

The original Fighters for Freedom



Frederick Douglass was the leading spokesman during slavery and Reconstruction. Born a slave, he escaped to the north where he joined the abolition movement, speaking in the United States and in England. He was a strong advocate of equality for Blacks in the political, economic, social, and educational areas. Throughout his long life he never ceased writing and speaking on behalf of equal rights for all citizens.



Booker T. Washington is remembered by many as a shrewd, calculating judge of people. He had the soft speech and the accommodating manner that made him equally at home among sharecroppers and at the President's table.

Washington first gained wide attention by a speech at the Atlanta Exposition in

1895. On that occasion Washington urged members of his race to "cast down their buckets" among the friendly white Southern people and to share the common purpose of raising the South's economic level. He offered the white South a peaceful reservoir of Black labor for the burgeoning southern industries.



Boston Common: Crispus Attucks, a runaway slave, in 1770 became the first to die in American Revolution

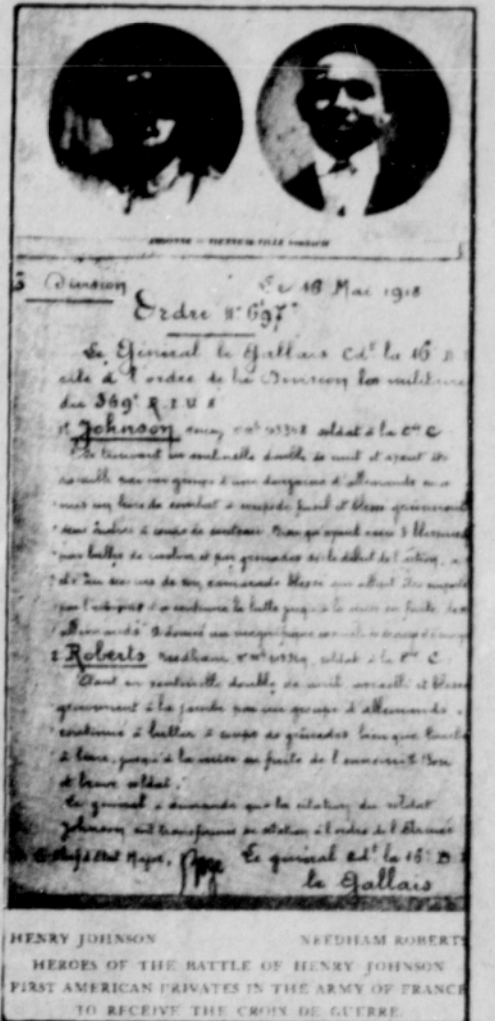
War has been, almost without exception, a part of man's culture in the most primitive of tribes and the most highly developed modern nations. For over 300 years the Black soldier has fought on the front lines of this nation's wars. They have been a part of the military from the American Revolution to the more recent wars like Vietnam. Black soldiers helped free slaves during the Civil War and Black men have long proven that given a chance, they can operate even the most complicated planes and missiles in use by the armed forces.

Never completely accepted by his comrades in arms or his white neighbors at home, the Black soldier has willingly and repeatedly offered himself and his life for the American dream. This history of the Black soldiers and sailors is carved deep in the history of the American Republic—which lives today because many Black men marched off to their graves in the name of America.



Black soldiers fought bravely in the Civil War.

One-fifth of America's frontier cavalrymen were Black. Frederic Remington sketched one trooper conversing in sign language with an Indian in 1880s.



HENRY JOHNSON VETERAN ROBERT HEROES OF THE BATTLE OF HENRY JOHNSON FIRST AMERICAN PRIVATE IN THE ARMY OF FRANCE TO RECEIVE THE CROIX DE GUERRE

"One patient cured by a Negro doctor, one sermon well preached, one office well filled, one life cleanly lived—these will tell more in our favor than all the abstract eloquence that can be summoned to plead our cause."

—Booker T. Washington

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