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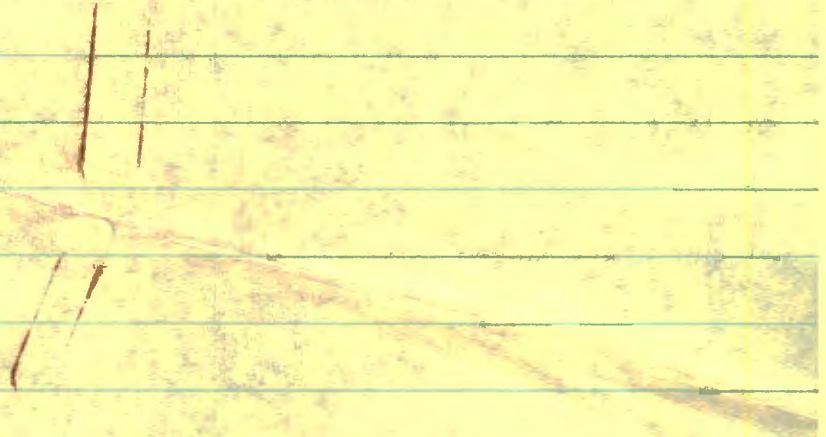
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Orchids
Order 9
Hibernian



- 10 2

THE JAMES SMITH STORY WAS ONE OF THE "TOP 10" NATIONAL NEWS ITEMS APPEARING ON NETWORK TELEVISION AND IN OVER 1,000 DAILY NEWSPAPERS ACROSS THIS COUNTRY. IT WAS ALSO COVERED BY REUTERS INTERNATIONAL AND BRITISH BROADCASTING, AND IS NOW BEING VIEWED BY U.S. MILITARY INSTALLATIONS AROUND THE WORLD AND IN EVERY FOREIGN CITY WHERE THERE IS A HEAVY CONCENTRATION OF AMERICAN CITIZENS.

1864 Hero Gets Grave And Honor

By GENE L. MAEROFF

After more than a century in an unmarked pauper's grave in Queens and an eight-year effort by his great-grandson, Capt. James Smith, a Medal of Honor winner from the Civil War, will join his fellow heroes at Arlington National Cemetery.

Captain Smith's belated recognition is the result of the efforts of Thomas Clarkson Brenker, a 36-year-old Manhattan businessman, who said he had to overcome resistance from both the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of New York and the Navy.

"The first I heard of him," said Mr. Brenker, "was when I was 11 and my mother's aunt, Sarah Smith Kelly, a daughter of James Smith, told me that her father was a Medal of Honor winner."

According to his citation, Captain Smith, a gunnery commander in the Union navy, held his post "despite damage to his ship and the loss of several men as enemy fire raked her decks" in the Battle of Mobile Bay.

A member of the British navy who jumped ship in Canada, James Smith of Belfast, Ireland, made his way to New York and enlisted in the United States Navy in 1863.

Act of Bravery

On Aug. 5, 1864, his bravery on the U.S.S. Richmond forced the surrender of the Tennessee, a Confederate vessel.

Captain Smith was honored yesterday at the Church of St. James on James Street, around the corner from City Hall, where he was married in 1870. His remains are being sent to Washington, where on the morning of May 30 there will be a ceremony at 9:30 at the Lincoln Memorial, followed by burial at Arlington.

Mr. Brenker was surprised when he



Because of efforts by Thomas Clarkson Brenker, the remains of Capt. James Smith will be moved to Arlington National Cemetery. Captain Smith, far left, won the Medal of Honor for actions aboard the Richmond, below, during the Battle of Mobile Bay in 1864.



went looking for his great-grandfather's grave eight years ago to find that he was in a mass grave for the indigent in Calvary Cemetery in Queens. Apparently, his family could not afford a burial when Mr. Smith died in 1881 at the age of 55 after being injured on the job as a shipbuilder in Brooklyn, according to information Mr. Brenker has gathered.

Mr. Brenker sought to have a gravestone erected over Captain Smith's grave, but the Archdiocese of New York, which owns the cemetery, repeatedly refused.

"It was a common grave with many remains in it and no one family could put up a memorial," Anthony Roina, an official of agency that operates the cemetery, said. "No one family is permitted to put up a memorial."

Mr. Brenker then took his campaign

in a new direction after reading of a similar situation in Kentucky, where a black Medal of Honor winner was exhumed from an unmarked grave and reburied in a military cemetery.

"The U.S. Navy told me my great-grandfather could be buried in Arlington if I could get permission to have the remains disinterred," Mr. Brenker said. "The permission had to come from the court because Calvary would not give it without a court order."

Mr. Roina said that the Archdiocese was not opposed to the exhumation, but that since Captain Smith was in a mass grave and the remains of others would have to be disturbed, a court order was needed.

After months of dealing with the Pentagon, Mr. Brenker said he found that military officials were reversing themselves on what sort of ceremony would

be provided for his great-grandfather.

Mr. Brenker said that the service yesterday at St. James and the service to be held at the Lincoln Memorial received no support from the Navy.

Full Military Honors

"We are burying him with full military honors appropriate to a Medal of Honor winner," was all that a Navy spokesman would say yesterday about the disagreement.

The procession that enters the cemetery will be met by a horse-drawn caisson, to which his flag-draped casket will be transferred for the final march.

At the grave site, where the service is to be conducted by the Navy's chief chaplain, three rounds will be fired and a bugler will play taps. And Captain Smith's resting place will finally have a marker.



Civil War Hero To Be Reinterred With Honors

The Medal of Honor awarded to Capt. James Smith for bravery during the Battle of Mobile Bay in 1864.

His remains were in an unmarked pauper's grave in Queens, but after an eight-year effort by his great-grandson, Thomas Clarkson Brenker, they will be moved, with full military honors, to Arlington National Cemetery. Page 27.



Photo by Glen Stubbe/The Washington Times

Tom Brenker stands beside a stone that will mark his great-grandfather's grave when he is reburied at Arlington National Cemetery today.

Civil War hero buried in Arlington

By Tracie Reddick
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Today at Arlington National Cemetery Tom Brenker will fulfill a vow he made at the age of 11 — to have his great-grandfather, Union Navy Capt. James Smith, buried with full military honors.

Capt. Smith, a Civil War naval hero who won the Medal of Honor, shared an unmarked grave at Calvary Cemetery in New York City with four other paupers.

But because of Mr. Brenker's commitment to having his great-grandfather honored, Capt. Smith will be placed to rest alongside America's other patriots.

"I feel as though a grave injustice has been corrected," said Mr. Brenker. "That type of contribution deserves some type of recognition."

Born in Belfast, Ireland, Capt. Smith received his Medal of Honor for bravery during the Battle of Mobile Bay on Aug. 5, 1864. He was credited with saving the USS Richmond after other crew members had been killed. Capt. Smith, who was in charge of the guns, is credited with forcing the Confederate ships to surrender.

Other heroic feats include jumping into mine infested waters to untangle a torpedo line while Adm. David Farragut shouted his famous order: "Damn the torpedos. Full speed ahead."

Returning to New York City after his tour of duty, Capt. Smith worked in the maritime industry and promoted swimming as a sport. He is said to have coached the first woman to swim around Manhattan Island.

After a six-month battle with pneumonia complicated by an internal condition caused



Navy Capt. James Smith

by deep sea diving, Capt. Smith died Oct. 31, 1881 at the age of 55. His long illness had left his family financially strapped, and he was buried in a pauper's grave.

Mr. Brenker's quest began when his aunt told him the story of his great-grandfather.

"For the past seven years, I carefully explored every option to make sure he received proper recognition."

His research led Mr. Brenker to his great-grandfather's grave, but when he tried to

place a marker at the site, he was turned down because of the others buried in the plot.

"I offered to buy the grave site, include the names of the others buried and deed the property back to the cemetery," said Brenker. "But they still refused. It never occurred to me to have the body exhumed."

It wasn't until Mr. Brenker read an article about Sgt. Brent Woods, a medal recipient who shared the same fate as Capt. Smith, that he began to phone and write government officials.

After three weeks, he received a reply from the Navy, which agreed to exhume the body if he obtained a court order.

The court order was issued last October, and the remains were held in a lab in New York in preparation for today's services.

The full honors burial — 105 years after his death and 125 years after Congress authorized the Medal of Honor — is to be conducted by Rear Adm. John R. McNamara, Navy chief of chaplains.

An additional service was held May 23 in New York at the Church of St. James, a landmark church in lower Manhattan where Capt. Smith was married. The Navy, public officials, the Irish community, the Olympic swimming movement and the maritime industry paid tribute to Capt. Smith, who was said to have contributed to the growth and development of each.

Mr. Brenker has established the Capt. James Smith Memorial Foundation to assist others in properly honoring more than 400 Medal of Honor recipients who have not been accounted for.



MEMORIAL SERVICE
IN HONOR OF
CAPTAIN JAMES SMITH
CIVIL WAR NAVAL HERO
AND
MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT
AND IN COMMEMORATION OF THE
125th ANNIVERSARY
OF THE
CONGRESSIONAL
MEDAL OF HONOR

The Church of St. James
James Street
New York City

May 23, 1986

Memorial Service

REVEREND KEVIN O'BRIEN, AND
CAPTAIN EDWARD A. HAMILTON OFFICIATING

NATIONAL ANTHEM

EULOGY

PRESENTATION ON THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR
Speaker: Captain George E. Pierce, Commanding Officer of the New York Naval Station
Wreath Presentation: Medal of Honor Recipient, Nicholas Oresko

"Eternal Father"

GREETINGS FROM THE STATE OF NEW YORK
Speaker: The Honorable Philip B. Healey, Member of the New York State Assembly
Wreath Presentation: Heyman Rothbart, New York State Division of Veterans Affairs

"America"

SALUTATIONS FROM THE IRISH COMMUNITY
Speaker: John Irwin, New York State Chairman, Ancient Order of Hibernians
Wreath Presentation: Nick Murphy, National Vice Chairman, Ancient Order of Hibernians

"Irish Hymn"

A TRIBUTE FROM THE MARITIME INDUSTRY
Speaker: Peter Stanford, President of the National Maritime Historical Society
Wreath Presentation: Shannon Wall, President of the National Maritime Union

"Columbia the Gem of the Ocean"

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS FROM UNITED STATES SWIMMING
Speaker: Joseph Coplan, Executive Director, Metropolitan Committee/U.S. Swimming
Wreath Presentation: Rick Carey, 1984 Olympic 'Gold Medalist'

"Ode to Joy"

A FRIEND

BENEDICTION

"RETREAT"

"Above and Beyond"

The story of James Smith, a man who gave one-hundred percent to this life, was accorded this nation's highest military honor, and died completely unnoticed and unacknowledged one-hundred and five years ago.

Steaming through mine-infested waters in Mobile Bay, August 5, 1864, Admiral Farragut lashed-out boldly from the flagship's main rigging, "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead."

But a new dimension to that historic occasion was recently unearthed along with the remains of gunnery Captain James Smith, a civil war Medal of Honor recipient who served under Farragut's command.

Mobile Bay, historians agree, was littered with mines that presented a serious threat to the entire naval operation and the attack on Fort Morgan. When the lead ship "Tecumseh" was suddenly struck and sunk in two minutes, the "Brooklyn" stopped short and the entire fleet backed up on her rear. Farragut was now visibly perched in the main rigging while the flagship jerked and steered sharply to the left. But during all of the confusion, few observed that a torpedo line was being dragged by the rudder of the Admiral's ship. In an instant, James Smith, a skilled swimmer, dove overboard on his own volition to disengage what might have caused irreparable damage and untold casualties.

We may never know for sure what actually occurred on the bristling August day in 1864, but we will always remember James Smith for his personal valor, compassion, and exceptional spirit of loyalty which reflects the highest degree of credit upon Smith and this proud and grateful nation.

James Smith (1826-1881) was one of three sons born to a protestant family of Belfast linen merchants. Had he lived out his life in Ireland, these few words might have said it all. But fate chose to bring this man named "Smith" to a far and distant shore where he might have the opportunity to develop to the full extent of his ability, and contribute his special genius in forging a new nation.

James Smith's story may be one of millions told in a million different way, but, it is, ideally, the story of America.

At the age of sixteen, James Smith enlisted in the British Navy. Some twenty years later he deserted and made his way to New York City. Arriving during the Civil War he enlisted in the U.S. Navy (September 23, 1863) as an ordinary seaman and served on board the USS Richmond which was preparing to join the Western Gulf Blockade.

On review of the ship's daily log, it appears that Smith was a man of good character and excellent health who conducted himself in a military manner. And probably owing to his training in the Royal Navy, his naval skills in the U.S. Navy were exemplary. Hence, on June 30, 1864—in preparation for battle—James Smith was promoted to Captain of the Forecastle, the highest non-commissioned rank in the U.S. navy at that time.

It was during the Battle of Mobile Bay and while engaged with the rebel ram "Tennessee" and the successful attacks carried out on Fort Morgan that James Smith clearly distinguished himself. To that extent Captain Thornton A. Jenkins, commander of the USS Richmond, noted in his report of August 10, 1864 that James Smith was especially entitled to the commendation of the Navy Department.

In accordance with General Order 45 dated December 31, 1864, James Smith was cited for the Congressional Medal of Honor.

Honorably discharged from the U.S. Navy on October 10, 1864, James Smith returned to New York City and took up residence at a seaman's hotel at the corner of James and Cherry Streets. There he lived for the next five years while working as a rigger on the ships docked along Manhattan's lower eastside, "the melting pot of America."

Being a former seaman protected by the maritime laws of Great Britain, James Smith would have been astonished and mortified by the abusive and devouring system which victimized mariners and seamen in the port of New York at that time. For it was not until 1868 and thereafter that the Congress of the United States moved to adopt an amended version of the British system which provided the framework and mechanism for building and protecting the U.S. Maritime industry.

If James Smith were not, himself, a prime mover he had to be at least an advocate of maritime legislation. It was only through sheer cunning and chicanery that he or anyone else

would be able to work the system to their own advantage.

Whatever his thoughts or circumstances might have been at the time, James Smith was, nevertheless, confident in the future and proud to be an American. For on October 25, 1865—two weeks after he was presented with the Medal of Honor—he renounced forever his allegiance to the Queen of England and was naturalized as a citizen of the United States.

In 1869 James Smith was introduced to Miss Ellen Caffrey, a young lady who was connected with one of Newark's leading families.

When her family objected to their marriage, James Smith and Ellen Caffrey eloped to New York City. They were married at the church of St. James on May 30, 1870.

Practically disowned by her family, Ellen and James Smith established a home in Brooklyn and lived together happily and modestly for ten short years.

The 1870's were prosperous years for most Americans and James Smith was no exception. He was steadily employed as a ship builder and rigger at the Brooklyn navy yard, did some deep sea diving, and spent his off-time as a swimming and diving instructor at one of the new and fashionable bath clubs on Manhattan's east river.

Swimming was just beginning to develop as a legitimate sport in the United States and James Smith's name appears among those of the early promoters. While it is said that he coached the first woman ever to attempt swimming around Manhattan Island, her identity still remains a mystery. But in a lengthy *New York Times* article of August 28, 1874—one year prior to Matthew Webb's successful swim of the English Channel—James Smith was prominently mentioned as a judge at what was then styled "The Great International Swimming Match" held at Long Branch, New Jersey.

But life is delicate, and too short for passionate men of vision and ambition. Late in 1879, while working on one of the ships at the Brooklyn navy yard, James Smith was suddenly struck in the chest by a swinging boom. Disabled, unemployed, and, apart from savings, no income to speak of,* the family, with a fourth child expected, moved across the river to Manhattan's lower eastside. From this point on a series of tragic events occurred including the death of James Smith's only son, and the ever-worsening condition of his own health.

James Smith's eldest daughter—who was only 8 years old at the time—recalls that her father had irregular seizures, "convulsing large amounts of blood." And, perhaps, thinking that he was tubercular—for which there was no cure—and attempting to allay any fears or suspicions, he instructed her, "don't tell your mother."

On Halloween night, October 31, 1881, while convalescing at home from a long and serious case of pleuro-pneumonia, James Smith has his final attack and died a half-hour later from what was actually diagnosed as hemoptysis.

Alone and grief-stricken, with 2 small children and a baby to support, James Smith's young widow has no where to turn, nor anyone—including her family—that she could really depend on. It was, perhaps, in this context—and unbeknown to the children and future generations—that James Smith was inadvertently buried in an unmarked, nontitled grave in Calvary Cemetery, Woodside, Queens County, New York.

Faced with adversity and the realities of the situation, Ellen Caffrey Smith rallied to the occasion. Herself, perhaps, the "heroine," she struggled valiantly to provide a home for she and her young family. But even as conditions improved, and long after she remarried, Ellen Caffrey Smith often spoke of her late husband "with deep affection." Indeed, any man who becomes a legend through 4-6 generations, must have been very much loved, and respected.

Today, James Smith would be the proud progenitor of 12 grandchildren, 20 great-grandchildren, 22 great-great grandchildren, 7 great-great-great grandchildren, and 1 great-grandchild 5 times removed.* * *

The life and times of James Smith could be the story of countless Americans and unsung heroes who struggled, sacrificed, endured the hardships, and even died building a better life for themselves and future generations. Today we honor one of many. But in doing so we pay tribute to all.

Our Special Thanks

To Those Who Made This Program Possible

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Mr. Murrilla Clarkson Walsh
James Smith Clarkson Rockefeller

AND AMONG MANY OTHERS

THE TRUSTEES OF THE
CAPTAIN JAMES SMITH MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

FREEDOMS FOUNDATION

MEDAL OF HONOR HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MEDAL OF HONOR ROUND TABLE

CENTER FOR RESPONSIBLE CITIZENSHIP

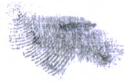
AMERICAN LEGION

VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS

PARALYZED AMERICAN VETERANS

MARINE CORPS. LEAGUE



CAPTAIN JAMES SMITH MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

[THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS ADOPTED THE FOLLOWING RESOLUTION AT ITS 83RD ANNUAL CONVENTION HELD IN BUFFALO, NEW YORK ON THURSDAY, JULY 10, 1986. FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, CONTACT AOH NATIONAL CHAIRMAN NICK MURPHY AT (212) 940-1935 OR (914) 634-2304.]

THE FULL TEXT OF THE AOH RESOLUTION READS:

IN COMMEMORATION OF THE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR, AND AS A FITTING TRIBUTE TO LIVING AND DECEASED MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS SHALL ASSIST PRIVATE AND GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO PRESERVE THE HISTORY AND INTEGRITY OF THIS NATION'S HIGHEST MILITARY AWARD. 01 05

WHEREAS, THAT 255 OF IRELAND'S NATIVE SONS WERE AWARDED AMERICA'S HIGHEST MILITARY DECORATION --MORE THAN TWICE THE NUMBER OF ANY OTHER NATIONAL GROUP-- AND ALMOST 2,000 OTHERS OF IRISH DESCENT DOMINATE THE LIST OF MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS, AND 10

WHEREAS, THAT SOME 400 RECIPIENTS OF THE MEDAL OF HONOR ARE UNACCOUNTED FOR, OF WHICH 72 PERCENT ARE OF IRISH DESCENT, AND 114 WERE IRISH BORN; AND

WHEREAS, ON AUGUST 25, 1985, AND IN RECOGNITION OF THIS FACT, THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS ERECTED A MONUMENT AT THE MEDAL OF HONOR GROVE IN VALLEY FORGE, PENNSYLVANIA, IN HONOR OF 66 IRISH BORN MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS AND 82 OTHER RECIPIENTS FROM 14 OTHER NATIONS ; AND 15

WHEREAS, ON MAY 23 AND MAY 30, 1986, WITH PRIDE AND REVERENCE FOR AMERICA'S INSTITUTIONS, THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS PAID TRIBUTE TO MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT CAPTAIN JAMES SMITH, A NATIVE SON OF BELFAST, IRELAND (A) WHO FOUGHT SO COURAGEOUSLY AT THE BATTLE OF MOBILE BAY (AUGUST 5, 1864) DURING THE AMERICAN CIVIL 20

CAPTAIN JAMES SMITH MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

RESOLUTION: ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS

WAR; (B) WHO REFLECTS THE HIGHEST DEGREE OF CREDIT UPON THE
IRISH COMMUNITY AND THIS PROUD AND GRATEFUL NATION; (C) WHO
WAS INADVERTENTLY BURIED IN AN UNMARKED PAUPER'S GRAVE; AND
(D) WHO BEARS TESTIMONY FOR THE NEED TO PROPERLY HONOR OUR
NATION'S HEROES AND RETRIEVE A VITAL PART OF OUR NATIONAL
HERITAGE; AND

25

WHEREAS, THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS SHALL ASSIST PRIVATE
AND GOVERNMENT EFFORTS TO PRESERVE THE HISTORY AND INTEGRITY
OF THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR; AND SHALL ENCOURAGE
ACADEMIC RESEARCH TO RECLAIM A VITAL PART OF OUR NATIONAL
HERITAGE; AND

WHEREAS, IN THIS SAME REGARD, THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS
ENCOURAGES FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES AND
LEGISLATIVE BODIES, AS WELL AS THE PRIVATE SECTOR, TO ASSIST
IN THIS MOST IMPORTANT EFFORT; NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT

RESOLVED, THAT THE ANCIENT ORDER OF HIBERNIANS, IN CONVENTION
ASSEMBLED, PAUSE IN ITS DELIBERATIONS IN ORDER TO COMMEMORATE
THE ONE-HUNDRED AND TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CONGRESS-
IONAL MEDAL OF HONOR, AND, IN TURN, HONOR ALL LIVING AND DE-
CEASED MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENTS; AND BE IT FURTHER

RESOLVED, THAT COPIES OF THIS RESOLUTION, SUITABLY ENGROSSED,
AND CONSISTENT WITH HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 501, BE TRANSMITTED
TO THE PRESIDENT, AND THE CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES.

CAPTAIN JAMES SMITH MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

Thomas C. Brenker
President

Honorary Board of Trustees
Mrs. A. Judson Dunlap
Mrs. Martha Kelly Ihne
Mrs. Murrilla Clarkson Walsh
Mr. James Smith Clarkson Rockefeller

July 22, 1986

Board of Trustees

Mr. Max Green
Office of Public Liaison
THE WHITE HOUSE OFFICE
Washington, D.C. 20500

Re: The Congressional Medal of Honor

Dear Mr. Green:

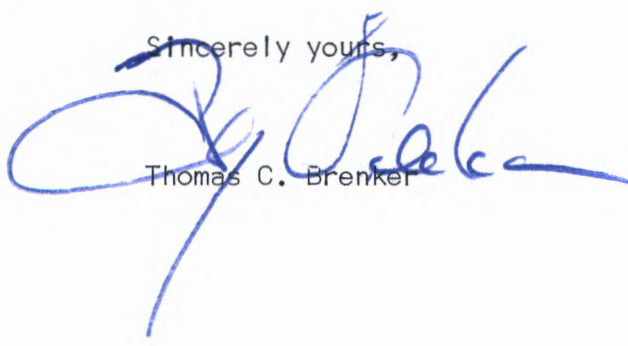
John Concannon of Newsweek suggested that I send the enclosed material to your attention.

As you can see, we are attempting to elicit the support of the White House and Congress in preserving the history and integrity of the Medal of Honor.

The James Smith incident may be the extreme, and yet the best possible example for bringing attention to over 400 other Medal of Honor recipients who are unaccounted for.

For your kind attention, I am

Sincerely yours,



Thomas C. Brenker

TB:

Enc.

cc: John Concannon

In Formation

CAPTAIN JAMES SMITH MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

Thomas C. Brenker
President

Honorary Board of Trustees
Mrs. A. Judson Dunlap
Mrs. Martha Kelly Ihne
Mrs. Murrilla Clarkson Walsh
Mr. James Smith Clarkson Rockefeller

July 14, 1986

Board of Trustees*

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C.

Re: The Congressional Medal of Honor

Dear Mr. President:

On May 23 and May 30, 1986 a proud and grateful nation paused to honor the memory of one man who was accorded this nation's highest military distinction, gave one-hundred percent to this life, and died completely unnoticed and unacknowledged one-hundred and five years ago. Until recently, the obscurity of an unmarked pauper's grave in a New York City cemetery was his final reward.

As a nation we corrected that situation and bestowed upon this man of valor the recognition and honor that he so justly deserved. By so doing, we also renewed a similar pledge to our men and women in uniform, and a commitment to retrieve a vital part of our national heritage...all at a cost of \$35,000 and 8 years of my personal time.

I mention this fact, not as a complaint, nor with regret; but because there is a great deal of work to be done to properly honor over 400 other Medal of Honor recipients who, like James Smith, may have become a mere footnote with the passage of time. For the benefit of future generations, and as a matter of national pride, we can't afford to let that happen.

Indeed, what we know of the Medal of Honor and its recipients is owing primarily to the tireless efforts of a handful of private citizens. For years, these people have devoted their personal time and money to projects which, rightfully, should be sponsored and funded by the United States Government.

Obviously, this is one of the reasons why the CAPTAIN JAMES SMITH MEMORIAL FOUNDATION was established. But to be truly effective, we need the support and cooperation of the White House and both Houses of Congress.

*In Form 1041

THE CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR:

Once again I bring your attention to the objectives of House Joint Resolution 501 which was introduced by Congressman Norman F. Lent (R-NY) on January 27, 1986. I don't doubt that it will pass in the House of Representatives, and that a more comprehensive bill will be introduced in the Senate. What does concern me is how well these measures pass, and the importance that we, as a nation, attach to a vital part of our national heritage. In that regard, and this being the 125th Anniversary of the Congressional Medal of Honor, your support has far greater significance.

For your consideration, I am

Sincerely yours,

Thomas C. Brenker
President

TB:

Enc: House Joint Resolution 501
"Dear Colleague" letter
Resolution: Ancient Order of Hibernians
New York Times article
Washington Times article
Program for New York ceremony
Letter: Senior Vice Admiral James Metcalf, III
Letter: Chief Justice Warren E. Burger

cc: Serphin Maltese, Chairman
New York State Conservative Party

99TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. J. RES. 501

To commemorate the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the Congressional Medal of Honor and the deceased and living recipients of this honor.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 27, 1986

Mr. LENT introduced the following joint resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Post Office and Civil Service

JOINT RESOLUTION

To commemorate the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the Congressional Medal of Honor and the deceased and living recipients of this honor.

Whereas 1986 marks the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the Congressional Medal of Honor;

Whereas this medal, our Nation's highest military award, and its valiant recipients should be appropriately honored;

Whereas some two hundred deceased recipients of this award have been inappropriately buried in unmarked graves without honor and recognition;

Whereas Captain James Smith, who fought so courageously at the battle of Mobile Bay during the Civil War, and who, for his valor, won the Congressional Medal of Honor and should be commemorated;

NORMAN F. LENT

4TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

COMMITTEE ON
MERCHANT MARINE AND
FISHERIES
RANKING REPUBLICAN

COMMITTEE ON ENERGY
AND COMMERCE

SUBCOMMITTEE
COMMERCE, TRANSPORTATION,
AND TOURISM

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

May 8, 1986

PLEASE ADDRESS REPLIES TO THE
WASHINGTON, DC, OFFICE
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TELEPHONE: (202) 225-7800

DISTRICT OFFICES:
 ROOM 300, 2280 GRAND AVENUE
BALDWIN, NY 11510
TELEPHONE: (516) 223-1610

MASSAPEQUA PARK VILLAGE HALL
151 FRONT STREET
MASSAPEQUA PARK, NY 11762
TELEPHONE: (516) 785-4454

TO HONOR OUR MILITARY HEROES

Dear Colleague:

1986 represents the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the Congressional Medal of Honor. This Medal is our Nation's highest military award and is appropriately bestowed upon our courageous and valiant military heroes.

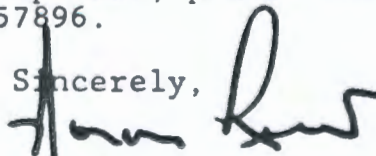
However, did you know that there are some two hundred deceased recipients of this medal who have been inappropriately buried in unmarked graves without honor and recognition? Unfortunately, it's true. One of these courageous recipients was Captain James Smith whose bravery during the battle of Mobile Bay in the Civil War earned him the Congressional Medal of Honor. Upon his death, Captain Smith was unceremoniously buried in an unmarked pauper's grave and was never properly honored. Fortunately, through the efforts of one man, Mr. Thomas Brenker, this injustice was rectified and Captain Smith will have the ceremonial burial befitting his heroism.

But let us not forget the others. I have introduced a resolution, H.J.Res. 501, which commemorates the one hundred and twenty-fifth anniversary of the Congressional Medal of Honor and the deceased and living recipients of this honor. My resolution also makes clear the resolve of Congress, and the appropriate agencies, to acknowledge and honor those near-forgotten heroes by examining the need for a central clearinghouse for information on recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor.

I urge you to join me in this worthwhile effort to acknowledge the recipients of this highest award whose valor, selfless sacrifice, and sense of duty have inspired this great Nation.

If you would like to cosponsor, please contact Anne Holloway on my staff at this number: #57896.

Sincerely,



NORMAN F. LENT
Member of Congress

NOTE: In commemoration of the 125th anniversary and in honor of Captain James Smith, you are invited to a ceremony at the Lincoln Memorial on May 30th at 9:30am to be followed by full military honors at Arlington National Cemetery.