

# BLACK HEROES OF THE CIVIL WAR

( 1 8 6 1 – 1 8 6 5 )

A PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE



# ROBERT SMALLS

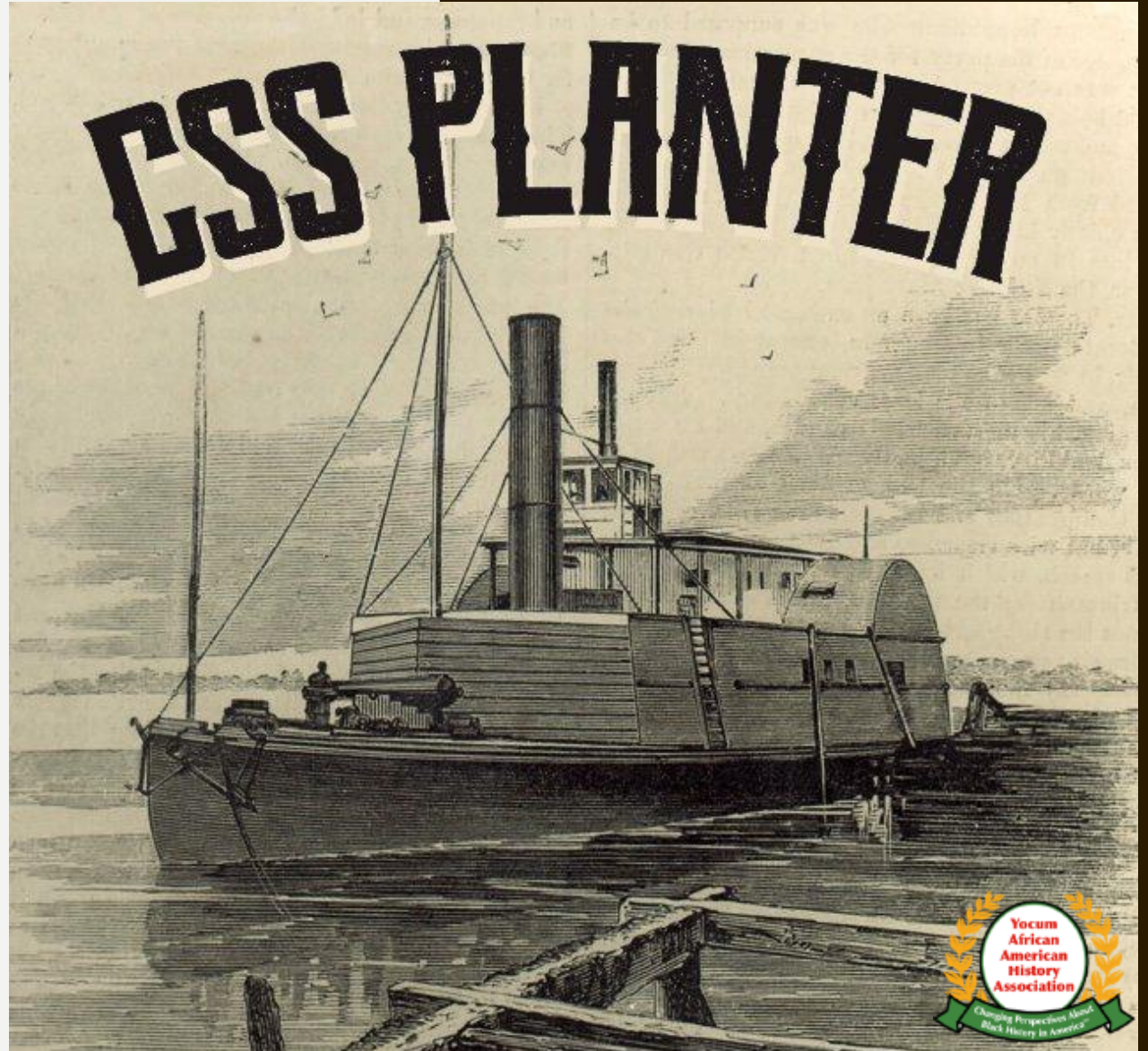
## CIVIL WAR HERO

Robert Smalls, a ship pilot, commandeered the CSS Planter, a gunboat of the Confederate Navy.

Small sailed the CSS Planter out of Charleston's Confederate-controlled waters to the Union blockade.

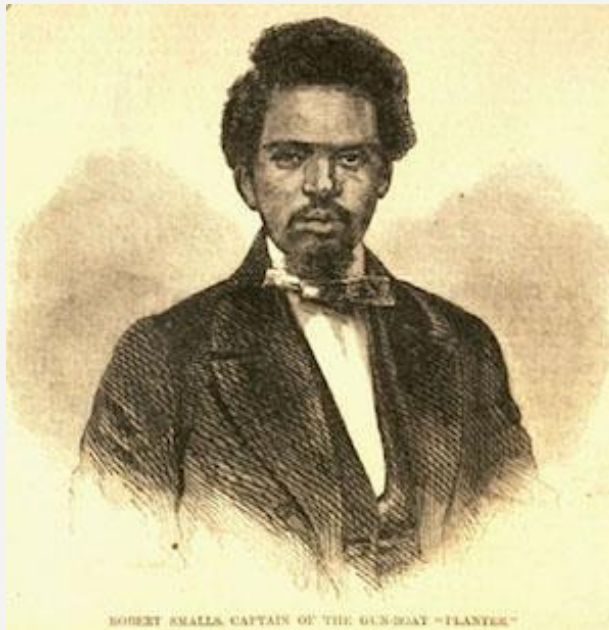
Renamed the USS Planter, it was invaluable to the Union's efforts in the Civil War.

CSS/USS Planter was lost in rough seas 14 years after the Civil War.

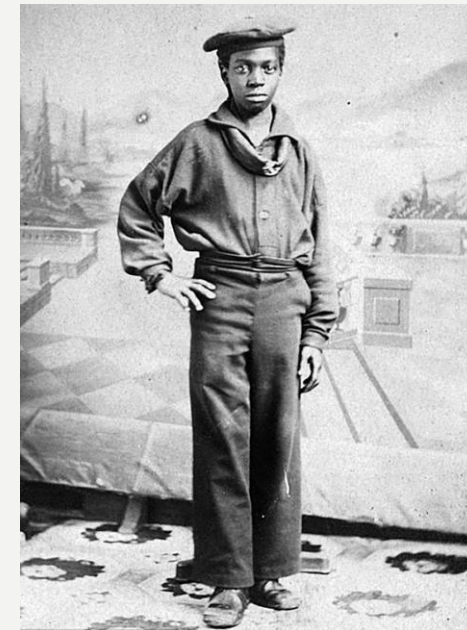


# HEROES IN THE UNION NAVY

ROBERT SMALLS, CAPTAIN OF THE USS  
PLANTER



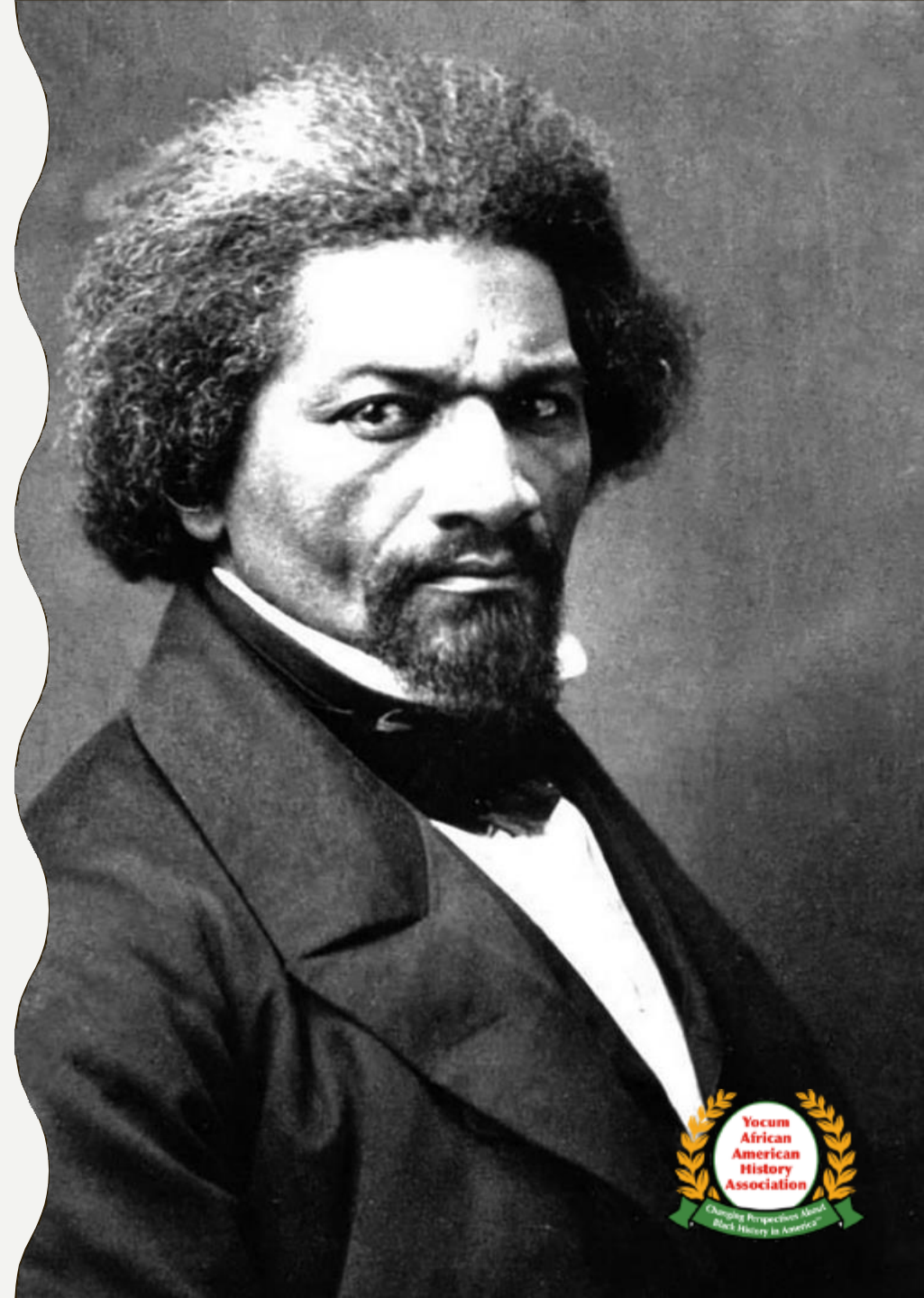
UNKNOWN SAILOR, THERE WERE OVER 18,000  
SAILORS IN THE UNION NAVY



# FREDERICK DOUGLASS

**Declared in The Douglass Monthly, "A Call to Arms"**

*"There is no time to delay. The tide is at its flood that leads on to fortune. From East to West, from North to South, the sky is written all over, 'Now or never.' Liberty won by white men would lose half its luster. 'Who would be free themselves must strike a blow.' Better even die free than to live slaves.' This is the sentiment of every brave colored man amongst us."*



# TILLMAN VALENTINE

Tillman was a free man with biracial bloodlines.

Tillman's poem compelled ordinary men to enlist in the Union Army.

Tillman was from an area in Pennsylvania that attracted both free and soon-to-be-free-people.

Here, residents organized a black Protestant church, responsible for the founding of Ashmun Institute (later known Lincoln University) that opposed slavery.

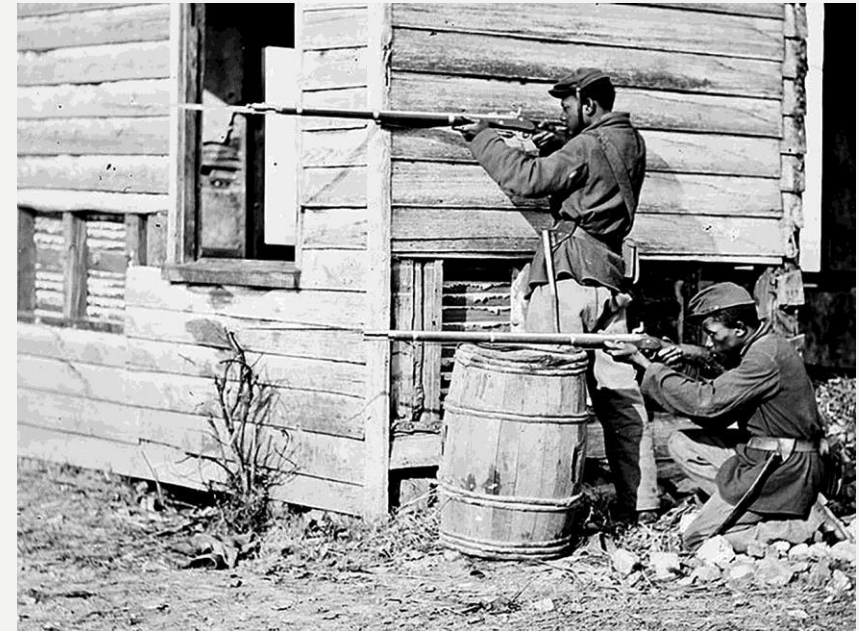


# BLACKS WERE TRANSFORMED FROM LABORERS OR “SERVANTS” TO UNION MILITARY HEROES

FIRST, BLACKS WERE LABORERS OR SERVANTS FOR WHITE UNION OFFICERS



LATER, BLACKS BECAME UNION HEROES

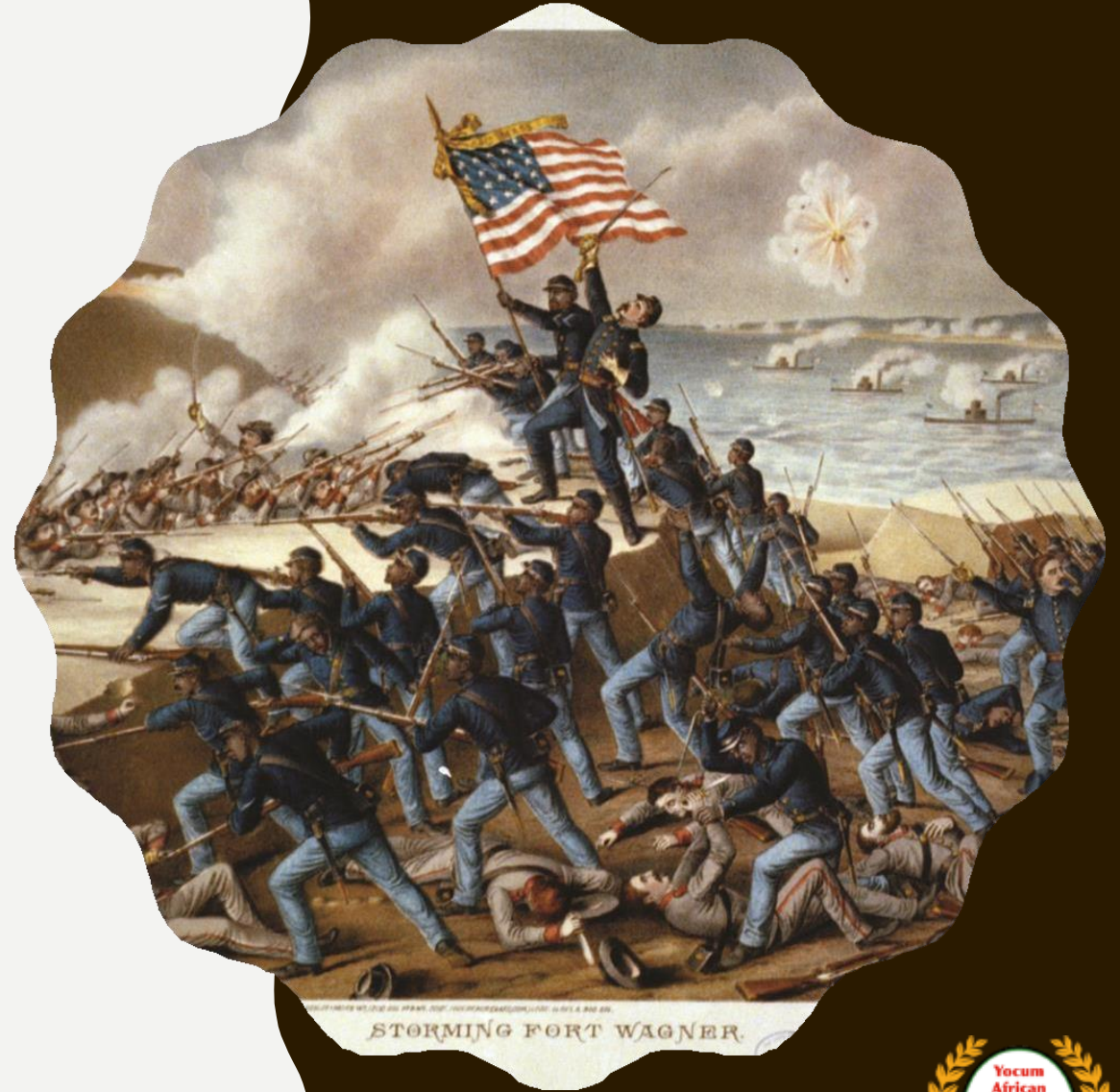


# STORMING FORT WAGNER

THE ALL-BLACK 54<sup>TH</sup> MASSACHUSETTS REGIMENT

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

**Frederick Douglass**



STORMING FORT WAGNER.





## CHARLES REDMOND DOUGLASS

## SERGEANT MAJOR LEWIS DOUGLASS

- The sons of abolitionist, Frederick Douglass.
- Both sons were members of the all-black 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts Infantry Regiment.
- Charles was the first black in the state of NY to enlist in the Civil War.
- Charles was later appointed by President Ulysses S. Grant as council to Santo Domingo.
- The 54<sup>th</sup> Regiment had nearly 600 volunteers, mostly free blacks.
- Sergeant Major Lewis obtained the highest rank a black man could in the Civil War.

# CORPORAL JAMES H. GOODING & HANNAH JOHNSON

LETTERS WRITTEN TO PRESIDENT LINCOLN ABOUT UNEQUAL PAY FOR BLACKS

## Corporal James H. Gooding

Are we Soldiers or are we Laborers? We are fully armed, and equipped, and have done all the various Duties pertaining to a Soldiers life...we have shared the perils and Labour, of Reducing the first stronghold, that flaunted a Traitor Flag...The patient Trusting Descendants of Africs Clime, have dyed the ground with blood, in defense of the Union, and Democracy....the Black man laid his life at the Alter of the Nation, and he was refused...all we lack, is a paler hue, and a better acquaintance with the Alphabet. Now Your Excellency, We have done a Soldiers Duty. Why can't we have a Soldiers pay?

## Hannah Johnson

...I am a colored woman and my son was strong and able to fight for his country and the colored people have as much to fight for as any...Now I know it is right that a colored man should go and fight for his country, and so ought to a white man...his pay is no greater his obligation to fight the same...they are proving themselves to be men...Robbing the colored people of their labor is but a small part of the robbery their souls almost taken...Will you see that the colored men fighting now, are fairly treated....We oppressed ones, appeal to you, and ask fair play.



# BATTLE OF CHAFFIN'S FARM

SEPTEMBER 29-30, 1864

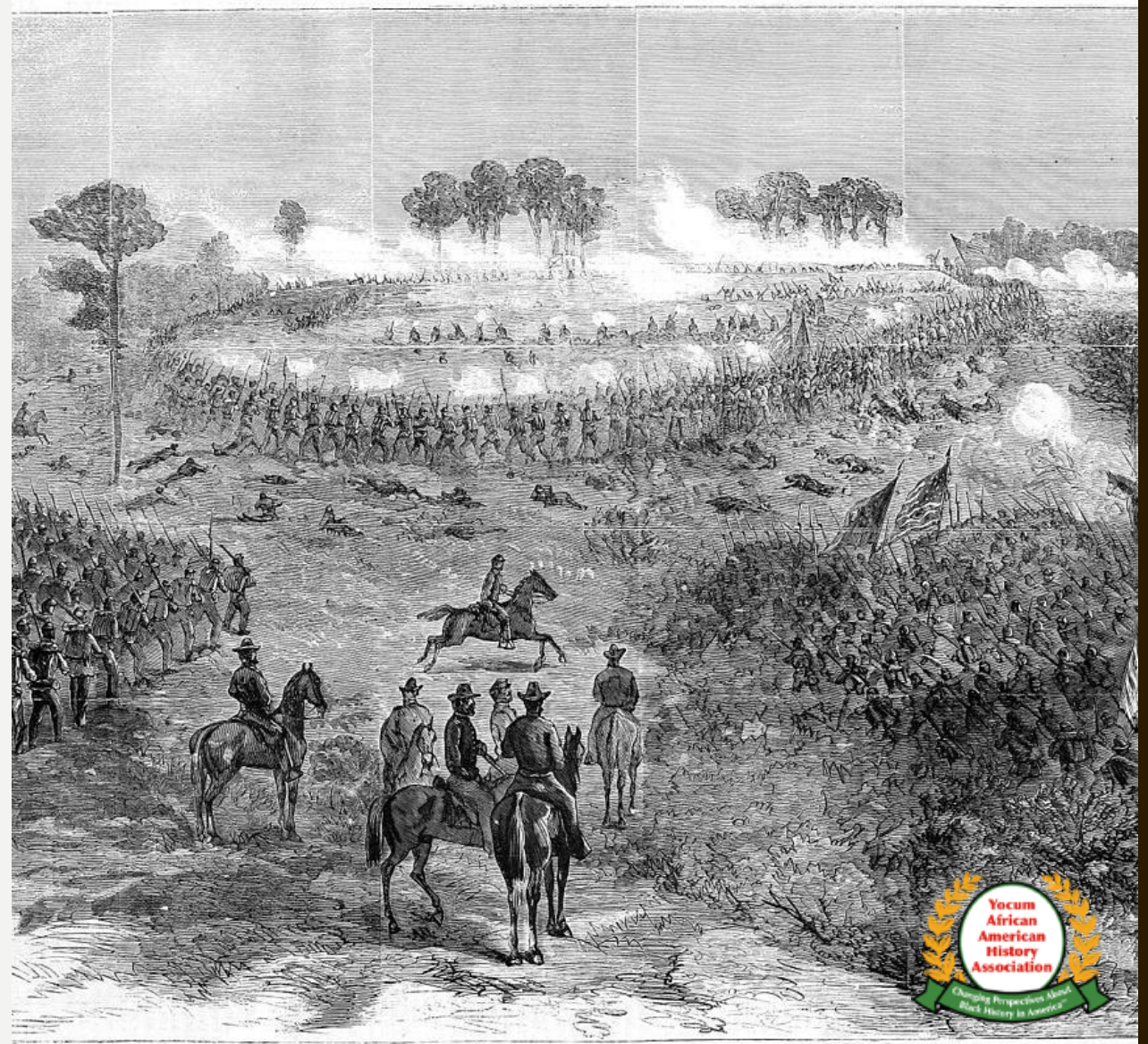
Considered a defining moment in black military history.

Total casualties, 4,430.

14 black soldiers received the Medal of Honor, including: Corporal Miles James, James Garner, James H. Harris, Corporal Isaiah Mays, and Sergeant Thomas Hawkins.

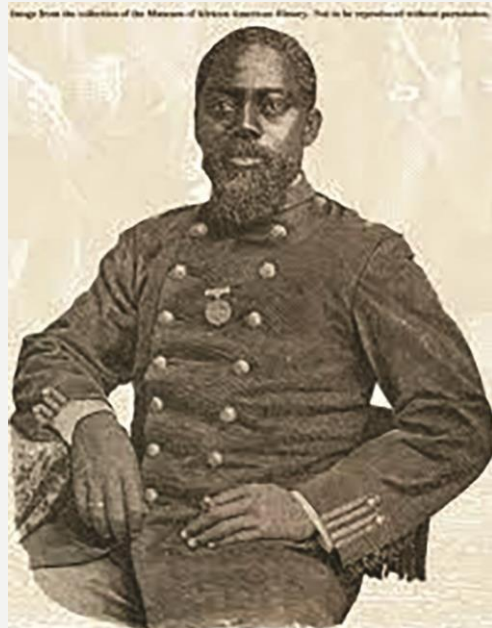
Confederate troops built defensive war trenches that made attack difficult.

General Benjamin Butler lead the black troops to a Union victory.



# CIVIL WAR MEDAL OF HONOR WINNERS

SERGEANT WILLIAM CARNEY, SON OF SLAVES, FIRST  
BLACK MEDAL OF HONOR WINNER FOR HEROISM IN THE  
54<sup>TH</sup> MASSACHUSETTS INFANTRY REGIMENT



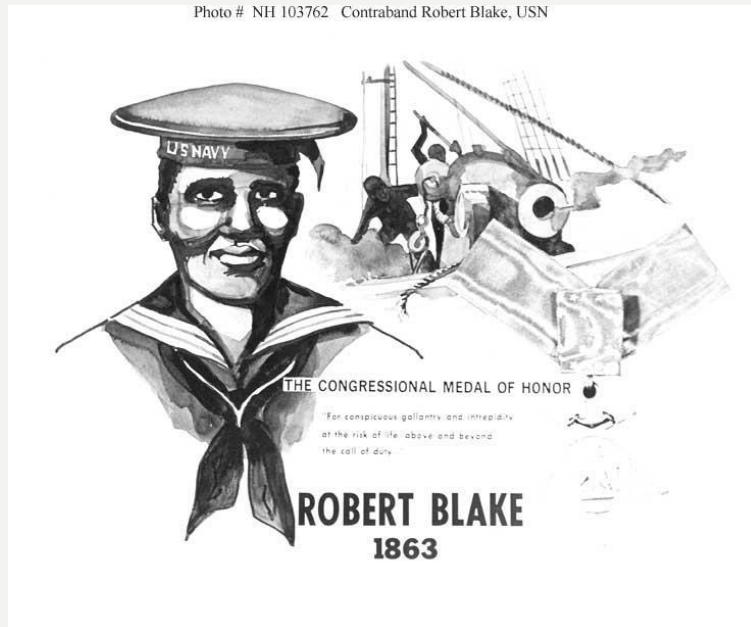
SERGEANT MAJOR CHRISTIAN A. FLEETWOOD FOR  
HEROISM ON THE BATTLEFIELD AT CHAFFIN'S FARM



# CIVIL WAR MEDAL OF HONOR WINNERS

**CONTRABAND ROBERT BLAKE, USN; FIRST BLACK TO  
EARN MEDAL FOR THE NAVY; U.S.S. MARBLEHEAD**

Photo # NH 103762 Contraband Robert Blake, USN



**SERGEANT THOMAS HAWKINS FOR HEROISM ON  
THE BATTLEFIELD AT CHAFFIN'S FARM, 6<sup>TH</sup>  
USCT INFANTRY**

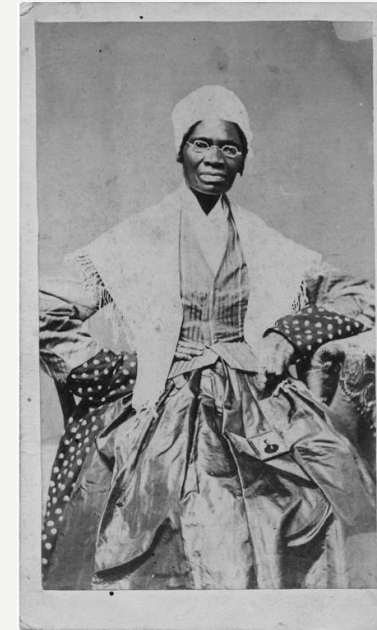


# WOMEN ACTIVISTS OF THE CIVIL WAR

CHARLOTTE FORTEN, BLACK TEACHER ON SOUTH CAROLINA'S SEA ISLANDS



SOJOURNER TRUTH WITH PICTURE OF GRANDSON, ENLISTED IN THE 54<sup>TH</sup> MASSACHUSETTS REGIMENT



# WOMEN ACTIVISTS OF THE CIVIL WAR

SUSIE KING TAYLOR, A NURSE, COOK, TEACHER,  
AND LAUNDRESS FOR THE ALL-BLACK UNIT OF THE  
FIRST SOUTH CAROLINA VOLUNTEERS



MARY BOWSER SPY FOR THE UNION WHILE AT THE  
HOME OF JEFFERSON DAVIS, PRESIDENT OF THE  
CONFEDERACY



# *REMINISCENCES OF MY LIFE IN CAMP*

BY SUSIE KING TAYLOR

“What a wonderful revolution! In 1861 the Southern papers were full of advertisements for “slaves,” but now, despite all the hindrances and “race problems” my people are striving to attain the full standard of all other races born free in the sight of God, and in a number of instances have succeeded. Justice we ask, to be citizens of these United States, where so many of our people have shed their blood with their white comrades, that the stars and stripes should never be polluted.”

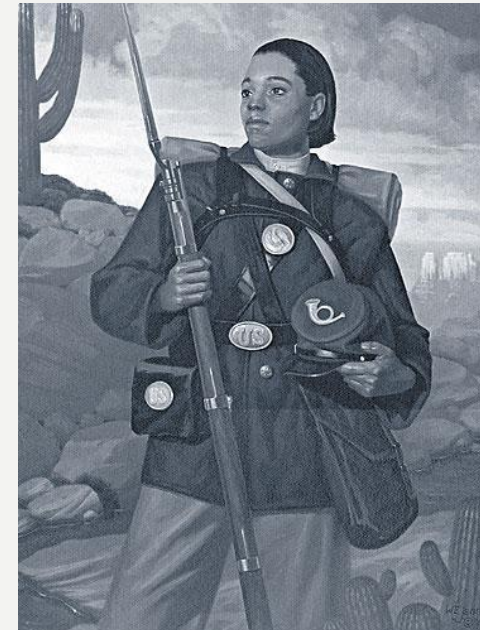


# WOMEN ACTIVISTS OF THE CIVIL WAR

HARRIET TUBMAN WORKED WITH BLACK UNION SOLDIERS AND CARED FOR THEIR NUMEROUS NECESSITIES.



CATHAY WILLIAMS DID LAUNDRY AND COOKING FOR THE UNION SOLDIERS BUT AFTER THE WAR, ENLISTED AS A BUFFALO SOLDIER IN 1866.



## SERGEANT SAMUEL SMITH FAMILY

Sergeant Samuel Smith of the 119<sup>th</sup> United States Colored Troops Regiment with “whole family” in freedom.

Both Samuel and his wife, Mollie, were born into slavery in Kentucky.

The photo is indicative of the strength, durability, and resiliency of family ties before and after the Civil War.



# SUMMARY

- Primary and Secondary Sources are important to tell the complete story of the Civil War.
- The Civil War was about slavery, not states' rights.
- Blacks fought with the Union in overwhelming numbers for their freedom (180,000 strong).
- Freeman and slaves were tenacious, brave, and innovative in this battle for freedom.
- From Robert Smalls successful commandeered Confederate CSS Planter to the fourteen men who were awarded the Medal of Honor for the Battle of Chaffin's Farm, these heroes and heroines made important contributions to the Civil War effort.
- The United States is indebted to all the brave men and women that fought for their country and their freedom.

