



SAMUEL HARRISON SOCIETY

PITTSFIELD MASSACHUSETTS

"NO WARMER FRIENDS HAVE I HAD
ANYWHERE THAN IN PITTSFIELD"



July 4, 1776

On this day in history, our founding fathers signed the Declaration of Independence. But not everyone was able to celebrate being free after the Revolutionary War was won. As we celebrate our nation's birthday, we at the Samuel Harrison Society believe Rev. Samuel Harrison's ideals are as relevant today as they were in the 19th Century. We believe, as Rev. Harrison did, that the United States should live up to the letter and spirit as written in the Declaration of Independence; "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men [and women] are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of happiness."

July 18, 1863

On this day in history, the brave men of the Massachusetts 54th Volunteer Regiment performed a frontal assault on Battery Wagner in South Carolina during the Civil War. Approximately 40 percent of the regiment was lost to injury or death. The 54th was widely acclaimed for its valor during the battle, and the event helped encourage the further enlistment and mobilization of African-American troops, a key development that President Abraham Lincoln once noted as helping to secure the final victory for the Union Army.

July 31, 1863

On this day in history, Massachusetts Governor John A. Andrew paid a visit to Rev. Samuel Harrison in Pittsfield. After the disastrous assault on Battery Wagner, Governor Andrew decided he needed someone to go to South Carolina and express the sympathies of the Commonwealth. Governor Andrew informed Rev. Harrison that he was coming to Pittsfield to speak with him. When the Governor arrived, he asked Rev. Harrison if he would go to South Carolina. Within an hour of being asked, Rev. Harrison accepted this call to duty. Little did Rev. Harrison know that 2 days before the assault, his name was already placed in consideration to be the Chaplain of the 54th. Rev. Harrison was also motivated by another fact. Rev. Harrison states; "I had "persuaded a number of men to go to the war who had left their families which were as dear to them as mine was to me. I could not bear that thought." Rev. Harrison would travel to South Carolina on behalf of the Commonwealth for a brief stay. He would later return to South Carolina as the commissioned Chaplain of the 54th.

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