



## SAMUEL HARRISON SOCIETY

PITTSFIELD MASSACHUSETTS

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



### November 12, 1863

On this day 157 years ago, the Rev. Samuel Harrison was mustered in as Chaplain of the Massachusetts 54th Volunteer Regiment (depicted below).

A commissioned officer in the 54th Regiment of Massachusetts Colored Volunteers, commanded by Colonel Edward N. Hallowell called into the service of the United States by The President.

This officer is appointed from civil life to fill an original vacancy by commission from the Governor of Massachusetts dated September 8th, 1863. This muster takes effect from November 12th, 1863.

I certify, on honor, that I have carefully examined this officer whose name is borne on this Roll, and have accepted him into the service of the United States for the term of Three Years unless sooner discharged from this Twelfth day of November 1863.

(signed) Chas A. Brooks (Mustering Officer)  
Capt. 9th Maine Volunteers  
Ass Com of Musters  
November 12th 1863  
Morris Island, S.C.

Rev. Samuel Harrison's recollection of this day was; "On the 12th day of November, 1863, I was placed in the United States Army by being mustered in, making oath to support the government of the United States, to serve three years unless sooner discharged. I did not know but that in all respects I would be treated by the officers of the government the same as other chaplains of a fairer hue." Rev Harrison's idea of being treated equally would soon change, as he further recalls. "But I did learn it by the time pay day came around. The paymaster declined to pay the men of the regiment the same amount paid to the white troops because they were men of African descent. I think it was through Secretary Stanton that Gov. Andrew made the promise for equal pay, and Massachusetts raised three regiments with this understanding. But the paymasters decided otherwise. The first intimation I had of it was when our Col. Hallowell said to me one day, 'Mr. Harrison, I do not think that the paymasters will give you the pay which chaplains get.' I said I would like to see the paymaster myself, and I asked him to let me know when he came. I looked anxiously for him. He had come and gone. The other officers got their pay, but the rank and file were neglected."

Rev. Harrison and the other African American soldiers of the Massachusetts 54th regiment refused the lower pay offered by the paymaster. But the men continued to serve and perform their duties as soldiers in the United States Army realizing that their goal was much greater than being paid, but that their goal was to win the war for the United States and hopefully freedom for African Americans throughout the country.

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