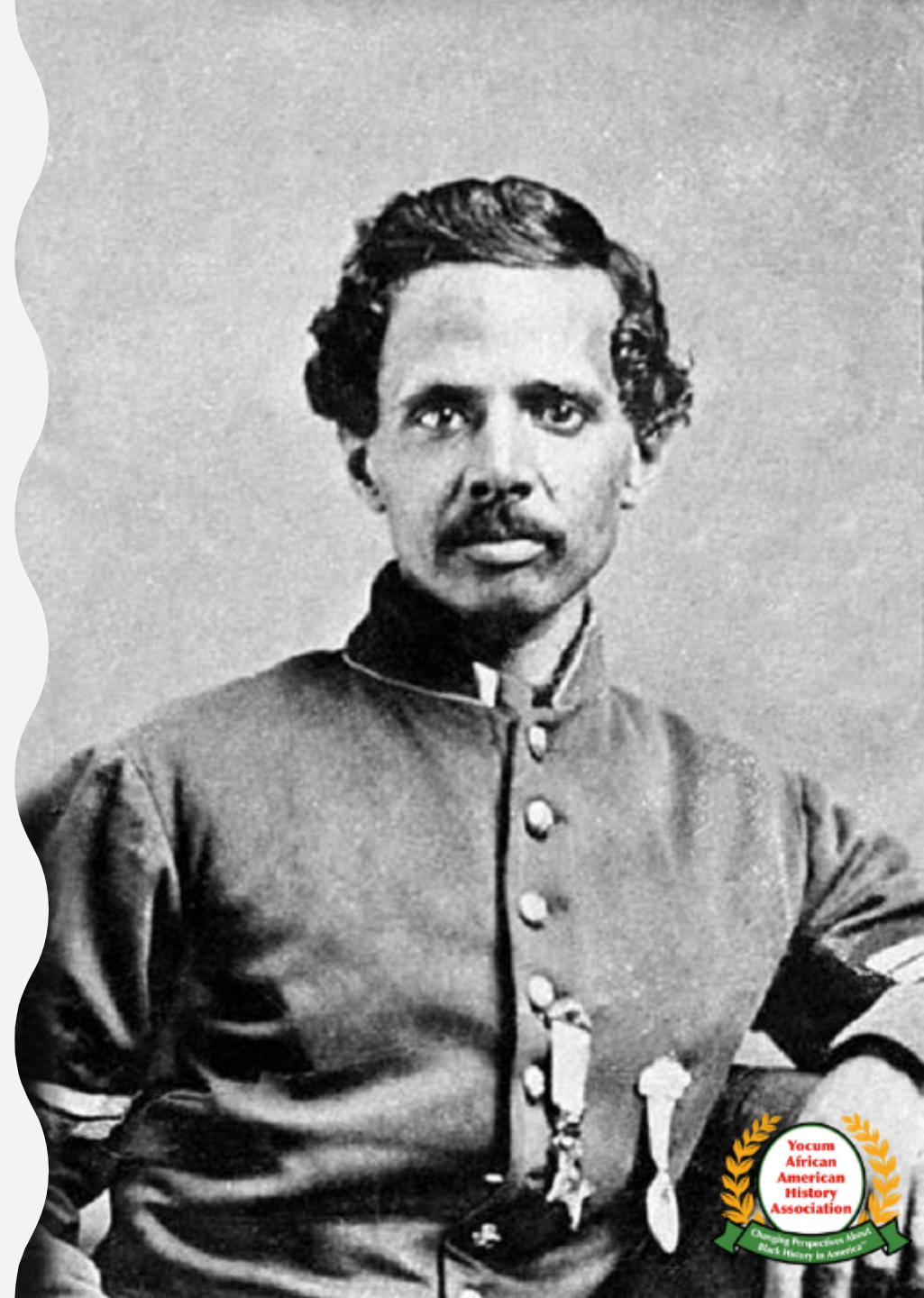
(1837 – 1916)

Beaty enlisted as a private in the Union Army at Cincinnati, Hamilton County, at 24 years of age.

He received the Medal of Honor for the battle at Chapin's Farm, one of the bloodiest battles of the Civil War (September 29-30, 1864).

Former slave Sergeant Beaty took charge after white officers were killed and lead his 5th U.S.C.T to victory at Chapin's Farm.

His valor, and that of others, would prove the exceptional ability of blacks in military service in the Civil War.



LANDSMAN JOHN HENRY LAWSON

U.S.S. HARTFORD

(1837-1919)

John was one of the first black Pennsylvanians to volunteer to serve in the Union Navy.

He was given the rank of Landsman, which was designated to new and inexperienced sailors.

His size made him an excellent choice for duty on the shell whip.

A shell whip was a device to raise powder boxes to the gun deck.

Lawson received his Medal of Honor at the battle of Mobile Bay.

After an explosion, though wounded, he continued his duties as shell whip during the battle of Mobile Bay.



UNION NAVY SAILORS

- Landsman Aaron Anderson (1811 - ?) U.S.S. Wyandank
- Seaman Joachim Pease (1842-?) U.S.S. Kersarge
- Landsman William H. Brown (1836-1896) U.S.S. Brooklyn
- Landsman Wilson Brown (1841-1900) U.S.S. Hartford
- Seaman Clement Dees (1837-?) U.S.S. Pontoosuc
- Contraband Robert Blake, (?-?) U.S.S. Marblehead
- Engineer's Cook James Mifflin, (1839-?) U.S.S. Brooklyn
- Signal Quartermaster Thomas English (1819-?) U.S.S. New Ironsides



COME AND JOIN US BROTHERS.



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USCT REGIMENTS

By the end of 1865, the United States Colored Troops (USCT), composed 175 regiments; one tenth of the Union Army. These soldiers and sailors showed valor; among them were twenty-six Medal of Honor recipients.

Frederick Douglass stated:

"Once [you] let the black man get upon his person the brass letters, U.S., let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder, and bullets in his pocket, and there is no power on earth...which can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship."

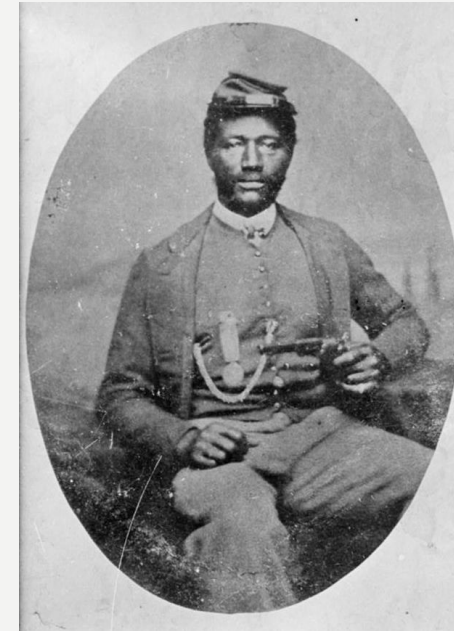


UNITED STATES COLORED TROOPS (USCT)

PRIVATE JAMES GARDNER, 36TH INFANTRY

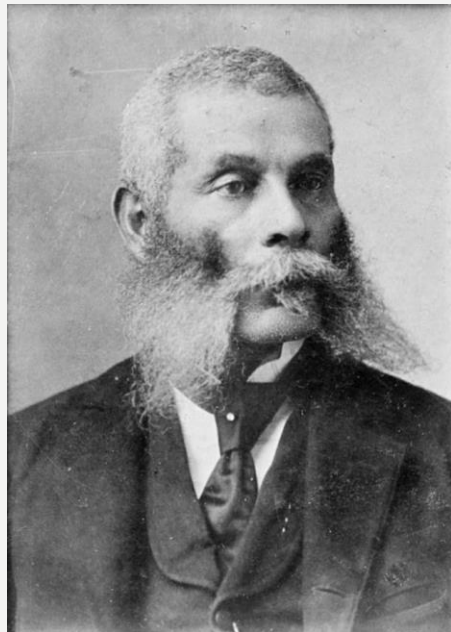


JAMES H. HARRIS, 38TH INFANTRY



UNITED STATES COLORED TROOPS (USCT)

1ST SERGEANT ALEXANDER R. KELLY, 6TH INFANTRY



SERGEANT MILTON M. HOLLAND, 5TH INFANTRY



UNITED STATES COLORED TROOPS (USCT)

SERGEANT ALFRED HILTON, 4TH INFANTRY



1ST SERGEANT ROBERT PINN, 5TH INFANTRY



MORE MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS

More United States Colored Troops (USCT)

- Private William H. Barnes (1845-1866) 38th Infantry
- Private Charles Veal (1838-1872) 4th Infantry
- 1st Sergeant Edward Ratcliff (1835-1915) 38th Infantry
- 1st Sergeant James H. Bronson, (1838-1884) 5th Infantry
- Sergeant Decatur Dorsey, (1836-1891) 39th Infantry
- Private Thomas R. Hawkins (1840-1870) 6th Infantry
- Corporal Miles James, (1829-1871) 36th USCT
- Private Bruce Anderson (1845-1922) 142nd Infantry
- Sergeant Andrew Jackson Smith (1842-?) 55th Massachusetts Infantry



SERGEANT CHRISTIAN A. FLEETWOOD

4TH U.S. COLORED TROOPS

(1840-1914)

Fleetwood was born in Baltimore to free parents.

He graduated from Ashmun Institute (Lincoln University) in Pennsylvania.

He enlisted August 11, 1863, "to save the country from ruin."

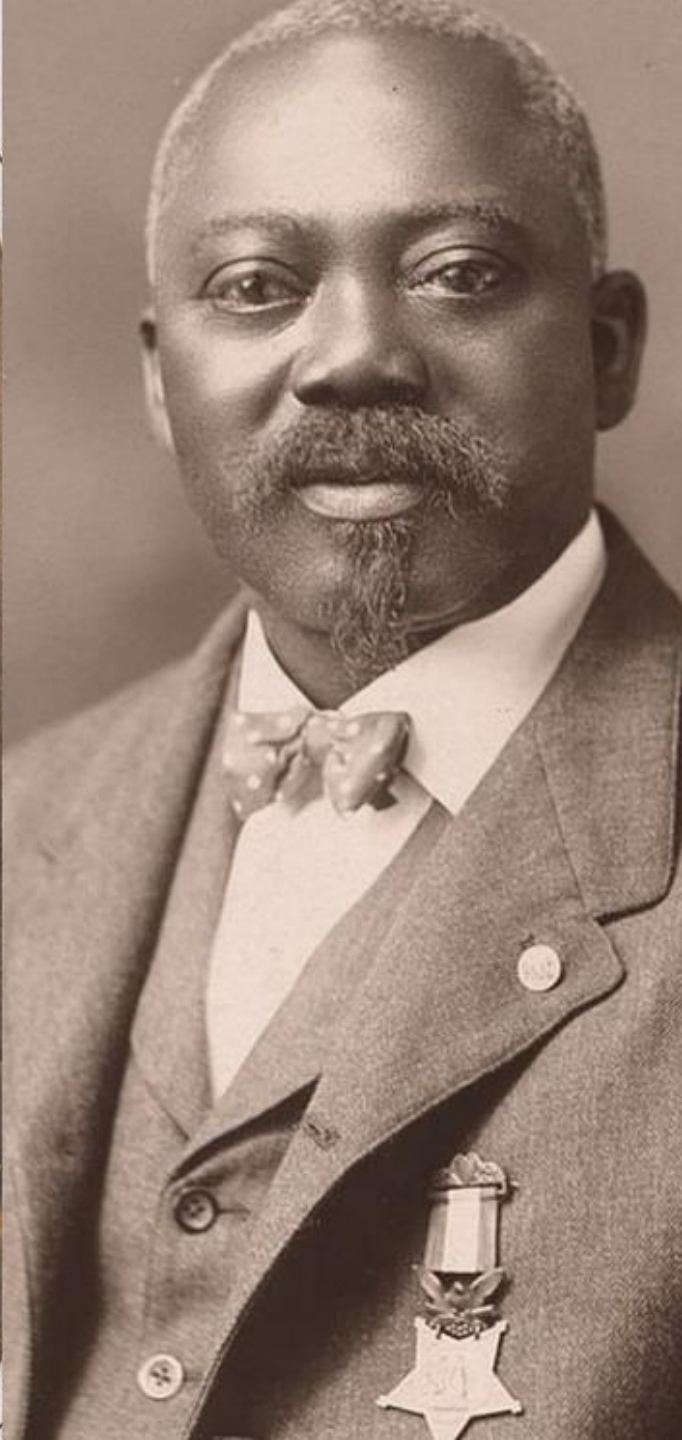
Fleetwood was promoted to sergeant on August 19, 1863.

Received his Medal of Honor at the Battle of New Market Heights (Chapin's Farm), 1864.

December 1864, Fleetwood wrote in his diary:

"This year has brought about many changes that at the beginning were or would have been thought impossible. The close of the year finds me a soldier for the cause of my race. May God bless the cause and enable me in the coming year forward it on."





SERGEANT WILLIAM HARVEY CARNEY

He was born a slave in 1840, died 1908.

William attended a secret school run by a minister.

He enlisted in the laudable 54th Massachusetts Infantry.

William received his Medal of Honor for the assault on Fort Wagner.

Upon his death, the flags at the Massachusetts State House were flown at half-staff.



SUMMARY

The impressive contributions that blacks made during the Civil War were invaluable to the Union Armed Services. Whether blacks were free, slaves, or contraband of war, they seized every opportunity to seek freedom, and be an active participant in their emancipation.

Blacks fought in every major campaign and battle during the last two years of the Civil War. They received 26 Medal of Honor awards.

The impact and success that blacks made during the Civil War proved that they were formidable fighters and erased all doubt of their worthiness to fight in the Union Army.

