

A Story of Boylston Clay and Its Ties to a Line of Veterans

Part II

By Inga Milbauer

*This story began with a cup made of Boylston clay by Alice Maud Hazard,
the granddaughter of one of Boylston's Civil War Veterans, Theodore Hazard*

President Abraham Lincoln called for the establishment of Black regiments following the Emancipation Proclamation issued on 1 January 1863. Massachusetts Governor John A. Andrew began to form an all-black regiment in early February 1863. Recruitment offices opened not just in Massachusetts, but across the country and in Canada. The 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry Regiment was one of the first African American regiments to serve in the Civil War. Governor Andrew chose Robert Gould Shaw of the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry Regiment to lead the 54th regiment. Robert Gould Shaw was born in Dartmouth, Massachusetts on 10 October 1837, the son of prominent abolitionist parents. He joined the army in 1861, and fought in several battles, including the Battle of Antietam.¹ The regiment organized at camp Meigs in Reidville, Massachusetts and mustered on 13 February 1863. On the morning of 28 May 1863, 1,007 soldiers and 37 officers gathered on the Boston Common, and marched through Boston to embark on the steamer *DeMolay* with destination Hilton Head, South Carolina. Thousands turned out to watch their farewell parade. According to the *Boston Evening Transcript*, “no single regiment has attracted larger crowds into the streets than the 54th.”²

On 16 July 1863, the regiment played an essential role in protecting the 10th Connecticut Infantry at the Battle of Grimball's Landing. On 18 July 1863, the 54th Regiment infantry led an assault on Fort Wagner in Charleston, South Carolina. The infantry attack on this Confederate stronghold by two Union brigades consisting of nine regiments ended in a retreat with heavy losses. Of the 54th Regiment as many as half of the regiment's men were counted as casualties. Seventy-two men were confirmed killed in combat, including Colonel Robert Shaw, and over fifty men were missing in action.³ Although the assault on Fort Wagner was a Union military defeat, the Confederates abandoned the fort on 7 September 1863. It also proved to be “both a powerful political and symbolic victory.”⁴ Through their bravery and valor, the men of the 54th motivated African American soldiers nationwide.” After the death of Robert Shaw, the 54th Regiment was led by Colonel Edward Needles Hallowell, an abolitionist from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. A monument created by Augustus Saint-Gaudens to commemorate the service of Robert Gould Shaw and the 54th Massachusetts Regiment was dedicated in 1897.



ROBERT GOULD SHAW AND 54TH MASSACHUSETTS REGIMENT MEMORIAL

*Monument on Boston Common by Augustus Saint-Gaudens
National Park Service*

Two Boylston residents enlisted in Company D of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment: Theodore Hazard and his younger brother Henry Hazard (the surname Hazard is often spelled as Hazzard, but Hazard will be used in this article). Both men are listed as “Free, on or before April 19, 1861” on their military records.⁵

Theodore Abram Hazard, a resident of Boylston, Massachusetts, enlisted in Concord, Middlesex County, Massachusetts on 17 July 1863. Theodore was 29 years old when he enlisted as a private for three years. He was a cook at the time of enlistment and is described as “5 feet 8 inches in height and having a light complexion, black hair and brown eyes.”⁶ He mustered with his unit on Long Island in Boston Harbor, Suffolk County, Massachusetts on 23 November 1863. On the September/October 1864 Muster Roll he is noted as company laundryman. In the next few Muster Rolls, he is listed as the company cook. His regiment participated in the Battle of Honey Hill and the Battle of Olustee in 1864, and the Battle of Boykin's Mill in April 1865. Theodore

¹ https://www.nps.gov/articles/54th-massachusetts-regiment.htm#_ftn1

² *Ibid*

³ *Boylston Civil War Veterans* by Leah Withers et al., *Boylston Historical Collaborative*, 2023.

⁴ https://www.nps.gov/articles/54th-massachusetts-regiment.htm#_ftn1

⁵ *Boylston Civil War Veterans* by Leah Withers et al., *Boylston Historical Collaborative*, 2023.p.431, p.438

⁶ *Boylston Civil War Veterans* by Leah Withers et al., *Boylston Historical Collaborative*, 2023., p. 431

mustered out in Charleston, South Carolina on 20 August 1865, having fulfilled his military commitment.⁷

Theodore, returned home to his wife Cynthia Ann (nee Messer) after his military service. They continued to reside in Boylston where he was employed as a farm laborer. By 1880 their household included Cynthia's mother, Betsey Kezser Messer, and three sons: Frank, age 14 years, Alpheus, age 10 years, and Willie, age 8 years. Their oldest son, George, age 22 years, worked and resided on the nearby farm of Levi Lincoln Flagg.⁸ Levi Lincoln Flagg was at that time the wealthiest farmer in Boylston.



HOME OF GEORGE HAZARD
Cross Street, Boylston, Massachusetts
BHSM Photograph Collection

George married his daughter, Alice Jane Flagg, in Rochester, Strafford County, New Hampshire on 3 April 1883. George and Alice Hazard resided in Boylston where he ran the Hazard Brickyard. George and Alice had four children, three boys and a daughter. Their daughter, Alice Maud Hazard made the clay cup described in Part I of this story. (see [FFF20240202 Clay Cup.pdf \(boylstonhistory.org\)](https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/44091608/theodore_hazard))

Theodore and Cynthia Hazard moved to Sterling, Worcester County, Massachusetts prior to 1889 where he was listed in the 1890 Veteran's Census.⁹ He died at home on 26 February 1891 at the age of 57 years, 7 months and 19 days old. His obituary mentions "he died of pneumonia, last week, after a four days illnees (sic); he was an industrious man

and resided on the former "Harvey Kendall place," which he owned. He was buried in Boylston. He leaves a widow and four sons."¹⁰ His wife Cynthia A. (nee Messer) Hazard died of pneumonia just four months later on 26 June 1891. Both were buried in Pine Grove Cemetery Boylston.¹¹

Theodore's younger brother, Henry Hazard enlisted in Company D of the 54th Regiment in Boylston, Worcester County, Massachusetts on 7 December 1863. Henry Hazard was 23 years old when he enlisted as a private for a three-year period. He is described as "a laborer, 5 feet 6 inches in height, with dark hair, dark grey eyes and a dark complexion" in the military records.¹² His unit assembled on 14 January 1864 on Long Island in Boston Harbor, Suffolk County, Massachusetts. Henry was wounded at the Battle of Honey Hill, South Carolina on 30 November 1864 and was hospitalized in Beaufort, South Carolina. This hospital was the first General Hospital for African American soldiers. Several well-known women such as Susie King Taylor, Clara Burton, Charlotte Forten, and Harriet Tubman treated patients at this hospital.¹³ Henry was discharged with a Surgeon's Certificate and mustered out on 7 June 1865 at David's Island, New York Harbor.

Like his brother Henry also returned home to Boylston. He worked as a farm laborer and lived in the household of Lyman P. and Eliza Kendall in 1870, according to the federal census. He worked as a laborer, and lived in Sterling, and Northborough, but resided in Boylston at the time of his death. He never married nor had children. He died on 18 August 1907 from pneumonia and was buried in Pine Grove Cemetery in Boylston.¹⁴



GRAVESTONE OF THEODORE HAZARD
PINE GROVE CEMETERY
BOYLSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
PHOTOGRAPH BY CAROL A. PURINTON
FINDAGRAVE VOLUNTEER



GRAVESTONE OF HENRY HAZARD
PINE GROVE CEMETERY
BOYLSTON, MASSACHUSETTS
PHOTOGRAPH BY BOYLSTON CEMETERY RESEARCH PROJECT
FINDAGRAVE VOLUNTEER

⁷ Boylston Civil War Veterans by Leah Withers et al., Boylston Historical Collaborative, 2023., p. 431

⁸ Boylston Civil War Veterans by Leah Withers et al., Boylston Historical Collaborative, 2023, p. 432.

⁹ Boylston Civil War Veterans by Leah Withers et al., Boylston Historical Collaborative, 2023, p.434.

¹⁰ https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/44091608/theodore_hazard

¹¹ https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/44091637/cynthia_ann_hazard

¹² Boylston Civil War Veterans by Leah Withers et al., Boylston Historical Collaborative, 2023.p.438

¹³ Ibid

¹⁴ <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/44087562/henry-hazard>

The African American Civil War Memorial on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. honors the service and sacrifice of the 200,000 African American soldiers and sailors who served in the United States Army and Navy during the Civil War. The names of both Theodore and Henry Hazard are included on that memorial. More detailed information about the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment can be found in the book *Boylston Civil War Veterans* by Leah Withers et al, 2023, Boylston Historical Collaborative, Boylston, Massachusetts.

Life Before the Civil War

As mentioned, both Theodore and Henry Hazard were Boylston residents when they enlisted in Company D of the 54th Massachusetts Infantry Regiment. Theodore had relocated to Boylston from Nashua, New Hampshire. He had married Cynthia Ann Messer on 19 September 1857 in Nashua, Hillsborough County, New Hampshire. She was the daughter of David Messer and Betsey Kezser, born to them on 8 May 1836 in Shirley, Middlesex County, Massachusetts.

Theodore and his wife resided in Nashua when their son George Hazard was born in December 1858. Shortly after the birth of George they moved to Boylston. Their daughter, Malina Ann was born in Boylston on 3 December 1859. According to the 1860 United States Federal Census, Theodore Abram (listed as Abram T.) was farming, and the household included his wife, a 6-month-old daughter, and Theodore's brother, Henry. Their son, George, was not enumerated with them in that census. Theodore had real estate valued at \$150 and personal funds of \$300.¹⁵ Henry's personal estate was \$100 at that time.¹⁶

Theodore and Henry both had grown up in Shirley, Middlesex County, Massachusetts. Theodore was born on 6 July 1834, the son of Abraham Hazard and his second wife, Louisa Boston. He was the eldest child of seven children, three sons and four daughters. Henry was born six years later on 19 February 1840. Not all siblings survived childhood, their brother George died at one month old, and the two youngest sisters, Adeline and Hannah, died from dysentery in August 1849.¹⁷ The family's history in Shirley, and the background of the paternal grandfather of Theodore and Henry, Thomas Hazard, is quite remarkable.

Thomas Hazard was enslaved, gained his freedom and settled in Shirley, Massachusetts soon after the Revolutionary War.

Part III of this story will lead us back to this history and how Thomas Hazard became a Revolutionary War Veteran!

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Boylston Civil War Veterans by Leah Withers, Patricia Kelleher Bartram, Nancy O'Loughlin Filgate, Elise Poretsky, Victoria Triolo, Julian Baldwin, Paige Money, Jordan Money, Isabella Uva, 2023, Boylston Historical Collaborative, Boylston, Massachusetts, 2023.

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<https://www.history.com/topics/american-civil-war/the-54th-massachusetts-infantry>

<https://www.nps.gov/people/robert-g-shaw.htm>

¹⁵ *Boylston Civil War Veterans* by Leah Withers et al., Boylston Historical Collaborative, 2023, p.430.

¹⁶ *Boylston Civil War Veterans* by Leah Withers et al., Boylston Historical Collaborative, 2023, p.438.

¹⁷ *Boylston Civil War Veterans* by Leah Withers et al., Boylston Historical Collaborative, 2023, p.428.