

54th Massachusetts Colored Infantry

The U.S Colored Troops in the Civil
War

Helen Den Uyl, Tammie Burroughs, & Sherry Rogers

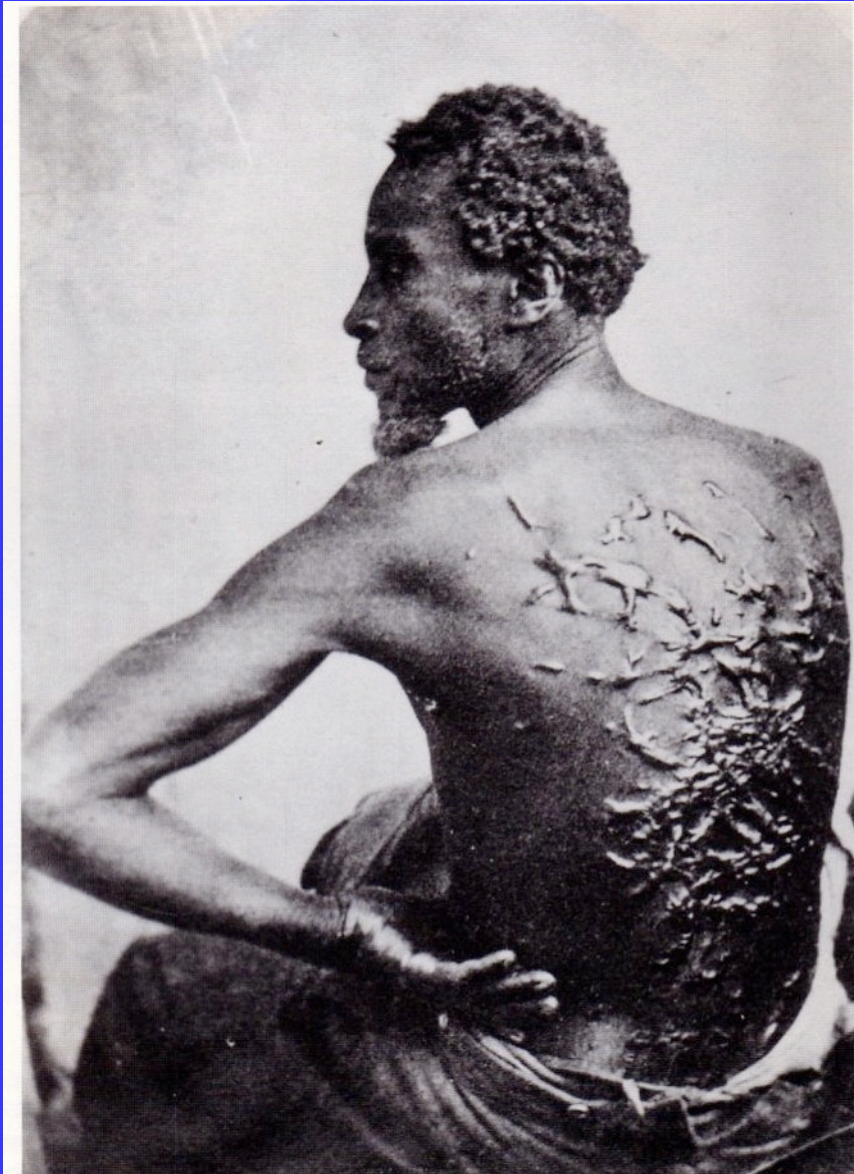
History of Black Soldiers

- Black Patriots Fought for Freedom in the Revolutionary War
- Massachusetts Had “Black Bucks” Regiment Consisting of Freedmen and Runaway Slaves
- Massachusetts Eliminates Slavery by 1790
- Large Abolitionist Population in Boston Prior to Civil War

Slavery Leads to Civil War

- Slaves Not Considered “Citizens” of the United States
- Anti-slavery Movement Grows from 1820s - 1850s
- William Lloyd Garrison Publishes “The Liberator” in Boston
- Racism Grew as Slavery Expanded

The Cruelty of Slavery Stirred People to Action



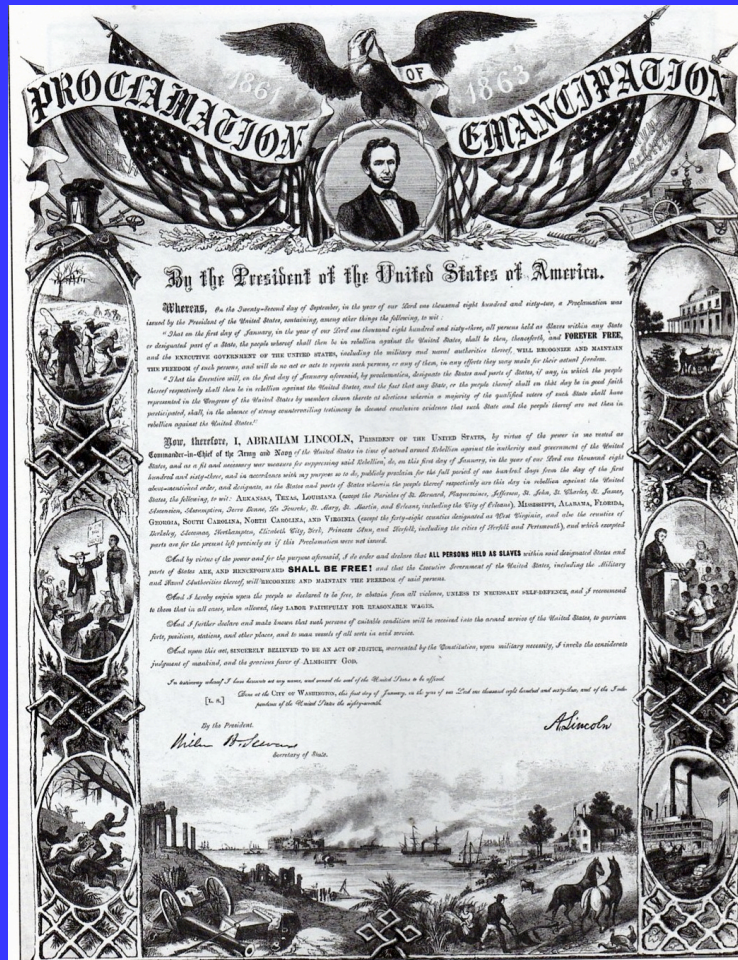
Slave testimony and photographic evidence refuted the Southern defense of slavery as a benign, patriarchal institution. Beatings, whippings, starvation, even murder, were utilized to maintain discipline and order. One runaway slave named Moses Roper reported that he regularly received one hundred to two hundred lashes from his owner and once had his head soaked in tar and set on fire. This image, sent home during the Civil War by Frederick W.

Mercer, assistant surgeon from the Forty-seventh Massachusetts Regiment, depicts a runaway slave from Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Mercer examined four hundred other runaways and found many "to be as badly lacerated as the specimen presented in the enclosed photograph." William C. Davis et al., eds., *The Image of War* (New York, 1982), 3:211.



- Abraham Lincoln
Issues the
Emancipation
Proclamation in 1863
- This Allows Former
Slaves to Join Federal
Forces (Union Army)

Two Different Views



NORTHERN VIEW



SOUTHERN VIEW

U.S. Colored Troops

TO COLORED MEN!

FREEDOM, Protection, Pay, and a Call to Military Duty!

On the 1st day of January, 1863, the President of the United States proclaimed FREEDOM to over THREE MILLIONS OF SLAVES. This decree is to be enforced by all the power of the Nation. On the 21st of July last he issued the following order:

PROTECTION OF COLORED TROOPS.

WAR DEPARTMENT, ADJUTANT GENERAL'S OFFICE,
WASHINGTON, July 31.

"General Order, No. 232.

"The following order of the President is published for the information and government of all concerned:—

EXECUTIVE MANSION, WASHINGTON, July 30.

"It is the duty of every Government to give protection to its citizens, of whatever class, color, or condition, and especially to those who are duly organized as soldiers in the public service. The law of nations, and the usages and customs of war, as carried on by civilized powers, permit no distinction as to color in the treatment of prisoners of war as public enemies. To sell or enslave any captured person on account of his color, is a relapse into barbarism, and a crime against the civilization of the age.

"The Government of the United States will give the same protection to all its soldiers, and if the enemy shall sell or enslave any one because of his color, the offense shall be punished by retaliation upon the enemy's prisoners in our possession. It is, therefore, ordered, for every soldier of the United States, killed in violation of the laws of war, a rebel soldier shall be executed; and for every one enslaved by the enemy, or sold into slavery, a rebel soldier shall be placed at hard labor on the public works, and continued at such labor until the other shall be released and receive the treatment due to prisoners of war.

"ABRAHAM LINCOLN."

"By order of the Secretary of War.

"E. D. TOWNSEND, Assistant Adjutant General."

That the President is in earnest the rebels soon began to find out, as witness the following order from his Secretary of War:

WAR DEPARTMENT, WASHINGTON CITY, August 3, 1862.

"Sir: Your letter of the 2d inst., calling the attention of this Department to the cases of Orlin H. Brown, William H. Johnston, and Wm. Wilson, three colored men captured on the gunboat Isaac Smith, has received consideration. This Department has directed that three rebel prisoners of South Carolina, if there be any such in our possession, and if not, three others, be confined in close custody and held as hostages for Brown, Johnston and Wilson, and that the fact be communicated to the rebel authorities at Richmond.

"Very respectfully your obedient servant,

"EDWIN M. STANTON, Secretary of War.

"The Hon. GIDEON WELLES, Secretary of the Navy."

And retaliation will be our practice now—man for man—to the bitter end.

LETTER OF CHARLES SUMNER,

Written with reference to the Convention held at Foughkeeps, July 15th and 16th, 1862, to promote Colored Enlistments.

BOSTON, July 13th, 1862.

"I doubt if, in times past, our country could have expected men any patriotic service. Such service is the return for protection. But now that protection has begun, the service should begin also. We should realize that rights and duties be weighed with nicely. It is enough that our country, wounded at last to a sense of justice, seeks to enroll colored men among its defenders.

"If my counsels should reach such persons, I would say: enlist at once. Now is the day and now is the hour. Help to overcome your cruel enemies now battling against your country, and in this way you will surely overcome those other enemies hardly less cruel, here at home, who will still seek to degrade you. This is not the time to hesitate or to flinch. Do your duty to our country, and you will set an example of generous self-sacrifice which will conquer prejudice and open all doors.

"Very faithfully yours,

"CHARLES SUMNER."

- Soldiers Promised “Equal” Pay
- Pay Would Actually Be Less Than White Soldiers’ Pay
- Charged For Uniforms, Boots, and Weapons

Formation of 54th Mass.

Image from the collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society.
Not to be reproduced without permission.

NOW IN CAMP AT READVILLE!

54th REGIMENT!

MASS. VOLUNTEERS, composed of men of

AFRICAN DESCENT

COL. ROBERT G. SHAW.

 **Colored Men, Rally 'Round the Flag of Freedom!**

BOUNTY \$100!

AT THE EXPIRATION OF THE TERM OF SERVICE.

Pay, \$13 a Month!

Good Food & Clothing!

State Aid to Families!

RECRUITING OFFICE.

**COR. CAMBRIDGE & NORTH RUSSELL STS.,
BOSTON.**

Lieut. J. W. M. APPLETON, Recruiting Officer.

RUSSELL & CO., Steam Job Printers, No. 47 Congress Street, Boston. 1863

- Meeting Held at Twelfth Baptist Church
- Sworn Into Service May 13, 1863



African Meeting House, Boston

05/07/2007

Robert Gould Shaw Was Chosen to Lead the Unit



- Educated at Harvard- Part of the Famous "Fighting Class" of 1860
- The Only Son of a Well-Known Boston Family

Robert Gould Shaw

- Parents Were Staunch Abolitionists
- Turned Down the Officer's Commission When Asked
- Mother Convinced Him to Take the Commission
- Recently Married to Anna Kneeland Haggerty

The African's Role Prior to the Formation of the 54th

- Personal Servants with Masters in Confederate Army
- Some Slaves Took the Place of Masters in Fighting as “Substitutes”
- Runaways Joining the Union Army Were Known as “Contrabands”
- “Pioneer” Units Did Hard Labor Tasks (Chopped Wood, Earthworks, Dug Trenches, Canals, and Latrines, Etc.)

“Jackson”- Portrait of a Slave and Union Drummer Boy



Frederick Douglass's Sons in the 54th

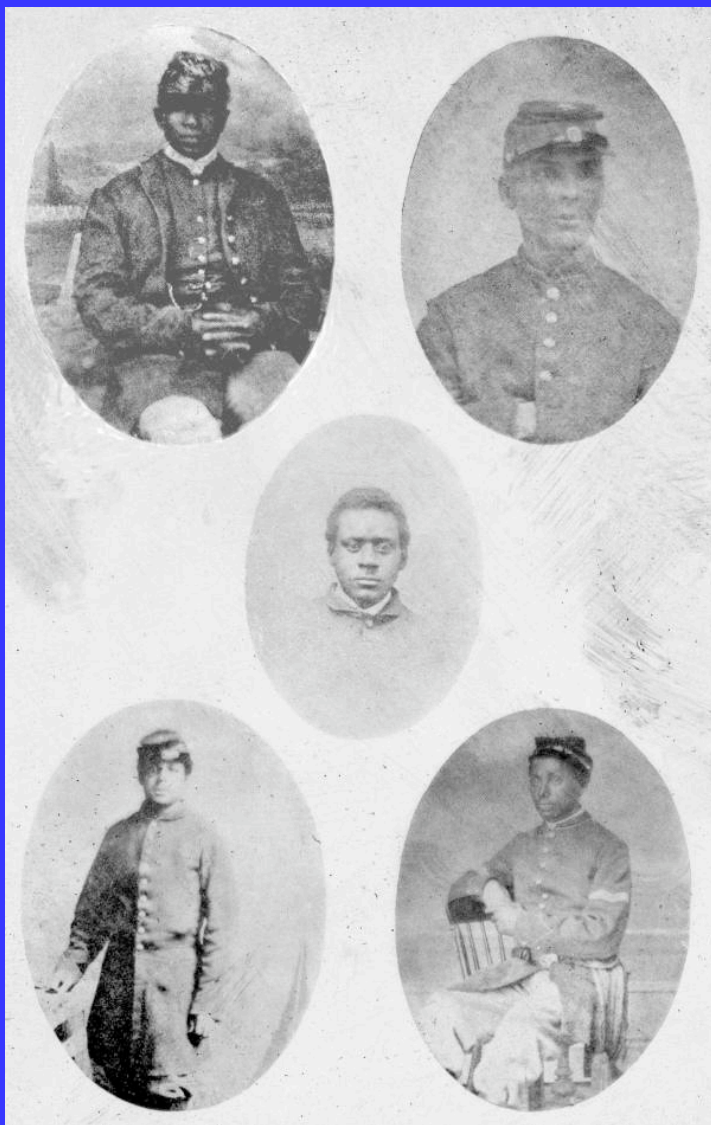


Left: Charles Douglass

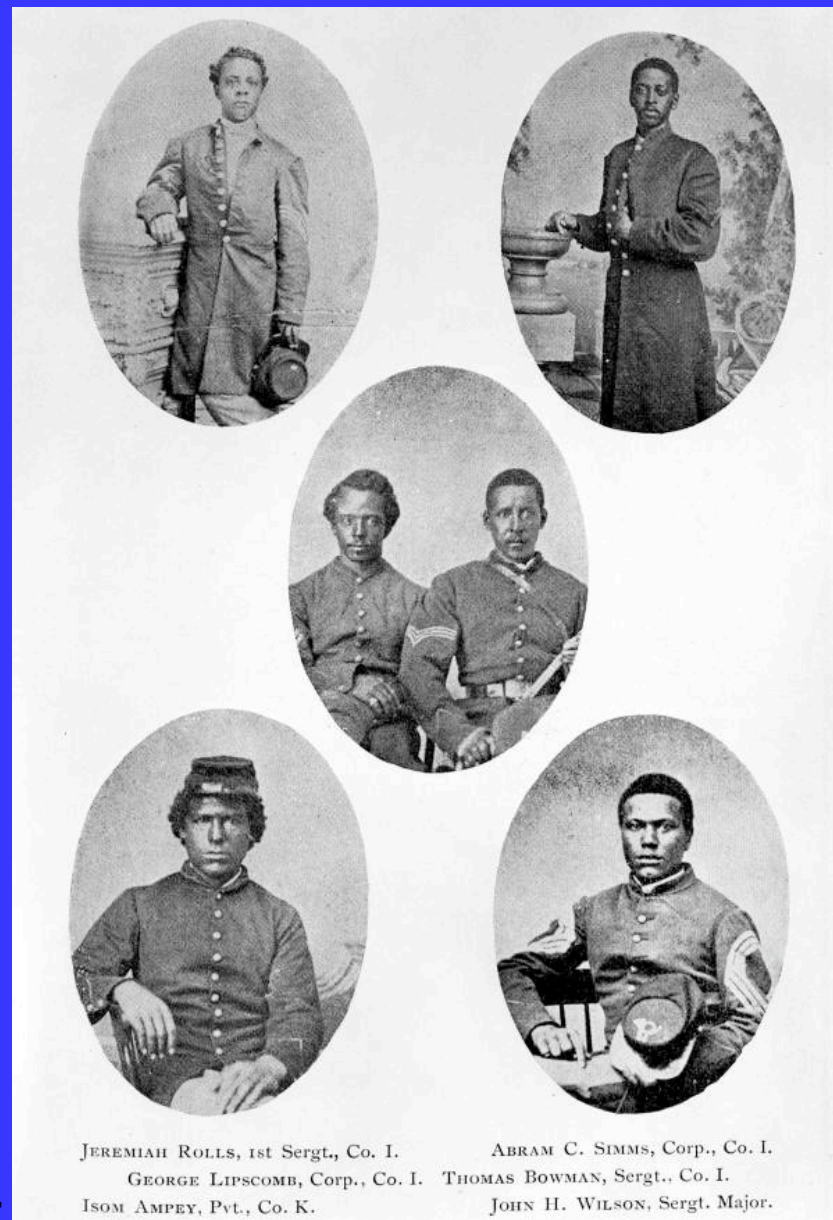
Right: Sergeant Major
Lewis Douglass



Soldiers of the 54th



Top: Abraham Brown, Pvt., Co. E (killed July 63'); Charles W. Lenox, Color Sergt., Co. A. Middle: Milo J. Freeland, Pvt., Co. A. Bottom: Charles H. Arnum, Pvt., Co. E.; Asa Cotton, Sergt., Co. K.



JEREMIAH ROLLS, 1st Sergt., Co. I.

ABRAM C. SIMMS, Corp., Co. I.

GEORGE LIPSCOMB, Corp., Co. I.

THOMAS BOWMAN, Sergt., Co. I.

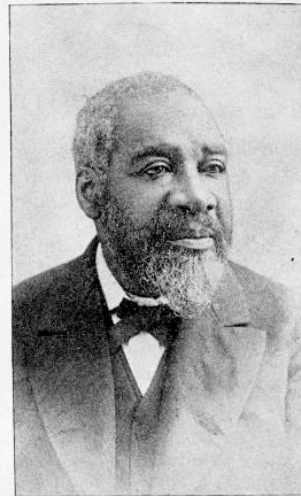
ISOM AMPEY, Pvt., Co. K.

JOHN H. WILSON, Sergt. Major.

Musicians and Officers



Top: Miles Moore, Musician, Co. H; John Gooseberry, Musician, Co. E
Middle: William J. Netson, Principal Musician, Co. K
Bottom: Robert J. Jones, Pvt., Co. I; Henry Steward, Sgt., Co. E



Chaplain Samuel Harrison



Lt. Frank M. Welch.



Lt. Stephen A. Swails



Lt. Peter Vogelsang.

**Lt. Giles M. Pease, Surgeon,
54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry**

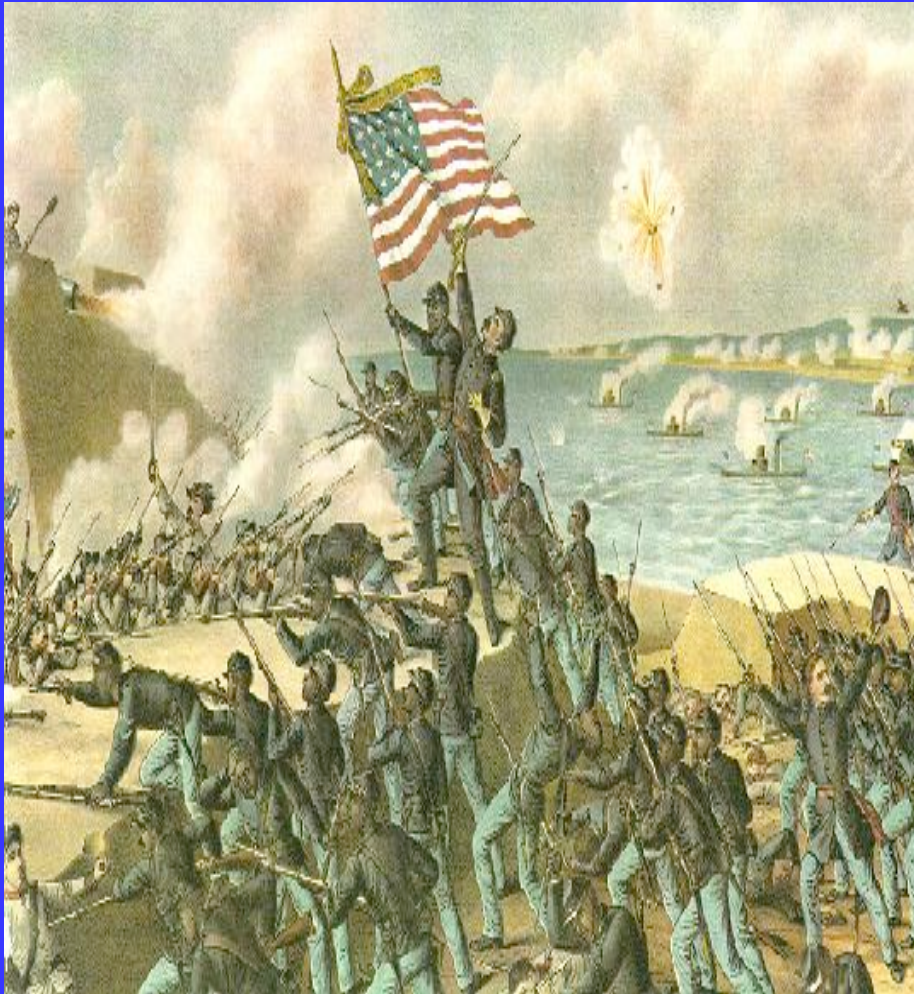


Battle of Sol Legare Island - July 16, 1863



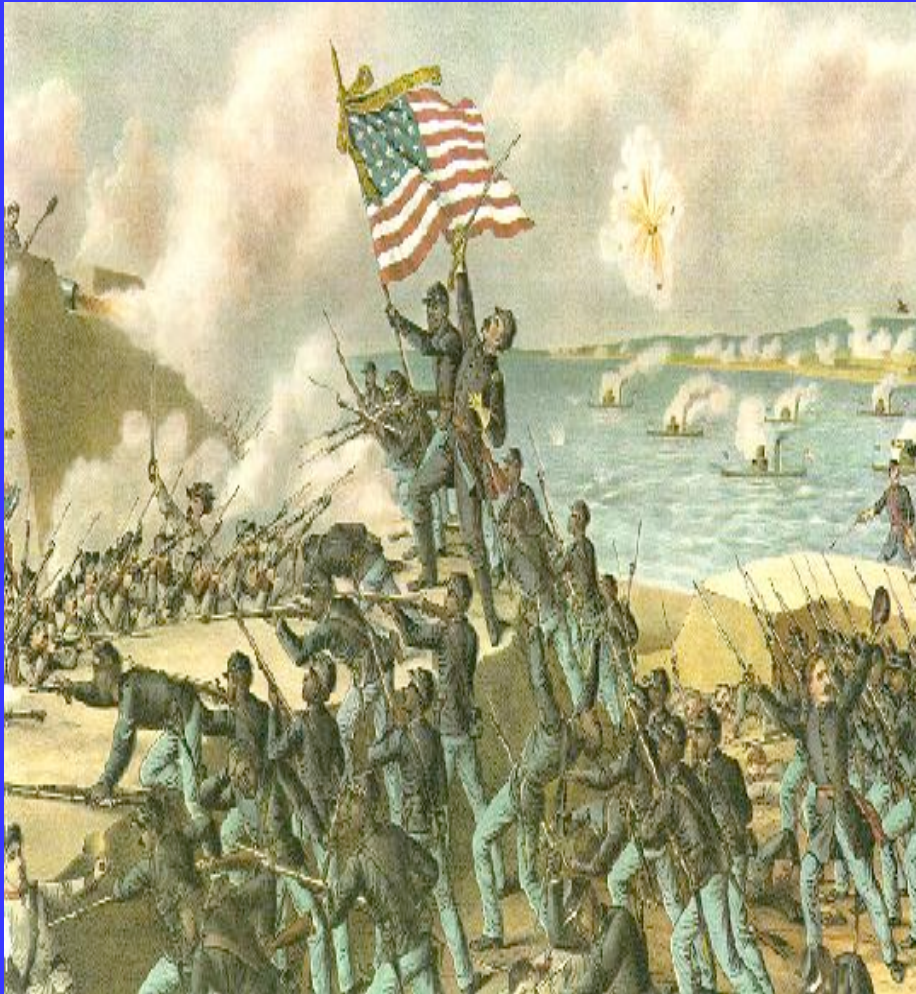
- Charleston Harbor
- 54th Part of Corps
- Corps Under the Supreme Command of General Gilmore
- Used to Protect Other Federal Troops Engaged in Battle
- 43 of the 46 Union Casualties Were 54th Soldiers

Battery (Fort) Wagner, July 18, 1863



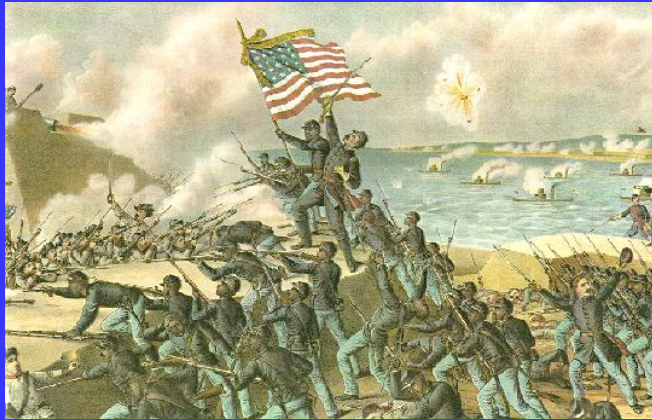
- Battery Wagner Protected Charleston
- 54th Under the Command of General Quincy Gilmore
- Used to Storm Fortress Under Fixed Bayonets
- The Maneuver Failed-Over 42% Casualties for the 54th
- Shaw Was Killed in the Attack Shouting, "Forward Fifty-Four!"

Battery Wagner, July 18, 1863



- Confederates Stripped Shaw of His Uniform
- He Was Thrown in the Burial Trench With His Dead Black Soldiers
- Father Chose That He Remain Buried with His Men Instead of Moving His Body to Boston

Federal Reports- Battery Wagner, July 18, 1863



“The men of the 54th behaved gallantly on the occasion--so the Generals say. It is not for us to blow our horn; but when a regiment of white men gave us three cheers as we were passing them, it shows that we did our duty as men should.” *Pvt.. James Henry Gooding Co, C, 54th. Mass.*

- “Our men are highly spoken of by military men as showing great bravery. They did fight when they were in front of the works [and a] good many of our men went on to the works and fought hand to hand with the Enemy.” *Lt. James W. Grace 4th. Mass.*

The Battle of Olustee (Ocean Pond)



- Fought at Olustee Station, Florida-February 20, 1864
- 54th Saved Union Troops from Complete Disaster
- Under the Direction of Major Edward Hallowell
- 87 Enlisted Casualties:
 - 13 Killed
 - 63 Wounded
 - 8 Missing
- 3 Officers Killed



Casualties of Battle of Olustee



“A regrettable episode in the aftermath of the battle was the apparent mistreatment of Union black soldiers by the Confederates. Contemporary sources, many from the Confederate side, indicate that a number of black soldiers were killed on the battlefield by roaming bands of southern troops following the close of the fighting”

Battle of Olustee Homepage

Private Robert J. Jones, 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry



- Private, Co. I
- Single, Age 20
- Reported Missing at Battle of Olustee
- Assumed Died as Prisoner

“Saved Colors”



“It was a deadly hailstorm of bullets, sweeping men down as hailstones sweep the leaves from the trees, and it was not long before [the second flag-bearer] also went down, shot through the leg. As he fell he held up the flags and shouted: ‘Boys, save the colors!’

Sergeant-Major Christian A. Fleetwood
September 29, 1864
Battle of Chaffin’s Farm

“Equal” Pay?



“I must tell you something about our living in the army. We have not had enough to eat for several weeks, being on three quarter rations, and for the last twelve or thirteen days, have been cut short of that, having no beans, peas, rice or molasses; in a word, nothing but salt beef and pork, tea and coffee half sweetened, and one loaf of bread per day or three-quarter rations of hard tack or bread. We would think it impossible to live on at home, but here we are obliged to; and, beside the short allowance of the government, it is said we are cut shorter by the quarter-master's department. From all appearances, our molasses has been out in the rain; our coffee has the essence extracted before it comes to camp, and then the sugar is very sparingly used. This may be a saving to the United States, but it is a grievous nuisance to us.”

Anonymous, FORT GREEN.

“It has been nearly a year since we have received any pay; but the white soldiers get their pay every two months; (\$13.00 per month,) but when it comes to the poor negro he gets none. The 54th left Boston on the 28th of May, 1863. In time of enlisting members for the regiment, they were promised the same pay, and the same rations as other soldiers. Since that time the government must have charged them more for clothing than any other regiment; for those who died in a month or two after their enlistment, it was actually said that they were in debt to the government. Those who bled and died on James' Island and Wagner, are the same. Why is it not so with other soldiers? Because our faces are black. We are put beneath the very lowest rioters of New York. We have never brought any disgrace by cowardice, on the State we left.”

E.D.W.Co. B, 54th Mass. Vol. Jacksonville, Fla., March 13th, 1864.

William H. Carney: 54th Massachusetts Soldier and First Black U.S. Medal of Honor Recipient



- Born a Slave February 29, 1840
- Norfolk Virginia
- Father Escaped, Then Bought Family's Freedom
- Considered Becoming a Minister Until Joining Army After Reading "The Liberator"
- Shot Three Times While Saving the Colors of the 54th at Battle of Fort Wagner

Congressional Medal of Honor Society

William H. Carney: 54th Massachusetts Soldier and First Black U.S. Medal of Honor Recipient



- Discharged on June 30, 1864
- Worked as a Postal Worker for 32 Years after Discharge
- Awarded Medal in 1900
- Killed in Elevator Accident in 1908

54th Massachusetts Memorial



- Sculpture by August Saint-Gaudens
- Originally Only Featured Shaw
- Took 14 years to Complete
- Shaw's Mother Insisted Black Soldiers Be Included
- Dedicated May 31, 1897
- Veterans of 54th and 55th Attended Ceremony
- Booker T. Washington Among Dedication Speakers

54th Massachusetts Memorial

Back View

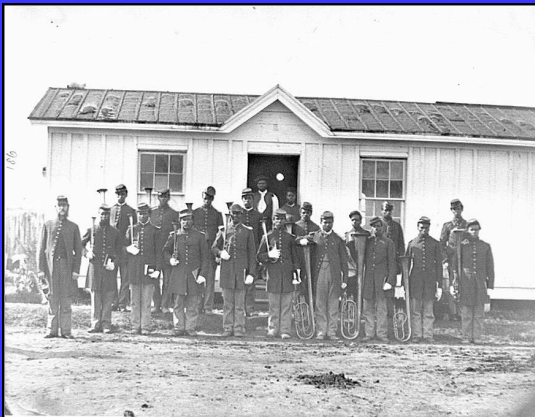


- Names Engraved on Back of Monument
- Names Are of Soldiers Killed in Action at Battery Wagner
- Names Were Added for 100th Anniversary Ceremony

54th Massachusetts Infantry



54th Massachusetts Infantry



54th Massachusetts Infantry



54th Massachusetts Infantry

TO COLORED MEN!
FREEDOM,
Protection, Pay, and a Call to Military Duty!

On the 1st day of January, 1867, the President of the United States proclaimed FERNON to cover THREE MILLIONS OF STAKES. This decree is to be enforced by all the power of the Nation. On the 21st of July last he issued the following order:

PROTECTION OF COLORED TROOPS.

¹ *General Order No. 200*.

*The following report of the President is published for the "honour" and government of all concerned:—
 RESPECTIVE WARDEN, Warrington, July 30.

¹² It is the duty of every government to give protection to the citizens, of whatever class, color, or condition, and especially to those who are duly registered as soldiers in the public service. The law of nations, and the usage and customs of war, as enacted on by a third power, permit no distinction to be made in the treatment of prisoners of war on public grounds. It will be evident that

¹ The Government of the United States will give the same protection to all its subjects, and if they remain shall sell or refuse any use because of his race, the officers shall be punished by retaliation upon the enemy's prisoners in our possession. It is forbidden

addressee, for every soldier of the United States, killed in violation of the laws of war, a whole soldier shall be recruited; and for every one captured by the enemy, or sold into slavery, a whole soldier shall be placed at least below on the public works, and continued at such labor until the effect shall be obtained and receive the treatment due to prisoners of war.

¹¹¹ By order of the Secretary of War.

That the President is in earnest the rebels soon began to find out, as witness the following order from his Secretary of War:

* *Re:* Your letter of the 22 last, calling the attention of this Department to the case of Orlis H. Brown, William H. Johnston.

and Vm. Wilson, these colored men captured in the gulches near Smith, he treated cruelly. This Department has learned that (they were) prisoners of South Carolina, & that he was not in our possession, and if not, these others, he confined in close custody and held as hostages for Drews, Coleman and Wilson, and that the fact be communicated to the colored authorities at Richmond.

¹⁰ "The Hon. Charles Wilson, Secretary of the Navy."

LETTER OF CHARLES SUMNER.

¹ Taken with reference to the discussion held at Washington, July 1938 and 1939, 1942, to present before EXHIBITION, BOSTON, July 1960, 1960.

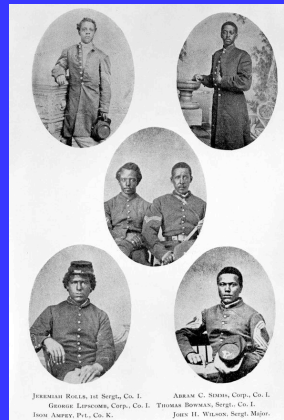
² I doubt it. In times past, our country could have exported from colored men any public service. Each service is the reason for provision. The law that parliament has begun, the service should begin also. The should reflect rights and duties be weighed with others. It is enough that our country, around as has to a sense of justice, seeks to read colored men among its defenders.

[illegible]

¹¹ 中國人與日本 中國人與日本



54th Massachusetts Infantry



C. 5444. *Stem.*
William H. Carney
Eng. & Arch. (1874)
(1875)
NOTATION.
Book kept. *R. 574-106*
20. 574. 64. 1066
Board and Division Office.
AND DEPARTMENT.
Working at *205/106*
Model of *Stem* on
underside of *2. 106* per
sect. *Stem* (1874)
gallies in *Stem* (1874)
Stem *Stem* (1874)
Caroline *Stem* (1874)





Soldiers of “Glory”

54th Massachusetts Colored Infantry

The U.S Colored Troops in the Civil
War

Helen Den Uyl, Tammie Burroughs, & Sherry Rogers