

From Vicksburg to Naktong: 28 Neb

By Ron Gibson

"... For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at risk of life above and beyond the call of duty in action."

That is the wording of the citation which accompanies a bronze, star-shaped medal hung from star-spangled blue silk—the Medal of Honor, highest U.S. military award.

The award, sometimes called the Congressional Medal of Honor because it is given in the name of Congress, has been won by 11 Nebraskans since its establishment during the Civil War.

Stretching a point, the Nebraska State Historical Society includes in its special file of Nebraska Medal of Honor winners the names

of all Medal winners with any state connection.

23 Names Listed

This broadens the list to at least 28, including those who won the medal in Indian fighting in Nebraska, or who settled here after winning the Medal in the Civil War. The Society is constantly searching for more.

Chronologically, the list begins with a Civil War general and ends with a courageous Marine private who died in Korea.

A study of Nebraska's Medal heroes takes one through the pages of American military history, and around the world:

Vicksburg . . . Gilman's Ranch . . . the Argonne



Gen. Vifquain . . . led Civil War charge.

Forest . . . Tunisia . . . criticism. Okinawa . . . the Naktong River. risk of life by two ey

From these engagements came Nebraska's most honored military heroes. They will be among those remembered next Friday, Veterans' Day.

When the Medal was established in 1862, it was easily won. There are thousands of awards from the Civil War, and many during the Indian Wars of the 19th Century.

In World War I, the Medal became a more distinguished award. It is now given for outstanding bravery—for a deed which, if the winner had not done it, would not subject him to any

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28 Nebraskans Won Medals of Honor

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Few are the Medal of Honor winners who lived to tell of their exploits in World War I, World War II and Korea.

Civil War Winner

The first real Nebraskan to win the Medal was Victor Vifquain, a Belgian immigrant who left his Saline County farm to enlist in the Union Army in the Civil War.

Vifquain became the colonel of the 97th Illinois Infantry Regiment and in 1865 led a bold charge against Confederate works at Ft. Blakely, Ala. For the charge he won the Medal and a pro-



Sgt. Kouma . . . saved Naktong crossing.

motion to brigadier general.

Settled in Nebraska

Vifquain and 5 other Medal winners later settled in Nebraska.

The list is a long one after that.

It includes a Pawnee Indian scout who was awarded the Medal in a mistaken identity case . . . a Norfolk sailor who was honored in a peacetime incident . . . an Omaha sailor who gave his life preventing disclosure of the Sicilian invasion in World War II . . .

There was a 1st Nebraska Veteran Cavalry private, listed as a Richardson County resident and carried on various Army records as Francis W. Lohnes or Lohnas or Frederick W. Lol-

mas. His medal was for "gallantry in defending government property against Indians" at Gilman's Ranch in Lincoln County in 1865.

The strangest Medal story is that of Mad Bear and Traveling Bear, two Pawnee scouts serving under the North brothers—Maj. Frank and Capt. Luther North.

At a skirmish on the Republican River in Kansas, Traveling Bear chased 4 Cheyennes into a canyon and returned with their scalps. For this, the Norths recommended him for the Medal of Honor. It was awarded to Traveling Bear—although the citation bears the name of Mad Bear. Mad Bear had been wound-

Continued: Page 2B, Col. 6

Cost of Winning Honor Medal Often Includes Winner's Life

Continued from Page 1B

ed and was incapacitated on the day of the canyon fight, however.

Peacetime Award

The only Nebraskan to win the award in peacetime was Seaman Otto D. Schmidt of Norfolk. He was aboard the U.S.S. Bennington when the ship's boilers blew sky-high off San Diego in 1905, and he won the Medal for courage in hauling injured comrades from below decks.

A Trumbull native was Nebraska's only World War I Medal winner.

He was Capt. Nelson M. Holderman of the 307th Infantry Rgt., 77th Division.

Argonne Combat

It was in the Argonne Forest in France in 1918.

tacks on the enemy and won the Medal.

One was PFC Robert D. Booker of Callaway, who died in North Africa in 1943.

It was near Fondouk in Tunisia. Booker carried his light machine gun through heavy enemy fire, was wounded, silenced one German machine gun and opened fire on another, and then was mortally wounded. Dying, he directed the fire of his squadmates.

Marine's Action

The other was Marine Pvt. Dale M. Hansen of Wisner.

Hansen exposed himself to enemy fire to kyo a Japanese position with his bazooka in fighting on Okinawa. Enemy fire destroyed the bazooka.

Hansen grabbed a rifle,

An explosion would have wiped out the LST and would have tipped off the invasion to the enemy. Parle wrestled the hot smoke pot into the water, saving the ship and the invasion, but died from smoke and fumes inhaled.

Fought 500 Reds

In Korea, M.Sgt. Ernest Kouma of Dwight was one of the early Medal of Honor winners of the conflict. He won it for a 1950 action.

Kouma's tank alone guarded the withdrawal of United Nations forces from the Naktong River when 500 Communists attacked. Kouma and his crew kept up fire for 9 hours.

Once, when Reds surrounded the tank, Kouma exposed himself to their fire to blast them with the tank's .50-caliber machine gun. Then he kept up the assault with his pistol and grenades. Finally the tank withdrew, killing more Reds. Kouma, wounded twice, killed an estimated 250 enemy soldiers.

The last Nebraskan to win the Medal of Honor was Marine PFC Edward (Babe) Gomez of Omaha, who died at an obscure place called Hill 749 in Korea in 1951.

Died in Explosion

Gomez was a member of a machine gun team. An enemy grade grenade landed between Gomez and his weapon. He shouted a warning to his buddies, grasped the charge and dived into a ditch. Gomez died in the explosion but saved the other members of his machine-gun team.

POLITICAL ADVERTISEMENT

MAN OF THE PLAINS

and I was captain, with Fred Mathews as my lieutenant.

We got to McPherson on the 12th, unloaded the horses, and went over the river to the fort, where we drew arms, ammunition, rations and forage, and went into camp on the river.³ I was allowed two wagons to carry my forage, rations and camp equipment, but we were not allowed any tents. It rained all day, turning into snow in the evening. We put in a pretty bad night, and in the morning started for the old Jack Morrow ranch,* where we were to turn south toward the Republican.

Major Noyes had been gone several days and we were to follow and join him somewhere on the Republican. It was still snowing when we started, and the wind soon began to blow so hard we could not see much of anything. We managed to get to the John Burke ranch where we got our horses and mules into some sheds and ourselves in some out-buildings, and managed to keep from freezing.*

Febr. 14 The next morning my brother went back to Columbus to recruit another company of scouts, and I went on after Major Noyes' command. I met him three days later on the Republican.

We had expected to find plenty of buffalo in the country, but we did not see one, and all of the game we had killed was one antelope. Major Noyes was out of rations and had not killed any game, and so had turned back to the fort. He had two troops of cavalry with him but no tents. I gave him pretty nearly all of the rations I had, and we went into camp with the understanding that we would start for Fort McPherson in the morning.

The next morning it was snowing very hard, but we broke camp and started. By the time we had reached the high table-

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3. Fort McPherson, established in 1863, was known successively as Cantonment McKean and Post Cottonwood Springs before it was officially named in 1866 in honor of Major General James B. McPherson. Its cemetery still remains under national supervision.

*The Campaigns of 1869*

land the wind was blowing a gale, and we could not see the trail that the cavalry had made ahead of us. The cavalry horses were in much better condition than our ponies, and were making much better time than we were. I kept a man on foot ahead of us to follow the road. About noon it got very cold, and I knew that I was freezing. I had my head well bundled up, but the snow would drift in and my nose, ears and cheeks were frozen pretty badly, while my fingers were also frostbitten so badly that I lost some of my nails.

When we started in the morning Major Noyes said we would camp on the Frenchman's Fork that night. I knew there was no wood on the Frenchman's Fork where the road crossed it, and I was wondering what we would do. About the middle of the afternoon one of my men rode up alongside of me and said, "I think we are near a canyon where there is plenty of wood."

I asked, "Can you find it?", and he said he could. I told him to go ahead and we would follow.

He turned to the left of the trail and was lost to sight in a minute, but we followed in the direction he had taken, and in a few minutes he met us and said he had found the place. We soon came to the head of a canyon where there was plenty of wood and grass, and very good shelter for the horses. The Indian that found this canyon was my first duty sergeant and was a very wonderful man. His name was

As soon as the wagons came he took some men with axes and cut some poles, and stood them up like lodge poles; then took the covers off the wagons and stretched them around the poles, making a tipi. While he with one or two men was doing this, we had the other men scraping the snow off the ground, and as soon as the tipi was up he had men cut grass with their butcher knives and spread it in the lodge for our beds. Then he built a fire in the center. We spread our robes and blankets, and in an hour we were perfectly warm and

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dry. The men had taken their blankets and some pieces of canvas that we had and had put up lodges for themselves, so we were all comfortable except for our frost bites.

That morning when leaving camp one of my teamsters had stepped in the creek and got his foot wet and had neglected to dry it. When our lodge was finished and he came inside and took off his shoe his foot seemed to be frozen solid. I called ~~Traveling Bear~~ and asked him if he could do anything for it. He got a kettle full of snow and stuck the man's foot in it. Then he took out his medicine bag, put about a teaspoonful of the powdered roots in his mouth, chewed it for some time, then spat into his hand and rubbed it over the foot and ankle. He sat up with this man nearly all night and repeated the treatment several times. Of course I don't know whether it was his treatment or not, but this man only lost the nail off one toe, yet I felt sure, when I first saw it, that he would lose his foot.

The next morning was bright and clear, but very cold. I broke camp early and went down to the Frenchman, where I found Major Noyes in camp on the open prairie. More than fifty of his horses were frozen to death and several of his mules. The Major himself was pretty badly frostbitten. They had burned some of the wagons and a lot of the men were badly frozen. Many of them lost their feet or hands or toes or fingers when we got to Fort McPherson.

My men were all in good shape, so I moved down the river. Where the road crossed, the river had frozen over hard enough to bear a horse, but many of the horses were barefooted, and those with shoes were so smooth that they could not stand up on the ice. I decided that the only thing to do was to chop out the ice and ford the river. I sent some of the men back to Major Noyes to borrow his axes, and set them to work. They were somewhat awkward with the axes, but got along pretty well, and by noon had cut a lane across the river wide enough for the wagons. Then I had two men

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ride ahead of each mule team and lead the lead mules, and we got across all right. Major Noyes complimented my men for their good work and said to me that he did not know how his men could have done it, as they were so badly frozen.

It took us three days to get to Fort McPherson, but the weather got much warmer, and although we had nothing to eat the last two days, we got through in very good shape. As soon as I got to the fort I drew tents, rations and forage, and went into camp on an island in the Platte, where there was good shelter, and began to build up our horses for the summer campaign, as they were very thin.



Some time in April my brother received orders to recruit another company of scouts, and we were ordered to North Platte.<sup>4</sup> After camping at North Platte for a couple of weeks, we were sent to Ogallala.

A few days later, I think some time in May, my brother and I with my company went on a scout up the North Platte River. When we got up the river about opposite Court House Rock,<sup>5</sup> and just as we were camping, we saw two horsemen on the north side of the river. They were just going out of sight behind an island that was covered with willows, and we could not tell whether they were white men or Indians, so my brother told three of my men to ride across and see who they were.

4. North Platte was laid out for the Union Pacific Railroad by General Grenville Dodge in 1866. A boom town during the construction of the U.P., by 1869 it had shrunk to "about 25 wooden and log buildings, including a jail, three stores, nine saloons, and three hotels" (Bill Dadd [pseudonym of John H. Williams], *Great Transcontinental Railroad Guide* [Chicago: 1896], 41).

5. Courthouse Rock, at the eastern terminus of the Wild Cat Hills about five miles southwest of the present town of Bridgeport, Nebraska, was a famed landmark on the Oregon Trail.

narrow, with perpendicular sides, and a lot of Cheyenne warriors had run up there. They were armed with bows and arrows and whenever we came near to the edge of the canyon they would let fly with their arrows, and then we would run up to the canyon, stick our guns over the edge, shoot and jump back. After keeping this up for some time and there were no more arrows coming, we looked down into the canyon and found there thirteen dead warriors, and between there and the mouth of the canyon were six or seven more, and in the village were about twenty. These were all warriors but two.

Dr. George Bird Grinnell in *The Fighting Cheyennes* says General Carr reported fifty-two Indians killed, but does not say how many were women and children. I did not see any children killed, but there were two dead women. The fight or chase continued for ten or fifteen miles west and south of the village, and several Indians were killed outside the village, but I do not know how many. I am quite sure that there were more than fifty killed in all.

When we finally turned back toward the village, after giving up the chase, we began to gather up the horses and mules that the Indians had abandoned. There were about five hundred horses and one hundred and twenty mules. The mules they had taken from freighters, and they were extra good ones. We made the charge into the camp at two o'clock and got back to the village about six.

Just as we got back to the village a terrific rain and hail storm came up, and while we were trying to get under shelter in the tipis Cody rode into camp. He had been with Colonel Royal and missed the fight. Later he was given by Ned Buntline the credit for having killed Tall Bull, but he was not in the fight at all.

While we were waiting for the storm to pass over I told the boys about how I supposed I had been shot when we first rode into the village, and that even now I was sore and stiff.

Capt. Cushing picked up my belt, which had a large square buckle on it, and said, "Well you were hit; the buckle is bent where the bullet struck it." I then opened my shirt and found a black and blue spot three or four inches in diameter on my stomach. I also had a cut over my eye where I was struck by an arrow while we were fighting at the head of the canyon. Aside from that none of our men were hurt.

The village was very rich in fancy buckskin shirts, and dresses with beadwork and colored porcupine quills worked into them. There were also several Navajo blankets, and a great many fine buffalo robes, besides quite a little money that they had taken from the colony they had massacred on the Solomon River when they took the white women. In the village our Pawnees found six hundred forty dollars in gold, every dollar of which they turned over to the white woman that we found. This woman, whose name was Weichel, recovered from her wound and was afterward married to a soldier at Fort Sedgwick. The white woman that was killed by the Indians, whose name was said to have been Suzannah Allerdice, was buried on the battlefield, and the battlefield was at first called Suzannah Spring, but was named Summit Springs by General Carr.\*



We gave up the day after the fight to destroying the village. The lodges, and, in fact, everything that would burn we burned, and in the afternoon we moved camp about ten or fifteen miles down to the Platte River.

In the fight one of my men, *Co-rux-ab-kah-wah-dee*, ~~had a horse which was killed~~ and pursued four Cheyennes, who were also on foot. They ran into the Canyon that I have before spoken of, and he followed and overtook and killed all four of them, and came back out of the mouth of the canyon with four scalps and



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four revolvers. My brother reported this to General Carr, and General Carr in his report of the battle mentioned him for his bravery, but in some way got the name confused with the name of the man *Co-rux-te-cha-dish*, Mad Bear, who was wounded in the night attack on the Republican about a week before. Later Congress had a bronze medal struck for him. The name on the medal was Mad Bear, but the medal was given to ~~Traveling Bear~~ by my brother. Mad Bear was in an ambulance the day of the battle, as he was not yet well enough to ride on horseback.

The second day after the fight we moved down the river about twenty-five miles, and that night our men had a good deal of trouble in holding the herd of captured stock. They thought the Indians were trying to stampede them, but they saw no Indians, and managed to hold the herd, and the second day after that we reached Fort Sedgwick.

July 15

The next day after we reached Sedgwick General Carr allowed each officer of the 5th Cavalry to pick a pony from the herd of captured horses, and then the officers of the scouts were given a pony each, and each of our scouts who took part in the fight was allowed to select a pony. All their ponies were taken across the river and shipped home, my brother going with them. The rest of the herd was turned over to me to take care of, as I was now in command of the battalion.

July 16

General Augur came to Fort Sedgwick, and on returning to Omaha took with him the prisoners that we had taken at Summit Springs, four women and thirteen children. They were sent from Omaha to the Spotted Tail Agency on the Missouri River above Fort Randall.

After staying at Fort Sedgwick for about two weeks, the command again started south, under command of Colonel Royal, as I think General Carr was ordered to Washington. We moved south to the head of the Frenchman's Fork of the Republican, where we found the trail of part of the band

## *The Campaigns of 1869*

that had escaped from the Summit Springs fight. They discovered us before we did them and moved down the Frenchman. We followed and they turned north toward the Platte River, crossing a few miles above Ogallala one day ahead of us.

The day we reached the river was very hot and dry; we were traveling as fast as we could, and I kept one or two of my men out ahead as trailers. We were crossing a high tableland covered with buffalo grass, and Cody rode up to me and said, pointing to the man ahead, "Does that Indian think he is following a trail?"

I said, "yes".

He said, "can you see any trail?", and I told him I could not. Then he proposed we ride on and ask the man, which we did.

He replied, "Yes I am following the trail."

I said, "The Long Hair says he doubts if there is a trail."

The Indian pointed ahead, where about three miles away there was a ridge of sand hills, and said, "Tell the Long Hair that when we get there he will see."

We rode on until we came to the sand hills and there were the tracks, plenty of them. Cody said, "Well I take off my hat to him, he is the best I ever saw."

That night we got to the Platte River, after a ride of seventy miles. We were all very tired and hot and thirsty, and as the wagon train did not get in, we went to sleep hungry. One of my men, who had been my orderly took my horse and led him away to find good grass for him, and I lay down with my saddle blanket over my head to keep the mosquitoes from eating me up, and went to sleep.

About midnight my boy came and woke me and said he had some coffee for me. I roused Capt. Cushing and we followed him over to the river bank, where he had a half gallon tin pail full of coffee, and three hard tack for each of us. We ate them and drank the coffee, before I thought to

## MAN OF THE PLAINS

Sioux woman who was pretty nearly starved to death.<sup>20</sup> The men brought her to camp and after a few days a wagon train that was going to Fort McPherson took her in, and I think she was sent from there to the Spotted Tail Reservation at the Whetstone Agency.

About the first of December we were mustered out and sent home.

## SUPPLEMENT

### MORROW'S ROAD RANCH (page 96)

Jack Morrow (1831-1876) came west from Pennsylvania; he sold supplies to freighters and migrants, traded with Indians, and raised cattle. His road ranch was about twelve miles west of Cottonwood Springs on the Oregon Trail (Frank A. Root and William E. Connelly, *The Overland*

20. The woman was questioned through the interpreter, John Y. Nelson, and through a Ponca serving with the Pawnee Scouts. The Ponca talked to her in Sioux and translated her statements into Pawnee, which Frank North translated into English. She said that the band was led by Pawnee Killer, Whistler, and a head soldier named Little Bull. She had lost her way in the flight and was trying to walk to Spotted Tail's camp to the northward. She was merely an old woman, she insisted, and the warriors had not told her their plans. Questioned later at Fort McPherson, she stated that she was Pawnee Killer's mother and that Whistler was responsible for the hostility of the band (Journal of the March, October 3, 1869; General Emory to General Ruggles, October 11, 1869, National Archives and Records Service, Record Group 98).

## The Campaigns of 1869

*Stage to California* [Topeka: 1901], 218-220; *Omaha Daily Bee*, July 7, 1876, 4).

### BURKE'S RANCH (page 96)

In 1864 John Burke established a ranch about seven miles west of Fort McPherson. It was destroyed by the Sioux in 1868, and he bought the Ben Holladay Overland Stage station about two miles west of the fort. Apparently it was here that North found shelter.

### TRAVELING BEAR (page 97)

In a retrospective view of "the great and eventful days of Pawnee history" North had this to say about Traveling Bear: "[He] was about 6 feet in height and very muscular; weight probably about 200 pounds. He had a frank and open countenance, was outspoken, and looked straight at you with his brown eyes (unusual in an Indian). Though apparently rather serious, he was generally pleasant; but in a battle a whirlwind—and I do not think he was ever afraid of anything.

"In 1867, when we had some Union Pacific R.R. officials hunting near Fort Kearny, the Bear shot an arrow entirely through a buffalo—a feat that he probably never duplicated. The only other Indian I ever heard of nearly equaling it was Two Lance, the Sioux warrior . . . I never heard of any white man even killing a buffalo with bow and arrow—much less shooting an arrow through one" (Bruce, *The Fighting Norths and Pawnee Scouts*, 19). Traveling Bear died of wounds received at Massacre Canyon in 1873.

### SCOTTS BLUFF (page 102)

A national monument since 1919, Scotts Bluff, on the south side of the Platte in present-day Scotts Bluff County,



## MAN OF THE PLAINS

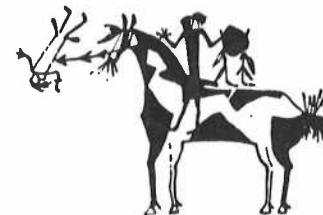
When they came out of the canyon, the Sioux turned away; and as the Pawnees ran on toward the Republican, they saw a cavalry troop coming up the river. The Pawnees always believed that the Sioux turned back when they saw the soldiers; and said if it had not been for that, more of their number would have been killed. . . .

In addition to Ogallala Sioux from Red Cloud Agency and Brule Sioux from Spotted Tail Agency, I believe there were some Cheyennes and Arapahos who were visiting Red Cloud and accompanied his band on that hunt. My impression is that it was the Ogallalas who had the permission to hunt on the Republican River, and that the other Indians accompanied them only as their guests, one might say.

Among the Pawnee Scouts killed in the fight, North mentions his striker, or batman, Nick Koots. [REDACTED], who had distinguished himself at Summit Springs, lost his whole family—a wife and four children—and was himself left for dead. When a Sioux stooped over to scalp him, "Traveling Bear threw his arm around the neck of the Sioux, pulled him down, took his knife away from him and killed him. Though very seriously wounded, the Bear made his escape across country about 150 miles to Plum Creek Station, Neb., and finally reached the Pawnee reservation at Genoa, but died a few months later" (39).

Today a granite monument at Massacre Canyon commemorates the last battle between the Pawnee and the Sioux. Carved on it are the faces of a Sioux, John Grass, and Sun Chief of the Pawnee.

## VIII



## THE BLACK HILLS EXPEDITION OF 1874

[See Map 8; supplement for this chapter begins on page 191.]

JUST AFTER RETURNING from the buffalo hunt, Joe Tiffany, Wesley Rhone<sup>1</sup> and myself started from Columbus to Spring Creek in Howard County. Joe and I had each a team and were intending to bridge several little creeks on the road. On the way to Genoa, we were joined by an old gentleman with a team, who was going to Howard County with the intention of locating there. When we passed through the Pawnee village some of the Indians went out with us to the Cedar River, where Fullerton now is, and they told me we had better go back, as the Sioux were in the country. We concluded to go on, however, and they went back.

1. Tiffany and Rhone were Platte County farmers.

# DEDICATION CEREMONY

## MEDAL OF HONOR WINNERS

The following listing of recipients of the Congressional Medal of Honor has been compiled pursuant to L.B. 1212 as passed during the Eightieth Session of the Nebraska Legislature which provides that Nebraskans awarded the Medal of Honor shall be named to the Nebraska Hall of Fame. Criteria for selection includes those individuals who have been awarded the Medal of Honor for service within Nebraska and native Nebraskans and individuals who have taken residence for at least two years in the State prior to or following military service:

### CIVIL WAR

Bates, Delavan  
Bourke, John G.  
Flanagan, Augustin  
Hanks, Joseph  
Henry, Guy V.  
Johnston, David  
Josselyn, Simeon T.  
Miller, Jacob C.  
Miller, James P.  
Prentice, Joseph R.  
Shapland, John  
Traynor, Andrew  
Vifquain, Victor  
Widick, Andrew J.  
Williams, William H.

### INDIAN CAMPAIGNS

Babcock, John B.  
Canfield, Heth  
~~Co-rux-a-kah-wadde (Pawnee Scout)~~  
~~(Traveling Bear)~~  
Day, Matthias W.  
Foley, John H.  
Grant, George  
Herron, Leander  
Heyl, Charles H.  
Himmelsback, Michael  
Hubbard, Thomas  
Leonard, Patrick  
Lohnes, Francis W.  
Lytton, Jephtha L.  
Stance, Emanuel  
Strayer, William H.  
Thompson, George W.  
Vokes, Leroy H.

### WAR WITH SPAIN

Ehle, John W.  
Meredith, James

Co-rux-a-kah-wadde (Pawnee Scout)  
(Traveling Bear)

### 1901-1911

Schmidt, Otto Diller

### PHILIPPINES, 1911

Volz, Jacob Jr.

### WORLD WAR I

Graves, Ora  
Holderman, Nelson M.  
Rickenbacker, Edward V.

### WORLD WAR II

Bauer, Harold W.  
Booker, Robert D.  
Cowan, Richard E.  
Hansen, Dale M.  
Lindstrom, Floyd K.  
Parle, John J.  
Powers, Leo J.  
Tominac, John J.  
Treadwell, Jack L.

### KOREAN CONFLICT

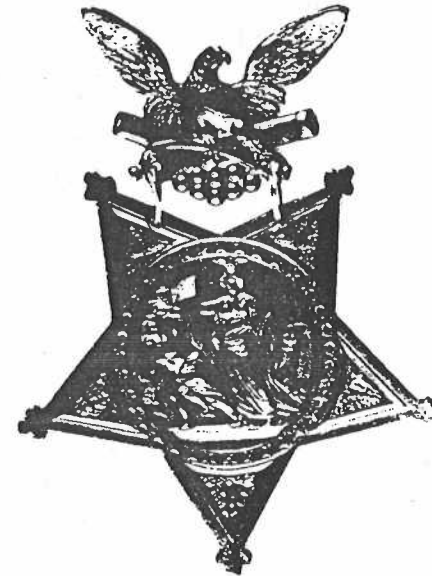
Gomez, Edward  
Kouma, Ernest

### VIETNAM CONFLICT

Coker, Ronald L.  
Fous, James W.  
Hagemeister, Charles C.  
Hibbs, Robert J.  
Keith, Miguel  
Kerrey, Joseph R.  
Young, Gerald O.

## Inducting

## Nebraska Medal of Honor Recipients Into the Nebraska Hall of Fame



*"Bravest of the Brave"*

HALL OF FAME, NORTH FOYER  
NEBRASKA STATE CAPITOL  
Lincoln

Sunday, May 5, 1974, at 2 p.m.



Gen. Victor Vifquain, Saline County, was an early Nebraska winner of the Congressional Medal of Honor. He enlisted first with a New York regiment. While serving with the 97th Illinois Infantry, he received the medal for action against Confederate Fort Blakely, Alabama, April 9, 1865 (citation dated June 8, 1865). A close-up of the medal is on the cover of this program.

### MEDAL OF HONOR

The Medal of Honor, established by Joint Resolution of Congress, July 12, 1862 (amended by acts of July 9, 1918 and July 25, 1963), is now awarded in the name of Congress only to "a person who, while a member of the Armed Forces distinguishes himself 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; while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party. The deed performed must have been one of personal bravery or self-sacrifice so conspicuous as to clearly distinguish the individual above his comrades and must have involved risk of life. Incontestable proof of the performance of the service will be exacted and each recommendation for the award of this decoration will be considered on the standard of extraordinary merit. Eligibility is limited to members of the Armed Forces of the United States in active Federal military service."

## PROGRAM

- Post Colors .....Color Guard  
Nebraska Army National Guard
- Master of Ceremony .....Honorable Eugene T. Mahoney  
State Senator, 5th District
- Invocation .....Chaplain John D. Reehl  
Major, Nebraska Army National Guard
- The Hall of Fame .....E. J. McBride, Blue Hill  
Chairman, Hall of Fame Commission
- Introduction of  
Distinguished Guests .....Senator Eugene T. Mahoney
- Reading of Citations. It is requested  
that each recipient present (or his  
relatives or descendants) stand as  
citation is read. ....Captain Charles R. James, Jr.  
Army National Guard  
Lieutenant Kenneth R. Kreitzinger  
Air National Guard
- Unveiling of the Plaque to the  
"Bravest of the Brave" .....Marvin F. Kivett, Director  
Nebraska State Historical Society
- Acceptance of the plaque in behalf of  
the State of Nebraska .....Honorable J. James Exon,  
Governor, State of Nebraska
- Appreciation for the recognition of  
Medal of Honor Recipients ....Major General Francis L. Winner  
The Adjutant General, State of Nebraska
- Retire Colors .....Color Guard
- Music provided by 43rd Army Band Nebraska Army National Guard  
CW2 Richard J. Kucera, Bandmaster

9.5.86

Dear Betty,

Enclosed is the note from the Pawnee Tribal Council - I am sorry this isn't typed, but I wanted it sent to you as soon as I could.

I'll try to get the article written. Hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely

Dan



# Pawnee Tribe of Oklahoma

P. O. Box 470  
Pawnee, Oklahoma 74058  
918/762-3624

Resolution No. 86-58  
August 22, 1986

## R E S O L U T I O N

- WHEREAS, the Pawnee Business Council is the supreme governing body of the Pawnee Tribe and is authorized to conduct business on behalf of the Pawnee Tribe in accordance with Article IV, Sections I and II of the Pawnee Tribal Constitution and By-Laws; and
- WHEREAS, the Pawnee Business Council met in a special session on August 22, 1986, at the Pawnee Tribal Administration Center Conference Room, duly authorized and with a quorum present; and
- WHEREAS, throughout history Pawnee Scouts have received commendations from the U.S. Government for their bravery and outstanding service to the U.S. Cavalry; and
- WHEREAS, the Pawnee Business Council received a letter from a Daniel H. Dietrich, M.D. of the Omaha Family Practice Clinic, Omaha, Nebraska; and
- WHEREAS, Dr. Dietrich is asking the Pawnee Business Council to authorize the pursual of changing an error in the naming of the Medal of Honor winner, whose correct name should be Traveling Bear; and
- WHEREAS, in the State Capital Rotunda at Lincoln, Nebraska, the individual who is honored is listed as Mad Bear.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Pawnee Business Council hereby authorizes the name correction of Mad Bear to Traveling Bear at the Nebraska State Historical Records in connection with the Medal of Honor award that had taken place approximately in 1869.

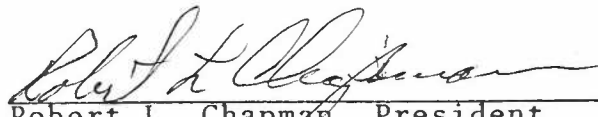
## C E R T I F I C A T I O N

I, Robert L. Chapman, President of the Pawnee Business Council, do hereby certify that a special session of the Pawnee Business Council was properly called and convened on the 22nd day of August, 1986, and that the Council is composed of eight (8) members of whom 8 were present, 0 absent, comprising a quorum, and the above resolution was duly adopted by a vote of 7 for, 0 against, and 0 abstaining and that said resolution has not been amended or rescinded.

Signed this 22nd day of August, 1986.

ATTEST:

  
Carol L. Nuttle, Secretary-  
Treasurer  
Pawnee Business Council

  
Robert L. Chapman, President  
Pawnee Business Council



NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

1500 R STREET, BOX 82554, LINCOLN, NE 68501

DIRECTOR: JAMES A. HANSON (402) 471-3270

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October 28, 1986

Robert C. Ripley  
Building Division  
State Capitol - 10th Floor  
P.O. Box 94924  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4924

Dear Bob:

Enclosed is a copy of the list of Medal of Honor winners showing the correction that Dr. Dan Dietrich and I have been trying to bring about,

The name should read: Co-rux-a-kah-wadde (Pawnee Scout)  
Traveling Bear

We would like to know when the plaque is as it should be. I think I told you that Dr. Dietrich contacted the Pawnee Tribal Council prior to my conversation with you. They appreciate the attempt to rectify the error.

I also told you that Dr. Dietrich has offered to help with the cost. He would like to be present, if possible, when the corrected plaque is hung in the Hall of Fame. For that matter, I would like to be there also if you have no objections. Please let me know.

I am enclosing a memo from Jim Potter about the error that was made. Evidently Ora Graves does not belong there. Jim has provided documentation for three additions and is working on another name. Jefferson Coates, Orion P. Howe, and Samuel McConnell were awarded the Medal of Honor for service in the Civil War and Jim has documentation for these three. Another name has surfaced but Jim said that the information about him is conflicting.

Dr. Dietrich has expressed the hope that the plaque can be corrected before the first of the year. If you need anything further, please let me know.

Sincerely,

*Betty Loudon*

Betty Loudon

Research Associate

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

cc: Daniel H. Dietrich, M.D.,  
Omaha Family Practice Clinic  
6751 No. 72nd - Suite 105  
Omaha, NE





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*Betty Loudon*

Betty Loudon

Research Associate

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY/AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER

cc: Daniel H. Dietrich, M.D.,  
Omaha Family Practice Clinic  
6751 No. 72nd - Suite 105  
Omaha, NE

November 16, 1986

*rec'd 11-20-86*

Betty Loudon  
Research Associate  
Nebraska State Historical Society  
1500 "R" Street Box 82554  
Lincoln, NE 68501

Dear Betty:

Enclosed is an article that I wrote. I don't know who I would get to publish it. Right now it is enough that I have completed a paper. I would like for you to critique it, if you would. I do have a tough hide so don't worry about hurting feelings, etc.

Keep in touch,

*Dan*

Dan

DHD:lm

March 9, 1988

TO: JIM  
FROM: BETTY  
SUBJECT: TRAVELING BEAR (NEBRASKA HALL OF FAME - CONGRESSIONAL MEDAL OF HONOR)

I understand that we are to submit an article relative to our work at the Society. I would like to submit Dr. Dietrich's article and accompany it with an introductory paragraph.

I think this article would appeal to readers of Nebraska History, it would bring about the change in the plaque (which is as it should be), and it would exhibit our concern to correct error. I would be happy to help with the Dietrich manuscript, if you want me to.

I have cleared this with Dr. Dietrich. When I spoke with him today, he reiterated his offer of paying for the corrections on the plaque.

In addition, Dr. Dietrich contacted the Pawnee Tribe and I have a copy of the resolution sent by the tribe authorizing Dr. Dietrich to pursue the changing of the name.

## TRAVELING BEAR

I was walking with Brian toward the east entrance to the State Capitol. Seven year olds have a tendency to bounce from activity to activity. It is interesting to watch. I was happy that there wasn't anything he could break. We were going from one side of the corridor to the other. Brian 'found' a bench. He looked at it and then tried it for fit. I was absentmindedly following his track. As I recall, the bench was either right under the plaque or very near to it. I began to read the names. The plaque commemorated the Medal of Honor recipients from the State of Nebraska.

The Medal of Honor was established by an act of Congress in 1863. It was created to honor the Ohio volunteers who invaded southern territory during the war between the states with the intent of destroying the Georgia State Railroad. The attempt failed. Twenty-two men were engaged in the 'adventure'. Six were executed and the rest either escaped or were exchanged.

The plaque begins with the Civil War. There aren't many names in that section. It next lists the "Indian Wars". One name in particular was fascinating simply because it was written in Pawnee. The Americanization was also listed..."Mad Bear." I found myself wondering what this man was like and what he felt. I wanted to know his experience.

I put the thought away for a year returning to the subject from time to time during a conversation with one or the other of my partners. I returned to the legislature as doctor of the day in February or March of this year and copied the name from the plaque. I began to correspond with the State Historical

Society and got a near immediate reply from Betty Loudon, an associate researcher with the Society. I found out that "Mad Bear" was not the person who had won the Medal of Honor. In fact, the man who had distinguished himself was a Pawnee scout by the name of "Traveling Bear." My initial response to the information was indifference. I just wanted to know how the man, whoever he was, had won the Medal of Honor. I wasn't that interested that the name was incorrect. The more I thought of the fact though, the more intrigued I became. I took a day off and went down to the Historical Society and met Betty.

The day was a Thursday in midsummer. I remember that I could park right across from the Society building without getting a ticket from the University's campus police. Betty is a middle-aged lady and the day I met her she was inundated with work. She is a pretty lady, and I thought for the few moments I talked with her, intelligent. She didn't have much time, but located some of the writings which I needed for my research. I spent most of the day reading the notes and writings of Luther and Frank North, the commanders of the Pawnee scouts. I finished the research in the afternoon and Betty and I discussed how the plaque could be changed. I felt that someone needed to know that there was a mistake besides Betty and me. I thought it would be fun to write an article for some paper. I felt that I wanted to do something to make the historical record right. As I consider all those thoughts now, it seems quite clear that I wanted not so much to correct the historical record as much as I wanted the recognition that I was making it correct. I am pleased that the record is being changed now...quietly and with dignity.

Well, with all of these rambling thoughts, I need to tell you about Ku-ruks-u-ka-wa-di, Traveling Bear. The historical record is limiting. Most

of the Pawnee history was passed by word of mouth. I am sure the language was written down later, but I was unable to obtain the 'Pawnee' historical perspective. The history surrounding the action in which Ku-ruks-u-ka-wa-di distinguished himself was recorded by a white man. His honor was bestowed by a white man's nation. This does not detract from the honor. It, perhaps, even enhances it. Valor does cross racial lines. It would have enhanced my understanding to know what those who fought beside the man thought.

In February, 1869, the Pawnee scouts were ordered to Fort McPherson near present day North Platte. The army had decided on a winter campaign into the Republican river valley. When the scouts reached Fort McPherson they drew ammunition, rations and forage for the fighting. A Major Noyes was in command of the campaign and had left McPherson ahead of the scouts. The campaign was hindered by foul weather. The first mention of Ku-ruks-u-ka-wa-di occurs at this point. He was the company's first-duty sergeant. It had been raining and the rain had turned to snow. This was followed by a severe cold. Traveling Bear found a wooded canyon and established one or two lodges which allowed the troop to survive the night. Noyes had found it necessary to encamp on exposed prairie. Fifty of his horses and several of his mules froze to death. Many of the men of Noyes's command suffered severe frostbite. The weather stopped the campaign.

In March, 1869, Major Frank North reorganized the Pawnee Scouts into three troops of fifty men apiece. Through the next two months they were involved in training and some fighting. This was in preparation for the



summer campaign against the Sioux and Cheyenne. Most of the fighting would center in the Republican river valley. Fort McPherson was the base of operations with General E. Carr commanding. Major North reported to him there in the summer of 1869. Carr mounted the campaign in late June and early July of that year. On a Sunday, July 11, 1869, the command came upon a large Cheyenne village. The leader of the Cheyenne, Tall Bull, was killed that day and his band of people widely scattered. The attack was made with complete surprise.

During the engagement, Ku-ruks-u-ka-wa-di followed four Cheyenne braves into a canyon where they had concentrated themselves for protection. The facts of what happened are not reported. It is said that he followed four men into the canyon and killed those four returning with their scalps and revolvers. Major North reported this to General Carr who recommended Traveling Bear for the Medal of Honor. A bronze medal was struck for him on the order of Congress. The name on the back was in error, however. The name printed was Ku-ruks-ti-cha-dish, Mad Bear. Frank North did present the medal to Traveling Bear...illiteracy being what it was. The record continued incorrect till Betty Loudon first recognized it incorrect some years ago. (Frank and Luther North knew of the error, also, but they were unable to correct the official record).

I wrote to the Pawnee nation's tribal council and asked if it would be an honorable thing to correct the error. They graciously acquiesced. The change is underway now. I wonder now, whatever became of the man. I haven't seen a picture of him. There are some pictures of the Pawnee Scouts, but there isn't a listing of who the people in the picture are. I wonder if he

ever talked about what happened. I wonder if he had children. His nation was never well treated by the whites. For me, it must suffice that I changed the record or had a part in the changing of the record...the plaque in the rotunda of the Capitol. I want to be there when it's done, even if there is no fanfare; and, just me and a workman are watching. I think it will be enough.

Daniel H. Dietrich, M.D.

# SOME FAMOUS Nebraskans

Third Revision

Bess Streeter Aldrich, Elmwood  
author of best-selling novels

Francis Allen Jr., Lincoln  
eight gymnastics championships

Letitia Baldrige, Omaha  
columnist, management consultant

J. Gutzon Borglum, Fremont  
designer, engineer of Mt. Rushmore

Virgil E. Boyd, Omaha/Alliance  
president, Chrysler Corp. 1967-70

Warren E. Buffett, Omaha  
one of world's wealthiest men, 1990s

William F. Cody, North Platte  
actor, outdoorsman, scout

Clara Bewick Colby, Beatrice  
women's rights advocate

Sandy Dennis, Hastings/Lincoln  
actress, two Tonys, 1966 Academy Award

Robert S. Devaney, Lincoln  
football championships, 1970, 71

Gladys Henry Dick, Pawnee City/Lincoln  
co-developer of scarlet fever antitoxin, 1924

Mignon Good Eberhart, Lincoln  
mystery writer

Paul F. Engler, Stuart/Amarillo, TX  
nation's second-largest cattle feeder

Ruth Etting, David City  
singer, actress

Gerald R. Ford, Omaha  
38th U.S. President, 1974-77

Bess Furman, Danbury/Kearney  
journalist, New York Times correspondent

Joseph C. Glenn, Lincoln/Greeley, CO  
football championships, 1996, 97

Lulu G. Graves, Fairbury/Peru  
co-founder, American Dietetic Assn. 1917

Creighton J. Hale, Hardy  
developer of baseball & military helmets

Joyce C. Hall, David City/Norfolk  
Hallmark Cards founder, 1957 Horatio Alger

Denham Harman, Omaha  
originator of free radical theory of aging

Barbara Hendricks, Lincoln  
opera singer, recitalist

Leta Stetter Hollingworth, Chadron/Valentine  
psychologist, author of leading textbook

Joseph McVicker Hunt, Scottsbluff  
psychologist, Head Start theorist

Frank W. Leahy, O'Neill/Omaha  
football championships, 1943, 46, 47, 49

Robert D. Legler, Fullerton/Schuyler  
NASA flight controller, co-rescued Apollo 13

Evelyn N. Lincoln, Polk/Lexington  
personal secretary of U.S. President Kennedy

Henry T. Lynch, Omaha  
cancer expert, 1996 Bristol-Myers Squibb Award

Arjay R. Miller, Shelby  
president, Ford Motor Company, 1963-68

J. Sterling Morton, Nebraska City  
founder of Arbor Day, 1872

George W. Norris, McCook  
U.S. Congressman/Senator, 1903-43

Thomas W. Osborne, Hastings/Lincoln  
football championships, 1994, 95, 97

Ada Patterson, Riverton/Franklin  
co-pioneer of "sob sister" journalism

Frank Phillips, Scotia  
founder, Phillips 66 Petroleum Co., 1917

Charles H. Purcell, North Bend/Lincoln  
designer, San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge, 1936

Alice G. Robinson, Omaha  
Congressional Digest founder, 1921

Ann Ronell, Omaha  
songwriter, "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?"

Daniel A. Ruge, Murdock  
physician of U.S. President Reagan, 1981-85

Roland M. Schaffert, Hayes Center/Crete  
developer of photocopy machine, 1948

Evelyn G. Sharp, Ord  
youngest licensed commercial pilot, 1938

Virginia Dodd Smith, Chappell  
U.S. Congresswoman, 1975-89

William E. Southworth, Harvard  
baseball world championships, 1942, 44

Robert Taylor, Filley/Beatrice  
actor, narrator, Golden Globe, 1954

Lady Evelene Brodstone Vestey, Superior  
highest-salaried female executive, 1920s

Glenn E. Wallichs, Grand Island/Omaha  
co-founder of Capitol Records, 1942

Irene Worth, Fairbury  
theatre actress, Tony Awards, 1965, 76, 91

Samuel W. Yorty, Lincoln  
mayor of Los Angeles, 1961-73

Darryl F. Zanuck, Wahoo  
co-founder of 20th Century-Fox, 1933

Mr. E. A. Kral

Box 685 • Wilber, NE 68465-0685

Phone (402) 821-3060

December 11, 1998

Mr. Michael R. Lewis, Editor  
Nebraska Blue Book  
State Capitol, 10th Floor  
PO Box 94604  
Lincoln, NE 68509-4604

*Called Mike  
Lewis  
12-28-98*

Dear Mike,

With regard to corrections needed in your listing of Medal of Honor winners in Nebraska Blue Book, I have contacted Mr. James Potter of the Nebraska State Historical Society, and he will be forwarding to you a communication by February 1st.

There are two spelling changes in the section on the Civil War, and the Indian Campaigns:

Johnson, David should be Johnston, David

*Johnston  
NO. TBIS correct*

Co-Rux-Ah-Kah-Wah-Dee (Traveling Bear) should be changed to Co-Rux-Te-Chod-Ish (Mad Bear)

As far as other variations between the Medal of Honors list published in government documents in the early 1980s, and the list in Nebraska Blue Book 1996-97 edition, they have been resolved by Mr. Potter on the basis of more recent government confirmation and records in his file on Medal of Honor winners with Nebraska connections.

I have suggested to Mr. Potter that the NSHS publish an article on all Nebraska-connected Medal of Honor winners for future posterity.

Meanwhile, you may expect to hear from Mr. Potter by February 1st, as you had requested.

Cordial regards,

*E. A. Kral*

E. A. Kral

cc. Mr. James Potter, NSHS

PS. A hard-bound volume title The Congressional Medal of Honor, The Names, The Deeds (Sharp & Dunnigan, 1984) may be found at Love Library under UB 433 C65, which reproduced the original government document that lists winners from 1863 through 1978. This volume does not, however, contain the updates that Mr. Potter has found since then.

Pulitzer Prize winners are listed on envelope

**Mark Nelson**

---

**From:** "Cheryl Iron" <crowpaw@hotmail.com>  
**To:** <mnelson@nebraskahistory.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 27, 2001 1:37 PM  
**Subject:** TravelingBear - a Pawnee Indian

Dear Mr. Nelson:

I am the assistant librarian at the library here in Pawnee, Oklahoma. Mr. Elmo Wilde, Pawnee Tribal Member and a member of the Pawnee Indian Veterans Organization has been researching the Pawnee Medal of Honor Recipients, in particular, whether Traveling Bear received one and if that honor is noted on his gravestone.

I was given your e-mail address by Tom Myers of the University of Nebraska. If you know what I'm talking about or know of a source that may be able to help us, please e-mail me at [crowpaw@hotmail.com](mailto:crowpaw@hotmail.com).

Thank you.

Cheryl Hunter  
Assistant Librarian  
413 Illinois  
Pawnee Public Library  
Pawnee, OK 74058

---

Get your FREE download of MSN Explorer at <http://explorer.msn.com>

**Jim Potter**

**To:** David Murphy

**Subject:** Message: <crowpaw@hotmail.com>

Dear Cheryl Hunter: Your inquiry to Mark Nelson about Traveling Bear came to me. Mark has left our staff. What we know about Traveling Bear and his Medal of Honor comes from Luther North's *Man of the Plains: The Recollections of Luther North* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1961). Luther mentions Traveling Bear several times, and also tells how he earned the Medal at the July 11, 1869, battle at Summit Springs in Colorado.

"In the fight one of my men, Co-rux-ah-kah-wah-dee, Traveling Bear, had left his horse, which was tired out, and pursued four Cheyennes, who were also on foot. They ran into the canyon that I have before spoken of, and he followed and overtook and killed all four of them, and came back out of the mouth of the canyon with four scalps and four revolvers. My brother [Frank North] reported this to General Carr and General Carr in his report of the battle mentioned him for his bravery, but in some way got the name confused with the name of the man Co-rux-te-cha-dish, Mad Bear, who was wounded in the night attack on the Republican about a week before. Later Congress had a bronze medal struck for him. The name on the medal was Mad Bear, but the medal was given to Traveling Bear by my brother. Mad Bear was in an ambulance the day of the battle, as he was not yet well enough to ride on horseback." (pp. 116-20).

Because of the mistake mentioned by Luther, the U.S. government's Medal of Honor book has Mad Bear as the recipient, but some years ago I pointed out the error to the Medal of Honor Historical Society. Hopefully their records now have it right.

Luther goes on to say that Traveling Bear was seriously wounded in the 1873 fight at Massacre Canyon, and made his way back to the Pawnee Reservation near Genoa, Nebraska, but died a few months later. I do not know the location of Traveling Bear's grave, or if it is marked in any way, but probably he was buried on the reservation before the Pawnee were moved to Oklahoma.—Jim Potter, associate director for research and publications.

**Jim Potter**

**From:** David Murphy

**Sent:** Thursday, June 28, 2001 2:16 PM

**To:** Jim Potter

**Subject:** iron email

Dear Mr. Potter:

Thanks so much for your prompt response. I will give a copy of your letter to Mr. Wilde and hope it contains the information he needs. The City of Pawnee has a Veterans Memorial monument on our town square and the Veterans Organization wanted a plaque to be placed there noting the Medal of Honor Recipients. Mr. Wilde wanted to make sure the plaque has the correct name on it, because Mad Bear is still listed as the recipient in the U.S. Army's list on the internet.

Thanks again.

Cheryl Hunter  
Pawnee, OK