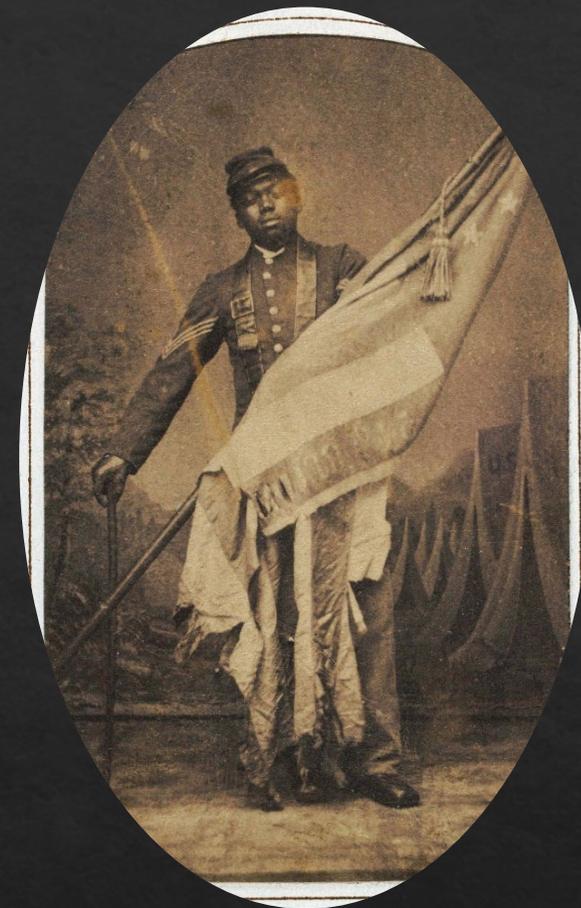


NARA BLACK HISTORY BASIC TRAINING

Feb 16 – Sgt. William H. Carney

[Sgt. William Harvey Carney](#) was the first African American to perform an action for which he was awarded the Medal of Honor. Born into slavery in Norfolk, VA in 1840, Carney and his family made their way to Massachusetts before the Civil War broke out. Carney enlisted with the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment in 1863. At the Battle of Fort Wagner, South Carolina (dramatized in the movie *Glory*) the Union Army forces came under heavy attack that would eventually end in defeat. In spite of the heavy assault and receiving a wound in his thigh, Sgt. Carney was commended for his action of keeping the American flag aloft throughout the course of the battle. His actions were pointed out as early as November, 1863, but Carney did not receive the Medal of Honor until May 23, 1900.



“Boys, the old flag never touched the ground”

Records:

- ✓ [Congressional Medal of Honor File - Sgt. William H. Carney](#), NAID 18573820
- ✓ [Letter from Gov John Andrew to Sec. of War Stanton describing Carney's actions](#), NAID 594893
- ✓ [Letter from William Carney on receiving his Medal of Honor](#), NAID 594895

Viewing:

- ✓ [Memorial to Robert Shaw & the Massachusetts 54th Regiment](#), National Gallery of Art
- ✓ [Thunder at the Gates: The Black Civil War Regiments that Redeemed America](#)

Reading:

- ✓ [The 54th Massachusetts](#), Pieces of History
- ✓ [54th Massachusetts Regiment](#), National Park Service
- ✓ [Thunder at the Gates: Black Civil War Regiments that Redeemed America](#) (Basic Books), 2016

Inspired by [GirlTrek](#)