

# Niagara County Medal of Honor Recipients

## What is the Medal of Honor?

The highest military decoration awarded by the United States is the Medal of Honor. It is often incorrectly referred to as the Congressional Medal of Honor because the President presents the award “in the name of the Congress”. It is given to a member of the United States armed forces who distinguishes themselves “. . . conspicuously by gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States. . . “. The deed must be proved by incontestable evidence of at least two eyewitnesses; it must be so outstanding that it clearly distinguishes the recipient’s gallantry from lesser forms of bravery; it must involve the risk of his life; and it must be the type of deed which, if it had not been done, would not subject him to any justified criticism.

Members of all branches of the US military are eligible to receive the medal, and each branch of the service has a unique design, although the Marine Corps as uses the Navy’s medal and the Coast Guard’s design has never been awarded. The latter is because the Coast Guard is subsumed into the US Navy in time of declared war. The Medal of Honor is only one of two American military awards worn around the neck; the other is the commander’s Degree of the Legion of Merit.

Most commonly the Medal of Honor is awarded through nomination by a service member in the chain of command, followed by approval at each level of command. The other method is nomination by a member of Congress and approval by a special act of Congress. The President of the United States often presents the Medal of Honor personally to the recipient or in the case of posthumous awards, to survivors. Because of its high stature; the medal has special protection under US law to keep it from being imitated or privately sold. Misuse of the medal is punishable by fine and imprisonment.

The first formal system for rewarding acts of individual gallantry by the nation’s soldiers was established by General George Washington. On

August 7, 1782. Designed to recognize “any singularly meritorious action.” The Badge of Military Merit, a purple cloth heart, was created. The Badge of Military Merit fell into disuse after the Revolutionary War, but the concept of a military award for individual gallantry by members of the US armed forces had been established. General Douglas MacArthur, in 1932, pressed for the revival of the Badge of Military Merit. Officially reinstated on February 22, 1932, the Purple Heart was first an Army award but was later amended to include personnel of the other branches of the service and “any civilian national” wounded while serving with the Armed Forces.

Early in the Civil Wars, On December 9, 1861 Iowa Senator James W. Grimes introduced S. No. 82 in the United States Senate, a bill designed to "promote the efficiency of the Navy" by authorizing the production and distribution of "medals of honor". On December 21st the bill was passed, authorizing 200 such medals be produced "which shall be bestowed upon such petty officers, seamen, landsmen and marines as shall distinguish themselves by their gallantry in action and other seamanlike qualities during the present war (Civil War)." President Lincoln signed the bill and the (Navy) Medal of Honor was born.

Two months later on February 17, 1862 Massachusetts Senator Henry Wilson introduced a similar bill, this one to authorize "the President to distribute medals to privates in the Army of the United States who shall distinguish themselves in battle." Over the following months wording changed slightly as the bill made its way through Congress. When President Abraham Lincoln signed S.J.R. No. 82 on July 12, 1862, the Army Medal of Honor was born. With this simple and rather obscure act Congress created a unique award that would achieve prominence in American history like few others. Although it was created for the Civil War, Congress made the Medal of Honor a permanent decoration in 1863.

Originally the Medal of Honor was awarded only to enlisted men. Army officers first received them in 1891 and naval officers in 1915. Many of the awards in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century were associated with saving the flag. This was not just for patriotic reasons, but because the flag was a primary means of battlefield communication. No other military award was authorized during the Civil War, which explains why some of the seemingly less notable actions that were recognized by the Medal of Honor. Criteria for the award were tightened after World War I.

Since the beginning of World War II, the medal has been awarded for extreme bravery beyond the call of duty while engaged in action against an enemy. Arising from these criteria, about 60% of the medals earned during and after World War II has been awarded posthumously. 19 men received a second award; 14 of these received two separate Medals for two separate actions, and five received both the Navy and Army Medals of Honor for the same action. Over 3,461 Medals of Honor have been awarded including 9 “Unknowns”. Only 111 awardees are still living today.

## Civil War

### Henry Bickford Cpl. Co. E. 8<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry

Henry H. Bickford was born on March 13, 1838 in Ypsilanti, Washtenaw County, Michigan the son of Phineas and Sarah A. (Hamlin) Bickford. His grandfather Samuel Bickford a Vermont native immigrated to Hartland, NY in 1815 having purchased 50 acres from the Holland Land Company. Henry was educated in the common schools in Niagara County and eventually purchased a 57 acre farm and a nursery in Hartland, NY.

When Henry was 22 and a resident of Johnsons Creek, he enlisted in the 8<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry on October 19, 1861 at Hartland. He mustered into Company E as a private a month later. The 8<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry, also known as the “Rochester Regiment,” was raised from counties in western New York. Ten companies were formed. The regiment departed for Washington via the Genesee Valley Road. The “union Blues”, consisting of a band and drum corps of young boys, dressed in Zouave uniforms, acted as escort for the troopers.

Private Bickford re-enlisted on December 12, 1863 and was promoted to Corporal and to Quartermaster on May 1, 1865. He participated in 35 out of 64 battles fought by the regiment and amazingly was never wounded. Action was seen by the 8th New York Cavalry at Winchester, Antietam, Upperville, Barbee’s Cross Roads, Beverly Ford, Gettysburg, Locust Grove, Hawe’s Shop, Wilson’s Raid, White Oak Swamp, Opequan, Cedar Creek, Fort Stedman and the Appomattox Campaign.

The Battle of Fort Stedman was fought on March 25, 1865 during the final days of the Civil War at Waynesboro, VA. The Union Army fortification in the siege lines around Petersburg, VA, was attacked in a pre-dawn confederate assault by troops led by Major General John B. Gordon. The attack was the last serious attempt by Southern troops to break the Siege of Petersburg and the final episode of the Richmond – Petersburg Campaign.

It was in this battle that Henry Bickford won the Congressional Medal of Honor. All that can be learned from the sketchy records is that Bickford recaptured a Union flag that had previously been taken by Confederate forces. During the Civil War and earlier a flag was used differently than today. During an advance, the flag always denoted the rallying point of a regiment. It was also the point of command, and always the most dangerous place on the battlefield. Any soldier who tried to capture a flag flirted with death and seldom came back alive.

Bickford would muster out at the completion of his enlistment on June 27, 1865 at Alexandria, VA. He was offered a commission at the close of the war but declined it, as he would have forfeited his bounty money. He was member of the Henry L. Smith GAR Post #178 of Middleport, NY. A pension of \$13 a month was granted to him; his pension was raised to \$15 on March 20, 1908. Rose E. Stewert married Henry on October 5, 1870. Bickford, a staunch Republican, was a four-time delegate to the State Republican Conventions in New York. He died on May 20, 1917 in Middleport, NY and is interred with his wife in Hartland Cemetery, Hartland, NY.

## Andrew Bringle

Cpl. Co. F. 10<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry

Andrew Bringle is a bit of a mystery. Not much is known about him. The *Niagara Falls Gazette* of October 2, 1861 records him as enlisting at Suspension Bridge, a section of the city of Niagara Falls, for duty in Company F, 19<sup>th</sup> New York Volunteer Cavalry Regiment in September, 1861. Andrew gave his post office address as Youngstown, Niagara County, NY but was born in Buffalo about 1843.

Early in 1862, Andrew Bringle was court-martialed for desertion and fined \$5.00. He deserted at least three times during his four year enlistment. On the evening of December 19, 1862 Bringle was on guard duty along with his company near Dumfries, VA when almost the entire company was captured by Confederates. In January 1863, he turned up at Camp Parole at Annapolis as an exchanged prisoner reporting for duty to his commanding officer.

July 1, 1863 at the beginning of the Gettysburg Campaign, Andrew and members of his company were scouting near Hanover, PA when he was captured again. Four months later he again turned up at a convalescent camp and in November he rejoined his regiment. Andrew re-enlisted for an additional three years or for the duration of the war on December 30, 1863. He was granted a 30 day furlough and paid a bounty for his re-enlistment. The re-enlistment bounty was \$300 to be paid \$50 upon presentation of a note from Andrew's lieutenant and the balance in amounts of \$50 at intervals of every three or four months.

Bringle was wounded in action during the Wilderness Campaign in May 1864 and hospitalized. He rejoined his outfit in July and on October 26<sup>th</sup> was promoted to corporal. Apparently he deserted from the Emory General U.S. Hospital in Washington on November 25<sup>th</sup> but returned to duty in January 1865.

The battle of Saylor's Creek also known as Sailor's Creek, Hillsman Farm or Lockett Farm, was fought on April 6, 1865, southwest of Petersburg VA. Many consider this action as the death knell of the confederate Army. Nearly one fourth of the retreating Confederate army was cut off by Union cavalry forces under Philip Sheridan. It was here that Andrew Bringle confronted Rebel artillery.

Official records state that Andrew Bringle was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor for gallantry in action. Bringle with Sergeant Llewellyn P. Norton succeeded in capturing a Confederate gun before it could be spiked by the artillery crew. Norton stood guard over the piece until dark when it could be withdrawn from the field. Bringle took the remains of the captured Confederate gun crew to the rear. Sergeant Norton was promoted to sergeant-major and brevetted first lieutenant. Both men were awarded the Medal of Honor.

Bringle was mustered out at Clouds Mills, VA on June 26, 1865. Not much else is known of him. There is some question if he actually received his Medal of Honor. As of 1875, Andrew Bringle was living in Lewiston in a frame house with 5 daughters and 2 sons.

## James Congdon

Co. E, 8<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry

James Madison aka James Congdon was born in Niagara, NY in 1842. At age 18 James enlisted in the 8<sup>th</sup> New York Cavalry on October 10, 1861 at Hartland, NY. He mustered into Company E as a Private four days later. Private Congdon was discharged for a disability on January 27, 1862 while in Washington, D.C. He reenlisted in the same regiment on May 1, 1862 and on August 17; he mustered back into Company E as a Private. Wounded in action at Culpeper, VA on August 1, 1863, he reenlisted on December 1<sup>st</sup>. During this time James was promoted first to Corporal and then to Sergeant. He was in the same company as Henry Bickford, another Civil War Medal of Honor winner. (See above)

General William Tecumseh Sherman left Winchester, VA on February 27, 1865 beginning his march to Petersburg with the intention of destroying the Central Railroad and the James River Canal. Confederate General Jubal Early with a large rebel force stood ready to oppose and frustrate Sheridan if possible. He went into position at Waynesboro, VA upon learning of the approach of the Union Army. The two armies clashed on March 2<sup>nd</sup>. The result was a Federal victory and the capture of the Confederate General Gabriel Colvin Wharton and some 1,800 officers and men, fourteen pieces of artillery, seventeen battle-flags and a train of nearly two hundred wagons and ambulances, including General Early's headquarters wagon, containing all his official papers and records, 1,500 stands of small arms and 800 team horses and mules.

Fourteen Medals of Honor were awarded at the Battle of Waynesboro, VA. Twelve of the fourteen awards were for the capture of Confederate Army flags, and two others were for the recovery of a captured Union standard. Sergeant James Madison/Congdon was one of the two men cited for recapturing a standard of the Union Army and recovering the headquarters flag of General Cook after it had previously fallen into rebel hands.

Congdon served under the name James Madison as per the US Government book on Medal of Honor winners. Why he assumed an alias is unknown. James Congdon died August 7, 1926 and is buried in the San Francisco National Cemetery.

## Dennis T. Kirby

Maj. 8<sup>th</sup> Missouri Infantry

Brevet Brigadier General Dennis T. Kirby was born in Niagara County on September 15, 1837, and moved with his parents to Buffalo, NY in 1847, and from thence to St. Louis, MO, in 1854. He entered the service as captain, Company E, 8<sup>th</sup> Missouri Volunteer Infantry, June 25, 1861 and was promoted to lieutenant-colonel on August 3, 1863.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Missouri Volunteer Infantry was formed in St. Louis, MO early in the summer of 1861. Most of its members were Irish who had worked on the Mississippi River docks prior to the war, which gave the regiment a distinct Celtic personality. It was an American Zouave unit, wearing a Zouave uniform.

The regiment saw extensive service during the first three years of the Civil War in the Trans-Mississippi Theater and Western theater. In the summer of 1861, they fought in Missouri against pro-Southern guerillas that were attacking US Army supply trains. They participated in the occupation of Paducah, KY, the Battle of Fort Donelson, Pittsburg Landing (Shiloh), Battle of Chickasaw Bayou, and Fort Hindman.

Dennis Kirby and ten other men of the regiment won the Medal of Honor during the May 22, 1863 assault on Stockade Redan during the Battle of Vicksburg. Grant originally wanted a quick end of the siege. In an attack set for May 22. Union forces bombarded Vicksburg, including naval gunfire from the river before the Union attacked along a three mile front. The Union troops broke through the Confederate lines a few times but were beaten back. The day saw over 3,000 Union casualties. It was at this time that the then Major Dennis Kirby earned the Medal of Honor. He seized the colors when the color bearer was killed and bore them himself in the assault.

The 8<sup>th</sup> Missouri Infantry would see additional action at the sieges of Atlanta and Savannah. Kirby was mustered out with the regiment on July 7, 1864. He was then commissioned colonel and aide-de-camp on the staff of Governor W. P. Hall, of Missouri, and colonel of the 5<sup>th</sup> Regiment St. Louis City Guard, October 1, 1864. Five days later he was made the lieutenant-colonel of the 27<sup>th</sup> Missouri Volunteer Infantry and at once was detailed as chief picket officer of the 17<sup>th</sup> Army Corps, on the staff of Major General Frank P. Blair, commanding. Kirby participated in Sherman's march to the sea, November 16 to December 13, 1864. He was present at the surrender of General Joseph Johnston, and in the grand review at Washington D. C. on May 24, 1865. Kirby was mustered out on June 13<sup>th</sup>.

A year later, on July 28, 1866, Kirby was appointed captain of Company E, 39<sup>th</sup> United States Infantry and brevetted major for gallant conduct as Chickasaw Bayou, lieutenant-colonel, US Army for gallant and meritorious conduct at Chickamauga Creek, GA, Mission Ridge, TN and Bivers Bridge, SC. He served in the regular army until the fall of 1868, when his services ended. Kirby then resided in Washington D. C. where he married Harriett Augusta, widow of Dr. Albert R. Whitney, on February 16, 1874. He died on April 18, 1922 and was buried in Section 1 of Arlington National cemetery. His private memorial has been destroyed by the weather and elements and there is very little left to mark his final resting place. His original gravestone has been replaced by a small upright white marker.

## Daniel McFall

Sgt. Co E, 17<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry

Daniel McFall was born in Niagara County, NY in 1836. He enlisted in Company E, 17<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry at Ypsilanti MI. The 17<sup>th</sup> Michigan Volunteer Infantry Regiment was mustered at the Detroit Barracks in August 1862 under the command of Colonel William H. Withington. The regiment consisted of raw recruits; one company was composed almost entirely of students from Ypsilanti Normal School, now Eastern Michigan University.

The Regiment participated in many engagements and it was during the Battle of Antietam, that the Regiment received the nickname "The Stonewall Regiment". At the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House Daniel McFall won the Medal of Honor. During the battle on May 12, 1864, McFall captured



Colonel Barker, the commanding the Confederate brigade that charged the Union Batteries. On the same day he rescued Lieutenant George W. Harmon, an officer of his regiment, from the enemy. For these two separate heroic actions he was awarded the Medal of Honor.

After Lee's surrender at Appomattox Court House, the Regiment proceeded to Washington, D.C. to participate in the Grand Review, remaining there until June 3, 1865, when it was mustered out of service and started for Detroit, arriving there on the 7th, to be paid off and disbanded.

Daniel McFall died on November 5, 1919 at the age of 83. He is buried in Rice Cemetery, Milan, Washtenaw County, MI.

## Alonzo Smith

Sgt. Co C, 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry

Alonzo Smith was born on August 9, 1842 in Niagara County, NY. At some point his family apparently moved to Jonesville, MI. At age 19, he enlisted in company C, 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry in August, 1861 for three years. The Regiment left Monroe, MI on Sept 5, 1861 to join the Army of the Potomac at Washington D.C.

The regiment saw action at the Battles of Bull's Bluff, Yorktown, Fair Oaks, Malvern Hill, Bull Run, and Antietam. Smith was wounded in action during this last battle on September 17, 1862. He was promoted to Corporal on January 15, 1863. The regiment again fought in the battle of Gettysburg on Cemetery Ridge near the center of the line and Corporal Smith was wounded a second time on July 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Smith along with many other members of the 7<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry Regiment reenlisted on December 16, 1863, at Stevensburg, VA. Enough soldiers reenlisted that the Regiment became a veteran unit and fought through the end of the Civil War including actions at Wilderness, Spotsylvania, Cold Harbor, Petersburg, Ream's Station, Hatcher's Run, Cat Tail Creek and the Siege of Petersburg. Smith was promoted to Sergeant on April 1, 1864, and then to Sergeant Major on November 2, 1864.

It was during the fighting at Hatcher's Run that Alonzo Smith won the Medal of Honor. The Battle of Hatcher's Run on October 27 – 28, 1864 is

also known as the Battle of Boydton Plank Road or Burgess' Mill and was part of the Richmond-Petersburg Campaign. Major General Winfield Scott Hancock withdrew his federal troops from the Petersburg lines and marched west to operate against the Boydton Plank Road and the South Side Railroad. The Union gained the Boydton Plank Road but in a counter attack led by Major General Henry Heth, the Rebels regained control of the road for the rest of the winter.

The 17<sup>th</sup> Michigan Infantry was in position on the edge of the woods, not yet taking part of the battle action. Smith saw movement and decided to investigate and discover the identity of the soldiers. About 200 yards away from his own regimental lines, he discovered that the movement was Confederate soldiers but they were moving too fast for him to return to his own lines. Alonzo therefore stood behind a large elm tree, loaded his gun and fixed bayonet. When the rebel soldiers came within twenty feet, Smith stepped out and demanded their surrender. He repeated his order assuring the Confederate officer that a division of Union troops were in the vicinity and called to his regiment for assistance. The members of the 26<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Infantry realized that they had strayed too close to Union lines, and surrendered.

Smith marched his prisoners out of the woods towards his regiment; on the way he relieved the color-bearer of the flag of the 26<sup>th</sup> North Carolina Infantry stating that "I think I'll be the color – bearer for a while." Smith was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions on December 1, 1864.

The Regiment was ordered to report on June 6<sup>th</sup>, 1865 to General Logan at Louisville, KY. Smith was promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant on June 12, 1865. On July 5, 1865 it was mustered out of service, returning to Jackson, MI, where it was paid off and disbanded. Alonzo Smith died on January 17, 1927 in Buffalo and is buried with his wife, Anna E. in St. Stephens Roman Catholic Cemetery, Middleport, NY.

## Leroy Williams

1st. Lt. Co.G & L, 8th New York Heavy Artillery:  
Co. G10<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry

Leroy Williams was born in Oswego, NY on August 8, 1845 and enlisted in the 8<sup>th</sup> New York Heavy Artillery on July 29, 1862 at Batavia, NY. The 8<sup>th</sup> New York Heavy Artillery was better known as Colonel Peter A. Porter's regiment. Porter was given the authority to recruit a regiment in the counties of Niagara, Genesee, and Orleans. Williams was mustered into Company G as a Private on August 14<sup>th</sup> and on October 30, 1862, he was promoted to Corporal, rapidly advancing from Sergeant on February 1, 1864, to 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant, October 4<sup>th</sup> and to 2<sup>nd</sup> Lieutenant on October 28, 1864. He was transferred on April 14, 1865 to Co. L and was promoted to 1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant. On June 5, 1865 Leroy was transferred again, this time to the 10<sup>th</sup> New York Infantry.

It was originally mustered as the 129<sup>th</sup> Infantry at Lockport on August 22, 1862, and it left immediately for Baltimore, MD and did garrison duty at Fort Federal Hill, Fort McHenry and Maryland Heights. In December, the regiment was changed to the 8<sup>th</sup> New York Heavy Artillery and the strength raised from 1,000 to 1,800 men. Its battle service was with the Army of the Potomac. The regiment participated in the battles of Spotsylvania Court House, North Anna River, Cold Harbor, both battles at Petersburg, Deep Bottom, Reams Station, Hatchers Run, Armstrongs Mill and was present at Appomattox.

The "Bloody Eighth" was the other nickname given the regiment because it stood second in the list of nearly 2,000 Federal regiments in the number of men lost in a single battle. Their total losses in killed, wounded and prisoners were 1,139 of which more than 1,000 including sixteen commissioned officers and their colonel, Peter A. Porter, occurred in 86 days, beginning on June 2, 1864. On June 3, 1864, their most notable feat, the charge at the Battle of Cold Harbor occurred. On this day alone, their losses were 475 men, including Porter and fifteen other commissioned officers.

General Meade commended the regiment for gallantry after the Battle of Spotsylvania Court House and General Egan did after Hatchers Run. This latter commendation was sent to the Governor of New York and elicited from him a letter expressing his gratification and thanks to the regiment. The regiment took part in the grand review in Washington D.C. on May 22-23, 1865. Half the regiment was mustered out at Munson's Hill, VA. on

June 5, 1865 and the balance were transferred to the 10<sup>th</sup> Infantry and the 4th Artillery and served a few months longer, including Lieutenant Leroy Williams

At the battle of Cold Harbor, (May 31-June 12, 1864) Colonel, Peter A. Porter, was killed while leading his regiment against the enemy's works; General Tyler had asked Colonel Porter, then acting Brigadier General to take command and charge the enemy. They succeeded and were able to capture the first line of the Confederate rifle pits. In defense of these, Porter was shot; he fell but soon rose and walked a few feet, and again was shot, this time fatally and his body remained where he fell, until recovered by a party of five men who volunteered for that purpose; Lieutenant. (then Sergeant) Leroy Williams, of Batavia, N.Y.; and privates Glen S. Hicks, of Lima, N.Y.; John Morris Duff, of Albion, N.Y.; Samuel Traviss, of Lockport, N.Y.; and Walter Harwood, of Baltimore. They each received from the Century Club of New York City, a medal of solid gold, about two inches in diameter. The one presented to Mr. Duff bore the following inscription:

A Tribute  
of 'THE CENTURY' to  
PRIVATE JOHN DUFF,  
For a rare act of heroic devotion  
in rescuing the body of  
COLONEL PETER A. PORTER,  
8th New York Cavalry,  
From under the guns of the enemy,  
Cold Harbor, June 3, 1864.

The reverse represents soldiers in the act of hearing the body of a fallen comrade from the field of battle. Each medal was accompanied by the following letter: General Hancock, who was selected to present the medals, said:

It is a source of infinite gratification to me that I have been selected by 'The Century' to present you each with a golden medal, commemorative of the heroism displayed by you in rescuing from the

sanguinary battle-field of Cold Harbor the body of your gallant and distinguished commander, Col. P. A. Porter, of the 8th New York Heavy Artillery, who had been killed while intrepidly leading his regiment to the charge against the enemy's works. This noble action was voluntarily performed by you under the close and deadly fire of the enemy, at the utmost peril of your lives.

. . . I know full well the dangers attending the valorous deed, in the performance of which you exhibited the noblest qualities of the soldier.

Lieutenant Williams was the oldest surviving commissioned officer of the regiment when it held its reunion in 1929. At that time he remembered the death of Colonel Porter and his actions which earned him the Medal of Honor.

Colonel Porter was within 75 feet of the enemy lines when he was killed. It was sad to see him go down for the whole regiment loved him. After we had returned to our lines I took a spy glass and crept out to see if I could locate his body. After a while I saw what I thought was the colonel's body.

I went back to the lines and reported and asked permission to lead a rescue party that night. We had to take a rope . . . for the colonel was a heavy man. He must have gone over 200 pounds, and he was within 75 feet of the Rebs. We couldn't stand up and lift him because we would have been seen. I had the other boys bring along a stretcher and when we were within a hundred or so yards of the Confederate lines, I told them to wait. I tucked the rope under my arm and started to wiggle along on my belly. I reached the colonel and fastened the rope about him. Then I dragged him back. It was kind of slow work, but . . . the boys they loved the colonel and we wanted him to be buried with the flag.

Finally I reached the boys. We lifted the colonel upon the stretcher and then we carried him back to the Union lines. We summoned the chaplain. He read the service. It really wasn't very much. I wish you wouldn't say much about me. . . . I wish the fact that 519 of our men were killed should be made most of.

--*The New York Times*, May 29, 1929

The Battle of Cold Harbor was the final battle of General Ulysses S. Grant's 1864 Overland Campaign and is considered to be one of America's bloodiest and most lopsided battles. Thousands of Union soldiers were slaughtered in a hopeless frontal assault against the fortified troops of Confederate General Robert E. Lee. Troops faced each other for nine days of trench warfare, sometimes only yards apart. After the June 3<sup>rd</sup> assault that resulted in so many Union dead, there were no more large scale attacks, although sharpshooters targeted anyone unfortunate enough to raise their heads above the trenches.

Most scholars agree that the June 3<sup>rd</sup> assault alone resulted in 7,000 Union dead as opposed to 1,500 Confederate fatalities. General Grant would always rue the decision. The Northern press at the time gave him the epithet "the bumbling butcher". Horrific as the losses were, Grant's larger army finished the campaign with relatively lower casualties than Lee. Foolish as the attack was at Cold Harbor, it still left Lee trapped. He barely beat Grant to Petersburg but spent the remainder of the war defending Richmond behind a fortified trench line.

Leroy Williams was awarded the Medal of Honor in 1898 at age 53 for leading the detachment in the retrieval of Peter A. Porter's body. He died on February 14, 1930 in Cleveland, OH where he resided, aged 85. He is buried with his wife Kate Steward Williams in Oakwood Cemetery, Niagara Falls, NY; the same cemetery that his beloved colonel was interred.

# Indian Wars

## Frederick Toy 1<sup>st</sup> Sgt. Co. Gr, 7<sup>th</sup> US. Cavalry

Very little seems to be known about Frederick E. Toy. He was born in Buffalo, NY in 1866 and enlisted in the US Army from Chicago, IL. As 1<sup>st</sup> Sergeant of Company C, 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry he received the Medal of Honor along with 23 other soldiers for bravery at the Battle of Wounded Knee, December 29, 1890. Toy later served in the Spanish American war and retired as Ordnance Sergeant in 1910 after serving 21 years in the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry.

At the age of 52, Toy volunteered for service as Captain in the Quartermaster Department. He was in charge of loading and unloading troops and food supplies at the port of Brest, France. Later he joined the New York Central Railroad Police force and at the time of his death headed the local Railroad police in Buffalo. Frederick Toy is buried in Lewiston, NY.

The story of the US 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry Regiment is more than its famous leader General Custer and the Battle of the Little Big Horn. It was organized on September 21, 1866 at Fort Riley, KS as part of an expansion of the Regular Army following the demobilization of the wartime volunteer and draft forces. The 7<sup>th</sup> fought in the Indian Wars, notably at the Battle of the Washita in 1868. It was composed of three battalions. Throughout this period, the cavalryman was armed with Colt Single Action Army .45 caliber revolvers and single shot Springfield carbines. After 1896 a carbine version of the .30-40 Krag-Jorgensen Rifle, the M1896 was issued. A variant of the McClellan saddle was ridden. Sabers were issued but not carried on campaign.

From 1895 until 1899 the Regiment served at Fort Bayard, NM and Fort Sill, OK, then overseas in Cuba until 1902. The author Edgar Rice Burroughs, was an enlisted trooper with the 7<sup>th</sup> Cavalry from 1895-1897 at Fort Grant Arizona Territory. The Regiment continued to train as a horse cavalry regiment right up to World War II. It was finally dismounted on February 28, 1943 before deployment to the Pacific Theater.

# World War I

## Willis Winter Bradley Jr.

Commander, US Navy

Willis Winter Bradley, Jr. was born in Ransomville, NY, on June 28, 1884, the son of Willis Winter and Sarah Anne (Johnson) Bradley. He moved with his parents to Forman ND in 1891. Bradley attended Hamlin University, St. Paul, MN. He was deputy registrant of deeds for Sargent Count, ND from 1902 to 1903, when he received his appointment to the United States Naval Academy from North Dakota. Willis graduated on September 12, 1906 and as then required by law, served two years at sea on the *USS Virginia* and was commissioned Ensign in the US Navy on September 3, 1908.

For the next ten years Bradley served on a succession of ships. From September 1913 to May 1915 he was a student in Ordinance, first of the Naval Postgraduate School, Annapolis, and later at George Washington University, Washington D.C. He graduated with a Masters of Science in Chemistry and Explosives degree. Further training was received at the Naval Proving Ground, Indianhead, MD, Bausch and Lomb Optical Company, Rochester, NY and Midvale Steel Company, Philadelphia, PA.

Bradley was again ordered to sea and commanded the *USS Stewart* from July – December, 1915 and then was Commanding Officer of the *USS Hull*, with additional duty as commander Reserve Torpedo Division, Pacific Fleet. While in command of the *USS Hull* he also commanded all the naval forces in the flooded areas during the Otay-Tijuana, CA flood. In January of 1916, a series of rainstorms had flooded the Otay valley outside of San Diego CA. destroying dams, overflowing rivers, closing highways, washing out bridges and destroying railroad lines, killing over 36 people.

From September 1916 until February 1917, he served on board the *USS San Diego* and was then transferred to the *USS Pittsburgh*, serving as Gunnery Officer. The *USS Pittsburgh*, ACR-4, had originally been commissioned the *USS Pennsylvania* but was renamed the *Pittsburgh* to free the name *Pennsylvania* for a new battleship. She was a United States Navy armored cruiser, the lead ship of her class. One of the distinctions of this ship is that on January 18, 1911, a plane flown by Eugene Ely landed on a platform constructed on her afterdeck, opening the era of naval aviation. The



*Pittsburgh* a symbol of American might and concern in South American waters, served as flagship for Admiral William B. Caperton, Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet, during South American patrols and visits during World War I. Cooperating with the British, *USS Pittsburgh* scouted German raiders and acted as a powerful deterrent against their penetration of the eastern Pacific.

The *Pittsburgh* departed Hampton Roads VA, on May 16, 1917 along with the *USS Nebraska* for Montevideo, Uruguay with the body of the late Carlos M. DePena, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary from Uruguay, with full honors. The ships arrived in Montevideo on June 19<sup>th</sup>. The Commander in Chief, US Pacific Fleet, came on board for the ceremonies and the body of the Uruguayan Minister to the United States was transferred with full honors. The *Nebraska* and the *Pittsburgh* departed for home five days later.

After returning from Montevideo, the *Pittsburgh* proceeded to the South Atlantic for patrol duty operating from Brazilian ports. On July 23, 1917 while steaming toward Buenos Aires, Argentina, as saluting cartridge cases were being reloaded in the after casemate, an accident occurred. One of the 3 inch charges exploded and caught some deck materials on fire. The fire threatened to ignite the powder supply and could have caused a devastating and possibly fatal explosion to the men as well as to the ship.

The then Lieutenant Bradley, who was about to enter the casemate was blown back by the explosion and rendered momentarily unconscious. While still dazed, Bradley crawled into the casemate through the blinding smoke, rescued a man, and then reentered the casemate to extinguish burning materials near a large powder supply, thus preventing further explosions and saving the ship. At the same time Seaman Ora "Pappy" Graves was blown to the deck, recovered only to find burning waste on the deck, which he then extinguished. Several men were killed and injured as a result of the explosion. As a result of the cool and heroic actions of Bradley and Graves who put out the fire, the men were awarded the Medal of Honor.

During the last years of the war Bradley served as Chief of Explosives, Fuses and Primer Section, in the Bureau of Ordnance, Navy Department, Washington D.C. In August 1919, he became the Naval Inspector at the Naval Torpedo Station, Keyport, WA. In June 1920 Bradley served as a Gunnery Officer of the *USS Texas* and in May 1921 assisted in the fitting

out of the USS California. He joined the battleship as Gunnery Officer upon her commissioning, and served as such until May 1922.

Willis Winter Bradley was Governor of Guam from 1929 to 1931, captain of the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard, 1933-1935. In 1940, Bradley was attached to the Board of Inspection and Survey, Pacific Coast Section. Retiring from the United States Navy due to physical incapacity incurred in the line of duty in 1946, he took up residence in Long Beach, CA. From 1947-1949, he served as a Republican to the Eightieth Congress but was unsuccessful in his bid for reelection in 1948. For the next four years he was assistant to the president of the Pacific Coast Steamship Company and then in 1952 became a member of the State assembly. He held this post until his death on August 27, 1954 in Santa Barbara, CA. Bradley is buried in Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, San Diego, CA.

In addition to the Medal of Honor, Bradley won the Cuban Pacification Medal, the Mexican Service Medal, the World War I Victory Medal, Patrol Clasp, the American Defense Service Medal, American Campaign Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal. He was also awarded the Messina Earthquake Medal by the Italian Red Cross, as well as the Silver Medal by Pope Pius XI.

## Frank Joseph Gaffney

Pvt.108<sup>th</sup> US Infantry, 27<sup>th</sup> Division

A Lockport native, Frank Joseph Gaffney, called "Toad" by his friends, lived in Niagara Street and was employed by Harrison Radiator Company. He enlisted in the U. S. Army at age 31 at Niagara Falls, NY. The 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry Brigade was called into federal service on July 15, 1917 and by late August was at Camp Wadsworth, near Spartanburg, SC for intensive training. In a letter dated Dec 30 – 1917 Frank describes South Carolina as:

...talk about a warm climate don't you believe it.  
It was just as cold and wintry yesterday as it ever  
was up there [in Lockport] and its cold today we  
had snow about 2 weeks ago and it was hell then  
the only time its warm here is in the summer time

and then its hot in the day time and cold nights. I say this is a hell of a place for a camp.

In spring 1918 the troop embarked for France, by July 25<sup>th</sup> the 27<sup>th</sup> Infantry participated in the occupation of the Dickenbush Lake and Sherpenberg area of Flanders. The great Somme “push” from September 24<sup>th</sup> to October 1, saw them fighting along the St. Quentin canal Tunnel, one of the out-lying strong points of the supposedly impregnable Hindenburg line.

Private Gaffney was an automatic rifleman. On September 29<sup>th</sup> near Ronssoy, France Gaffney pushed forward alone after the other members of his squad had been killed and discovered some Germans setting up a heavy machine gun position. Placing his gun on the parapet he opened fire. Gaffney killed the crew, captured the gun, bombed several dugouts in the trenches and killed four of the enemy with his pistol. He then held the position until reinforcements came up and helped with the 80 prisoners Gaffney had captured.

On October 25<sup>th</sup> in a letter to his sister Mae, Private Gaffney wrote:

Well we seen some fighting allright we started over the top the 29<sup>th</sup> Sept and kept at it for 3 days and went at it again we did good work allright but lost heavy well your brother was some figure too and take it from me I guess the germans wished I stayed home nothing got past me alive neither did I pass any live ones. Well I got recommended for decorations and in this last act I begin to think I was death proof and I even made a speech to the fellows on the field. You see we went over 4 mornings straight and some of the lads was getting leery. Why I says we're to lucky the shells were landing kind of close. I jumped up and says why to hell with them and don't worry until your hit, you'll never hear the one that hits you coming well I no more than got the words out of my mouth than Bang! I was hit and sure enough I didn't hear that one coming. Well if you ever saw a stuck pig bleed that's the way I bleed but they stopped the blood and got me on a stretcher I certainly thought

I was a dead dog but they patched me up and sent me here to England. ... [Punctuation and spelling Gaffney's]

These wounds resulted in the amputation of his left arm. General John J. Pershing conferred the knighthood of gallantry on Gaffney, whose deeds Pershing considered surpassed only by those of Private York. In addition to the Congressional Medal of Honor, Frank Gaffney was awarded the Purple Heart the medal which the City of Lockport had struck of him, the Victory Medal, the Medaille Militaire and the Croix de Guerre of France, the Distinguished Conduct Medal of England, the Cruz de Guerra of Portugal, the Montenegro Medal of Honor, and the Italian Cross of Military Valor.

When Frank returned home he married Miss Marie Georgen of Buffalo in May 1920. They lived in Niagara Falls where he was employed by a International Paper Company as a chemist. On May 25, 1948, he fell from the second floor porch of his home on Buffalo Avenue. Death was caused by a fractured skull suffered when he struck a parked automobile. He was 62 years old. Frank J. Gaffney was buried in the United German – French Roman Catholic Cemetery in Buffalo, NY.

## **World War II**

### **Bernard Pious Bell**

Technical Sergeant, US Army, Co I, 142<sup>d</sup> Inf., 36<sup>th</sup> Inf. Division

Bernard Pious Bell was born in Grantsville, WV on December 29, 1911. He moved to Niagara Falls in 1937. When his Selective Service number came up in 1942, Bell entered the service at New York, NY on August 15<sup>th</sup> and was assigned to the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division.

The 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division was originally activated as a National Guard Division from Texas and Oklahoma in July 1917. The unit was sent to Europe the following year and conducted major operations in the Meuse – Argonne offensive. The T–Patch insignia for the 326<sup>th</sup> Division was first used at this time. The insignia design that was adopted was a blue flint arrow head pointing down to symbolize Oklahoma, once Indian Territory

and a large olive drab block "T" for Texas. The Division was inactivated in June 1919.

On November 25, 1940, the Texas National Guard was inducted into federal service at San Antonio, TX as the 36<sup>th</sup> Division and moved to Camp Bowie, TX. Two years later the unit was moved to Camp Blanding, Fl and nine months later in August, 1942, and over 40 train loads later, it was moved to Camp Edwards, MA.

The Division was deployed on April 2, 1943 for training in North Africa at Arzew and Rabat, Morocco. This included amphibious training in preparation for the invasion of Italy. The 36<sup>th</sup> Division became the first Americans to set foot in Europe during World War II when they landed at Paestum on the Gulf of Salerno. In November they captured Mount Maggiore and later assisted in the attack on Cassino and fought along the Rapido River. May 25, 1944, saw the 36<sup>th</sup> landing at Anzio and entered Rome on June 5<sup>th</sup>. Two months later they were in Rome.

At the end of August a lightning dash by the 36<sup>th</sup> Division, opened the Rhone River Valley in Southern France in Operation Anvil. They continued to the Moselle River at Remiremont and the foothills of the Vosges. In a grinding offensive, the Division crossed the Meurthe River, breached the Ste. Marie Pass and burst into the Alsatian Plains. The Germans counterattacked on December 13, 1944.

Bernard Bell had landed with his division and fought through the North African campaign, the Salerno landings and the Italian drive. He was captured by the Germans in the Rhone Valley but escaped by throwing himself from a train. The French underground conducted him back to his company. At Mittelwihr, France on the morning of December 18<sup>th</sup>, Bell led a squad against a schoolhouse held by enemy troops. While his men covered him, Bell dashed toward the building, surprised two guards at the door and took them prisoner without firing a shot. He found that other Germans were in the cellar. These he threatened with hand grenades, forcing 26 in all to emerge and surrender. His squad then occupied the building and prepared to defend it against powerful enemy action.

The next day, the Germans poured artillery and mortar barrages into the schoolhouse, disrupting communications which Bell repeatedly repaired under heavy small-arms fire as he crossed dangerous terrain to keep his

company commander informed of the squad's situation. Several prisoners were taken during the day while others were killed when the Germans were attracted to the schoolhouse by the sound of captured German weapons fired by the Americans. At dawn the following day the enemy prepared to assault the building. A German tank fired rounds into the structure, partially demolishing the upper stories. Despite this heavy fire, Technical Sergeant Bell climbed to the second floor and directed artillery fire which forced the enemy tank to withdraw. He then adjusted mortar fire on large forces of German foot soldiers who were attempting to reach the American position. When this force broke and attempted to retreat, Bell directed deadly machinegun and rifle fire into their disorganized ranks.

When calling of armored support to blast out the German troops hidden behind a wall, Bell unhesitatingly exposed himself to heavy small-arms fire to stand beside an American tank and tell its occupants where to rip holes in wall protecting approaches to the school building. He then trained machineguns on the gaps and mowed down the German troops attempting to cross the openings to get closer to the school building. By his intrepidity and bold, aggressive leadership, Technical Sergeant Bernard Bell enabled his 8-man squad to drive back approximately 150 enemy soldiers, killing at least 87 and capturing 42. Personally, he killed more than 20 and captured 33 prisoners.

The 36<sup>th</sup> Division began its assault on the Siegfried Line on March 20, 1945 and entered Germany three days later. At this time the 36<sup>th</sup> captured it's most famous prisoners; Reichmarshal Hermann Goering, SS General Sepp Dietrich, Reichsminister Dr. Hans Frank, Leni Reifensahl- and others. The Division was shocked by what they found when they liberated the concentration camps in Dachau. The end of the war found the 36<sup>th</sup> at Kufstein, Austria and the unit arrived back in the states at Hampton Roads, VA on December 15, 1945 and was inactivated at Camp Patrick Henry, VA, thus bringing to end the involvement of the 36<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division in World War II.

Bernard Bell received the Medal of Honor on August 30, 1945 from President Harry S. Truman having been mustered out of the US Army on May 19, of that year. From 1953 until his retirement in 1967, Bell served in the Veteran Administration regional offices in Buffalos, West Palm Beach, FL and Albuquerque, NM. He was a member of the Legion of Valor, open only to recipients of the Medal of Honor or the Distinguished Service Cross.

Bernard P. Bell died on January 8, 1971 in Deland, FL after choking on a potato chip during a meal. He was pronounced dead upon arrival at Fish Memorial Hospital in Deland. He is buried in Arlington National Cemetery. Bell had just finished writing a book on his war experiences at the time of his death.

## William F. Leonard

Private 1<sup>st</sup> Class, Co. C, 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 3<sup>rd</sup> Infantry Division

William Leonard is the most recent Niagara County citizen to be awarded the Medal of Honor. A 2002 Congressional review looked at soldiers who had received the Distinguished Service Cross [DSC], the military's second highest honor, but not the Medal of Honor due to discrimination. In the reevaluation of 6,505 DSC recipients from World War II, Korean and Viet Nam wars, 600 soldiers were found to meet the criteria for a Medal of Honor, including several who were not a minority. William F. Leonard was one of these service members, and so, on March 18, 2014, his daughters posthumously received their fathers Medal of Honor from President Barack Obama in a White House ceremony.

According to his World War II Draft Card, Leonard was 5 ft. 8 inches tall, weighed 193 pounds, had brown hair and eyes with a "ruddy" complexion. The Lockport native, enlisted in the Army on December 16, 1943. He trained at Camp Upton, NY, Camp Blanding, FL, and Fort Meade, MD. Assigned to Company C, 30<sup>th</sup> Infantry, 3<sup>rd</sup> Division, Leonard left for Europe in June 1944.

The 3<sup>rd</sup> Division known as "the Rock of the Marne"[from World War One service] had just broken out of Italy's Anzio beachhead and was advancing toward Rome. After reaching Rome, the division went rested, integrating new replacements and training for the invasion of Southern France. During this time, Leonard was promoted from private first class to Sergeant. On August 15, 1944, another D-day, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Division landed at St. Tropez, to attack elements of the German army from the south. The Division advanced up the Rhone Valley, through the Vosges Mountains before smashing through German defenses and crossing the Rhine River on March 26, 1945. The Vosges Mountains have historically proved to be a formidable obstacle to invading armies. Altitudes from 1200 to over 1600 feet, steeply wooded ridges, and the approach of winter limited American Army aerial support and the mountainous terrain, twisting paths, and mud hampered the armored units. Infantry carried the major brunt of the campaign. Often they did

without adequate shelter and food, enduring exhaustion and trench foot. William Leonard was one of these intrepid infantry soldiers. As described in William Leonard's Medal of Honor citation, "Private First Class William F. Leonard distinguished himself by acts of gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a Squad Leader in Company C, 30th Infantry Regiment, 3d Infantry Division during combat operations against an armed enemy near St. Die, France on November 7, 1944. Private First Class Leonard's platoon was reduced to eight men as a result of blistering artillery, mortar, machinegun, and rifle fire. Private First Class Leonard led the survivors in an assault over a hill covered by trees and shrubs which the enemy continuously swept with automatic weapons fire. Ignoring bullets which pierced his pack, Private First Class Leonard killed two snipers at ranges of fifty and seventy-five yards and engaged and destroyed a machinegun nest with grenades, killing its two-man crew. Though momentarily stunned by an exploding bazooka shell, Private First Class Leonard relentlessly advanced, ultimately knocking out a second machinegun nest and capturing the roadblock objective. Private First Class Leonard's extraordinary heroism and selflessness above and beyond the call of duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of military service Leonard received the Medal of Honor, March 18, 2014; the Bronze Star Medal, the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with one Bronze Service Star, the World War II Victory Medal, the Combat Infantryman Badge and the Honorable Service Lapel Button-World War II. and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit and the United States Army." Promoted to Staff Sergeant and Leonard eventually returned to Lockport. He worked in the automotive industry, as a butcher, and finally retired from a Harrison Radiator company. He passed away five days before his 72nd birthday as he sat in the backyard listening to a New York Yankees game on the radio.

## **Vietnam**



## John Paul Bobo

2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. Co. 3<sup>rd</sup> Battalion, 9<sup>th</sup> Marines USMC KIA Vietnam

John Paul Bobo was born on February 14, 1943 at Niagara Falls, New York; a premature baby who spent the first month of his life in the hospital. He was the oldest of five children. John Bobo attended St. Mary's grade school and Bishop Duffy High School, where he graduated in 1961. At Duffy, he was a member of the track team and played JV basketball.

Five feet eleven inches tall and weighing 185 pounds, Bobo was exceptionally strong, but not by accident. He was turned down for football in his sophomore year at Bishop Duffy High School. For Christmas 1959, his parents gave him a set of 250 pound weights which he lifted religiously everyday.

He majored in history at Niagara University where he received a BA degree in 1965. At NU, Bobo was a member of the varsity track team, an intramural wrestling champion and played intramural football and basketball teams. John was also a member of the Hennepin Club and assisted in NU orientation programs.

Instead of entering graduate school, Bobo enlisted in the Marine Corps Reserve at Buffalo in May, 1965. He was still concerned about being in good enough shape to qualify and so frequented the YMCA for extra practice. John trained at Quantico, VA and assigned as Platoon Commander, Company I, Third Battalion, Ninth Marines, Third Division to Vietnam.

On March 30, 1967, after a two-day march, his company was establishing night ambush sites when it was attacked by a reinforced North Vietnamese company, supported by heavy automatic weapons and mortar fire. The Marines had walked into a trap. The North Vietnamese were dug in deeply enough on the top of the hill to withstand American shelling. They had trained their machine guns down the path the Americans were climbing, and they'd zeroed their mortars in on a line of old foxholes on both sides of the path, knowing that was where the marines would jump when the machine guns opened up. That is just what happened.

Bobo and his group retreated to the next hilltop a hundred yards away and fought all night against North Vietnamese climbing toward them. The Marines used hand grenades and bayonets because their rifle fire would have given their positions away, and they had to kill some of their North Vietnamese prisoners whose shouts were guiding the attackers.

The group held out thanks to helicopter crews who flew straight into machine gun fire to drop ammunition and medical supplies. Thanks to American bombing and shelling, the North Vietnamese were driven away after two days.

On this hill in Quang Tri Province, Vietnam, Lt. John Paul Bobo immediately organized a hasty defense. He moved from position to position encouraging his platoon of 58 Marines despite the murderous enemy fire. When an exploding enemy mortar round severed his right leg below the knee, he refused to be evacuated and insisted upon being placed in a firing position. With a web belt around his leg as a tourniquet, and his leg jammed into the earth to slow down the bleeding he retained an upright position from which he could direct his men. He delivered divesting fire and was mortally wounded while firing his weapon. Bobo's valiant spirit inspired his men and his tenacious stand enabled the command group to gain a protective position where it repulsed the enemy onslaught. At least 15 Marines survived because of the sacrifices of John Bobo.

Lieutenant John Paul Bobo is buried in Gate of Heaven Cemetery, Lewiston, NY. He received posthumously the 43<sup>rd</sup> Medal of Honor of the Vietnam War on August 27, 1968 as well as the Purple Heart, the Vietnam Service Medal with one bronze star, the National Defense Service Medal, the National Order of Vietnam 5<sup>th</sup> Class with Gallantry Cross with Palm, and the Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

In 1986, the American Legion Post 624, Tonawanda, placed a plaque on a Medal of Honor monument in Prospect Park in Niagara Falls, a few yards from the Civil War Monument in the nation's oldest state park. A street in the Marine base at Yuma, AZ is named "Bobo Drive." NU honored him by naming their baseball field for him in 1990 as is the Officers Mess at Quantico Marine Base in Virginia. John's Medal of Honor story is used to teach leadership to every Marine Officer Candidate.

On February 14, 1985, a U.S. Navy supply ship named the Lt. John R. Bobo was commissioned at Quincy, MA. The five ships of the TAK-3008 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. John P. Bobo Maritime Prepositioning Ship [MPS] class carry a full range of Marine Corps cargo, enough cargo to support a Marine Air Ground Task Force for 30 days (17,000 personnel). These ships contain nearly everything the Marines need for initial military operations; from tanks and ammunition to food and fuel to spare parts and engine oil. They are certified to land up to CH-53E level helicopters. The deck gear on the Bobo includes five deck cranes, thus allowing the ship to unload its own cargo in remote locations where the ship might be called on to deliver men and materials. Four of these ships are prepositioned in Guam and Saipan, while TAK-3008 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt. John R. Bobo is based in Europe.