

THE RAILROAD AND HIGHWAY LIFESAVING MEDALS

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The Precedent: The Gold and Silver Lifesaving Medals

On June 20, 1874, Congress enacted legislation establishing the Gold and Silver Lifesaving Medals to reward members of the newly established Lifesaving Service for rescuing people from perils of the sea. In 1897 the scope of these medals was extended by Congress to include any person (not just members of the Lifesaving Service) who otherwise met the criteria for the awards, thus making them the first Federal Civil Decorations for heroism, at least in the form of a medal. These medals have changed in size, also slightly in design over the years and are currently administered and still awarded by the Coast Guard.

Legislation Creating the Railroad Lifesaving Medal

Based on the precedent set by the Gold and Silver Lifesaving Medals, in 1905 Congress passed the *Medals of Honor Act* (Public Act No. 98, approved February 23, 1905, entitled "An Act to Promote the Security of Travel Upon railroads Engaged in Interstate Commerce, and to Encourage the Saving of Life," but known by the short title, "Medals of Honor Act"). This Act authorized the President to have prepared bronze medals of honor to be awarded to individuals who, "... by extreme daring endanger their own lives in saving or endeavoring to save, lives from any wreck, disaster, or grave accident, or in preventing or endeavoring to prevent such wreck, disaster, or grave accident upon any railroad within the United States engaged in Interstate commerce." This legislation was not as broad as the legislation authorizing the Gold and Silver Lifesaving medals because it only authorized medals for those who, "by extreme daring, endanger their own lives," whereas the Silver Lifesaving Medal could be awarded to a person who makes a signal exertion" in rescuing the shipwrecked or saving a person from drowning.

In hearings before the Committee on Interstate Commerce held on February 6, 1905, Senator Moseley asked the question, "Why should not these men, who conduct the land commerce of the nation' receive public recognition for their brave deeds as well as those who are employed on or about the waters over which the United States has Jurisdiction?" He answered his own question thusly:

"Time and again these men have been reminded that they are public servants, charged with responsibilities and duties to the public which they cannot evade. The courts have required them to sacrifice what they have considered their interests as individuals on numerous occasions in obedience to the highest duties to the public. It is no more than proper, therefore,

that the public should provide means to reward them for deeds of conspicuous heroism and self-sacrifice performed in its service.

Yet dangers to the train man, like those incurred by the sailor, do not come home to the good people."Their attention has not yet been sufficiently awakened to the subject. Let them think of the fated fellow who slips between the cars and whose only possible effort is a grip at their icy sides; or of him who, swept from the running-board of the rapidly moving car, is hurled to instant and certain destruction. Dangers beset him everywhere. As he works amid an intricate warp of iron rails the next step may fasten his heel in the deadly unblocked frog, holding him in a vice, suffering an agony of suspense, while the wheel bears down upon him to mangle his poor body and crush his life but. Let them reflect that it requires fully as much courage and nerve to peer out into the darkness and catch sight of a few feet of gleaming rails in front, all else the blackness of night, as it does to stand on the bridge of a ship and with straining eyes endeavor to avoid the passing vessel, the derelict, or the iceberg."

Design of the Medal

The medal was designed by Adolph Weinman (1870-1952), a noted sculptor. The medals were originally struck at the Philadelphia Mint. The medal shows the sturdy figure of a man leaning over a great rock lying across a track, his one hand resting upon a signal rendered useless by the obstruction placed on its mechanism, and the track. In the other hand he is swinging aloft a torch, thus warning the on-rushing train of its impending danger. The blank space surrounding the figure, suggesting night, is enlivened by a brief inscription LAVS VIRTUTIS HEROIS PRAEMIVUM. The reverse of the medal shows a tablet resting upon a wreath of laurel and bearing the name of the recipient raised on the medal. This requires a separate insert name die to be created for the medal's reverse resulting in a single striking for each recipient. (This is the way each of the Carnegie Medals are struck to this day) Encircling this design is the inscription, THE UNITED STATES MEDAL FOR LIFE SAVING ON RAILROADS. Within the wreath, above the name of the recipient, are the words FOR BRAVERY AWARDED TO and below the name, the inscription, ACT OF CONGRESS FEB. 23, 1905. The medal is of bronze, one and three tenths inches in diameter. It is in the form of a pendant, suspended from a pin by a silk ribbon one and a quarter inches wide with red and green stripes at the edges five-sixteenths, of an inch wide and a center white stripe fourteen-sixteenths of an inch wide.

On January 16, 1973 the Director of the Federal Highway Administration authorized the use of a red, white, and blue ribbon instead of the original ribbon for their medal. In about 1989 the Interstate Commerce Commission ordered an additional supply of approximately 20 Railroad medals; however, the ones that were produced are slightly different in suspension from the original. Although they are the same size and of the same design, the ornate suspension bar for the medal was not pierced so the ribbon could pass through it; instead, a strap was affixed to its rear. The reason for this was that the manufacturer felt the area was so thin that they could not pierce it without the tool breaking, so the Department of Transportation advised them to do whatever they thought was best. As a result, the manufacturer soldered a wide bar on the reverse to thread the ribbon through. In 1991 one of these medals was presented.

The Recipients

The first act for which a Railroad Lifesaving Medal was awarded took place on June 26, 1905. The recipient was George E. Poell, a fireman on the St. Joseph & Grand Island Railway. On that date he saved the life of a small boy, the son of Mr. and Mrs. John Ussary, at Grand Island, Nebraska by going out on the pilot (cow-catcher) of his engine and picking up the child from the middle of the track while the train was moving at the rate of about 12 miles an hour. The child escaped injury, but both of Mr. Poell's arms were broken and his left foot was so badly injured that it had to be amputated. His medal was awarded on October 4, 1906. However, the first medal to actually be awarded went to George H. Williams, an engineer on the New York, New Haven & Hartford Railroad. On December 21, 1905, he endeavored to prevent a lady from attempting to cross the track in front of a rapidly moving train at a railroad crossing near which his engine was standing at Braintree, Massachusetts. The lady, Mrs. Jennie M. Hill, was uninjured but Mr. Williams was struck by the engine sustaining injuries which necessitated his removal to a hospital and which kept him from his regular duties for about three months. He received his medal on June 21, 1906. From its inception to the present, only 124 nominations have been received for the award, and only about 81 of these medals have been awarded. The alphabetical list of known recipients (the date of action is indicated) includes the following:

Arms, Charles, civilian, Clarksville, TN (September 29, 1906)

Ball, Olney D., Brakeman, Southern Pacific Railroad; Miami, AZ (January 11, 1927)

Barton, Dorothy, 16 year-old civilian, West Elizabeth, PA (January 22, 1935)

Bennett Charles, Brakeman, Chicago & Northwestern Railroad; Waukeegan, IL (September 22, 1905)

Bowers, Emmett R, 15 year-old civilian (1964?)

Brandle, Robert, civilian (police officer), McKeesport, PA (October 26, 1909)

Caskey, Nettie, 16 year-old civilian, Fairmont, IN (March 19, 1910)

Chamberlin, Fred H., Crossing Watchman, Atlantic Coastline Railroad; Petersburg, FL (February 9, 1948)

Clement, Benjamin B., Engineer, Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad, Newport News, VA (October 26, 1944)

Clendenin, J.P., Agent, Illinois Central Railroad; Wiggins, MS (June 7, 1929)*

Cogburn, Elmer W., Yard Foreman, Atlantic Coastline Railroad; Florence, SC (January 8, 1946)

Collins, C.M., Engineer, Illinois Central Railroad; Clinton, IL (April 14, 1929)

Crotty, Elwood D., Fireman, Erie Railroad; Graham, NY (September 16, 1931)

Davis, J. L., Switchman, Illinois Central Railroad (1967 ?)

Dowell, James E., Brakeman, Southern Railway; St. Charles, VA (July 10, 1950)*

Duey, Harry E., Brakeman, Pennsylvania Railroad; Clarence, PA (July 13, 1915)

Dunn, Alexander, Flagman, Baltimore & Ohio Railroad; Takoma Park, MD (February 8, 1926)*

Elrod, Robert S., Fireman, Southern Railway; Courtenay, SC (September 3, 1937)

Falzo, Anthony G., (1991)*

Fields, Craig F., Brakeman, Atlantic Coastline Railroad; Mayesville, SC (August 5, 1943)

Frist, J.C., Stationmaster; Meridian, MS (February 3, 1914)

Garner, Robert (1969-73?)

George, Edgar E., Civilian; Parsons, PA (June 5, 1906)

Giblin, C.M., Switchman, Illinois Central Railroad; New Orleans, LA (September 29, 1925)

Gibson, Otto, Fireman, Missouri-Pacific Railroad; South Omaha, NE (June 14, 1955)*

Gibson, Will, Baggage Porter, Atlantic Coastline Railroad (February 9, 1940)

Gish, Alfred G., Engineman, Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific Railroad; Hydro, OK (October 20, 1928)

Golden, Clarence H., Signal Helper, Illinois Central Railroad; Mayfield, KY (May 25, 1949)

Guinan, Mary, Civilian; Middletown, New York (December 19, 1906)

Haack, Arnold F., Switchman, Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha RR; Superior, WI (Jan 7,1937)

Haight, Charles E., Engineer, Delaware, Lackawana & Western RR; Utica, NY (April 26,1905)*

Hill; Willie, Brakeman, Louisiana & Arkansas Railway Shreveport, LA (March 6,1934)

Hodges, Lee Roy, Assistant Signal Master, Atlantic Coastline Railroad; Folkston, GA (January 22,1958)

Holley, W.A., Switchman, Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railway; Greenville, TX (January 21, 1914)*

Houston, Curtis E., Brakeman, Chicago & Illinois Midland Railroad; Springfield, IL (March 21, 1945)

Irish, Edward R., Trackman, Chesapeake & Ohio Railway; Blackmar MI (October 13,1947)*

Johnson, Wallace G., Fireman, Chicago, Milwaukee & Pacific Railroad; Tacoma, WA (February 7,1946)*

Karsten, George, Switchman, Chicago & Northwestern Railroad; Milwaukee, WI (September 29,1909)

Knight, Jessie (Miss), Stenographer, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St Louis Railroad (July 27,1927)

Landram, 8.W., Brakeman, Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad; Cameron, MO (September 5, 1910)

Lang, William G., Motorman, Lakeshore Electric Railway Lorain, Ohio (August 24,1932)*

Lapp, L.F., Station Helper, Union Pacific Railroad; Cozad, NE (December 30,1922)

Larson, Frank, Fireman, Chicago & Northwestern Railroad; Exeter, NE (January 19, 1908)

LaSalle, Louis, Fireman, Boston & Maine Railroad; Rindge, NH (February 10, 1955)*

Leggins, Will, Shop Employee, Atlantic Coastline Railroad; Thomasville, GA (November 11, 1915)

Lindsey, George W., Brakeman, Illinois Central Railroad; Waterloo, IA (July 30, 1943)

Lugar, John R. Signalman, Cleveland, Cincinnati, Chicago & St Louis Railway; Pana, IL (April23, 1930)

Lynch, Walter, Flagman, Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad; Burlington, IA (December - 16, 1915)

Malone, Thomas W., Yard Clerk, New York Central Railroad; Belle, WV (December 16, 1929)

Marshall, W.V., Track Laborer, Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railroad; Harwood, MO (October 19, 1916)

Mathis, Carl W., Conductor, Atlantic Coastline Railroad; Chadbourn, NC (May 8, 1934)

McGrath, Edward A., Station Agent, Chicago, Milwaukee & St Paul RR; Milwaukee, WI (Aug 26, 1907)*

McLaughlin, J.J. (1969-73?)

Meyers, S.C. (1969 73?)

Mulligan, Patrick, Crossing Watchman, Pennsylvania Railroad; Norristown, PA (August 19, 1914)*

Murray, Edward, Freight Conductor, Pennsylvania Railroad (January 22, 1906),*

Nauman, Henry, Crossing Flagman, Michigan Central Railroad; Hammond, IN (March 30, 1927)*

Northcutt, Glen E., Apprentice Telegrapher, Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe RR; Moore, OK (Oct 7, 1954)

Patrick, William, Civilian; Wood River, IL (February 5, 1929)

Pickett, J. Barney, Civilian (Postmaster); Pope, MS (1962)

Poell, George E., Fireman, St Joseph & Grand Island Railway; Grand Island NE (June 26, 1905)*

Poole, Hubert, Switchman, Birmingham Belt Railroad Company; Birmingham, AL (January 17, 1958)

Powers, Roy A., Track Foreman, Chicago, Milwaukee, St Paul & Pacific RR; Rockford, IL (June 14, 1943)*

Ratcliff, Howard E., Agent-Telegrapher, Northern Pacific Railroad; Plains, MT (May 7, 1966)*

Royal, James N., Conductor, Atlantic Coastline Railroad; Copeland, FL (October 6, 1944)

Russell, Aloysius A., Brakeman, Reading Railroad; Suplee, PA (June 12, 1955)*

Sanders, Bert L., Civilian; Kokomo, IN (March 6, 1943)*

Schaefer, Herman J., Switchman, Chicago & Northwestern Railroad; Evansville, IN (March 29, 1954)

Scharf, O.P., Clerk, Railway Express Agency; Anna, IL (May 3, 1939)

Stokes, Donald E., Civilian (farmer); Mitchell, Iowa (July 26, 1952)

Tracy, James P., Switchman, Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad; Ottumwa, IA (September 21, 1944)

Underwood, James A., Switchman, Kansas City Southern Railway; Shreveport, LA (January 3, 1923)

Van Buren, Charles W., Stationmaster, Illinois Central Railroad; Jackson, MS (September 5, 1926)

Whale, Robert J., National Guard; Louisville, KY (July 7, 1962)

Wall, George L., Switchman, Atchison, Topeka & Santa Fe Railroad; El Dorado, KS (November 5, 1952)

Werner, A.C., Brakeman, Missouri, Kansas & Texas Railway; Phelan, Texas (June 20, 1913)*

Williams, George H., Engineer, New York, New Haven & Hartford RR; Braintree, MA (Dec 21, 1905)*

Wolff, Fred G., Car Foreman, Chicago & Northwestern Railroad; Pecatonica, IL (July 2, 1935)*

Woodrick, Arthur, Track Foreman, Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad; Batavia IL (June 19, 1943)

Wortham, Hollis W., Conductor, Illinois Central Railroad; Fort Knox, KY (February 27, 1942)

Younger, Fred, Freight Brakeman, Kansas City Southern Railway Sallisaw, OK (January 21, 1927)

Note: Names in bold letters are individuals who were killed during the event for which the medal was awarded. Names denoted by an * also received the Carnegie Medal.

Set of photos of an early Presidential Medal for Highways awarded posthumously to Alexander Dunn. Note raised name insert on the reverse.



Citation for the Carnegie medal:

ALEXANDER F. DUNN
Gaithersburg, Maryland

Alexander F. Dunn died attempting to save E. Alexander Gregory from being killed by a train, Washington, D.C., February 8, 1926. Gregory, 10, started over a railroad crossing as a train, running 50 m.p.h., was approaching. He stopped between the rails. Dunn, 67, crossing watchman, holding a warning sign, stood on the opposite side of the crossing, six feet from the track. He took several steps and a jump to Gregory, and, as he touched Gregory, they were struck by the train and killed. (Carnegie Silver Medal citation 26017-2072)

Obituary

ALEXANDER F. DUNN, SR.
Gaithersburg, Maryland

Alexander Dunn, 67-year-old watchman at the Chestnut Street railroad crossing in Takoma Park, Md., gave his life yesterday morning, Feb. 8, 1926, in a vain attempt to save Alexander Gregory, 9, from being ground under the wheels of the Capitol Limited.

The bodies of the two were found together, horribly mangled, in a ditch more than 100 feet from the scene of the accident. Less than five minutes before, the boy, on his way to school, had kissed his mother and his sister goodbye at his home.

Dunn had been employed by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad for more than 30 years, the last five spent at the Chestnut Street crossing. Railroad officials were loud in their praise of Dunn. Friends of Dunn already have suggested for him the Carnegie Medal for heroism.

(Edited from newspaper accounts of the incident provided by a family member.)

The Medal is Extended to Highways

In its 1956 Annual Report, the ICC recommended that the Railroad Medal be extended to acts of heroism" involving any commercial motor vehicle subject to the Commission's motor-carrier safety regulations." As a result, the Act creating the Railroad Lifesaving Medal was amended by Public Law 85-50 of June 13, 1957; however, instead of following the ICC's proposed limitations, it included acts of heroism in connection with motor vehicles on the public highways, roads, or streets of the United States - a far broader charter than had been recommended by the ICC. Regulations to implement the amendment were contained in Executive Order 10765, signed by President Eisenhower on April 24, 1958, which provided that award of the medal would be made by the Chairman of the Interstate Commerce Commission in

the name of and on behalf of the President. On November 28, 1967 President Johnson signed Executive Order 11382, which authorized the Secretary of Transportation assume responsibility for the two medals and to adopt and revise the existing design of the railroad award for highway purposes, including the medal, ribbon, and rosette.

The Design of the Original Medal is Modified to Create a Highway Medal

The design of the original medal was left essentially as it was except that on the obverse the railroad track and signal lantern were to be removed, and on the reverse, the original date (February 23, 1905) was replaced with June 13, 1957. The word "Railroads" on the reverse was to be replaced by the word "Highways." To qualify for the Highway Medal, the person nominated must have voluntarily risked his or her life to an extraordinary degree in saving or attempting to save the life of a fellow being, or must have voluntarily sacrificed himself or herself in a heroic manner for the benefit of others. At least part of the heroic event had to have taken place on a public highway, road, or street. Finally, a nomination had to be filed within two years of the date of the occurrence. The Highway Medal was awarded to the following

Recipients:

Allen, Morris, presented on September 18, 1976 at Saratoga Springs, New York*

Aubin, Armand, presented on March 11, 1977 at Cranston, Rhode Island

Bennett, Donald E., Route 130 between Gary IN and Salem, IL on July 25, 1986; presented on Oct 5, 1987

Bett, Wendell, presented on July 30, 1975 at Washington, D.C.

Calvert, J.V. (Posthumously): near Reagan, Texas, on August 5, 1980

Collins, Andrew, near Georgetown, South Carolina on February 22, 1979

Couch, Edward: near Columbia City, Indiana on June 18, 1981*

Dooley, Harold; presented on July 16, 1974 at Atlanta, Georgia

Drumm, Kenneth: Neosho, Missouri on September 30, 1983; presented November 30, 1984

Elliott, Rodney D., presented on November 17, 1975 at St. Louis, Missouri

Gritz, Steven G., presented on July 16, 1974 at Atlanta Georgia

Harley, Jon Eugene; presented on July 19, 1973 at Kansas City, Missouri

Johnson, Dennis: near Columbia City, Indiana on June 18, 1981*

Keltz, Douglas, near Georgetown, South Carolina on February 22, 1979*

Lavelle, Roy E., presented at Atlanta, Georgia on July 16, 1974

Leslie, John C., on the Connecticut Turnpike at Stratford, Connecticut on January 19, 1983

Mattingly, Jack: Neosho, Missouri on September 30, 1983; presented on November 30, 1984

Mead, Albert, presented on July 30, 1975 at Washington, D.C.

Overly, Terry L: east of Melbourne, Florida; February 23, 1986; presented on March 27, 1987

Rodriguez, Andrew, presented posthumously on November 17, 1975 at St. Louis, Missouri

Rooney, John R., on I-87 at Yonker's Toll Barrier, near Yonkers New York on April 7, 1977

Ruiter, Sam: Santee Indian Reservation, Santee, Nebraska on August 26, 1983, presented Sep 14, 1985

Sullivan, John P.: near New Rochelle, New York on April 22, 1986; presented on June 24, 1987

Thompson, Robert H., near Fairview, Tennessee on March 9, 1976

Widsteen, Lucille; presented on July 19, 1973 at Kansas City, Missouri

Wilson, Raymond E., near Fairview, Tennessee on March 9, 1976

Winkleman, George: near Greenville, Indiana on October 15, 1982; presented September 21, 1983

Young, Richard A., near Anacostia Park, Washington, D.C. on Oct 22, 1986; presented on Oct 5, 1987



Obverse of the Highways medal in the black case

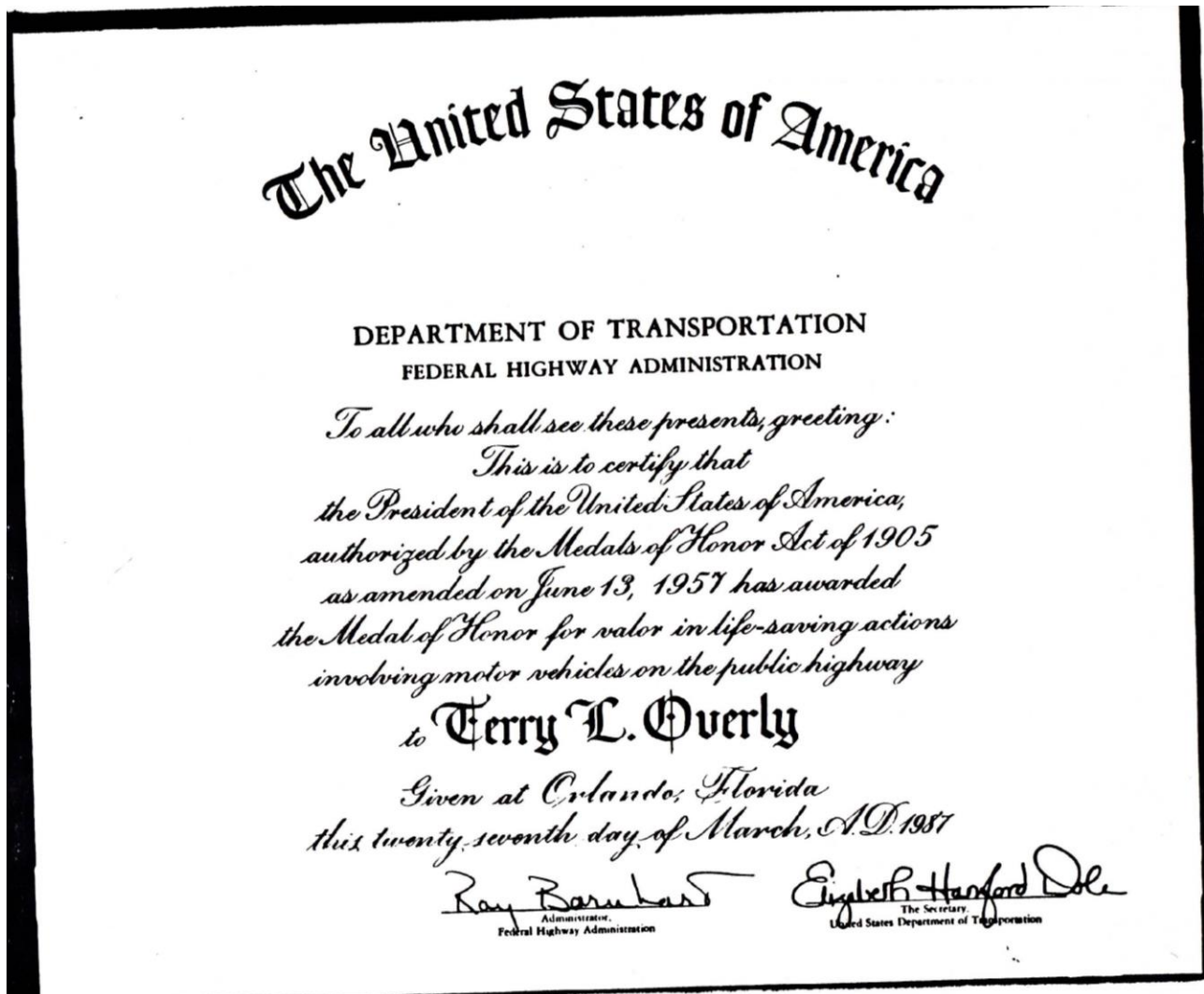


Reverse of the Highways medal engraved to Edward W. Couch.

Citation for Carnegie Medal for Edward W. Couch:

EDWARD WERNER COUCH
Columbia City, Indiana

Edward Werner Couch attempted to rescue Robert L. Owen from burning, Columbia City, Indiana, June 18, 1981. After his tractor-trailer rig crashed into the rear of another rig, Owen, 30, sat pinned in the cab, which was burning. Edward, 16, high school student, climbed onto the driver's side of the cab, and, standing on a fuel tank, tried to free Owen by reaching into the cab. He was assisted in the attempt by the operator of the other rig, who pulled Edward away from the cab moments before the fuel tank exploded and engulfed the cab in flames. Edward was treated for minor burns. Owen died.



Highways Award Document for Mr. Terry L. Overly

Citation

*in recognition of an act of heroism on the public highway
The Medal of Honor
is presented to*

Terry L. Overly

On February 23, 1986, at 6:55 p.m. on Florida State Route 192, a two-lane highway east of Melbourne, Florida, a westbound Pontiac Grand Am crossed over into the eastbound lane while passing another vehicle. In doing so, it struck a passenger van head-on that was traveling eastbound, forcing the van to roll over three times before coming to rest on its side. The van contained 15 people, 13 of whom were residents of a home for the mentally retarded in Rockledge, Florida.

Mr. Terry L. Overly was driving two cars behind the van when it was struck. After witnessing the accident, he immediately swerved over to the side of the road and jumped out, becoming one of the first people to reach the accident scene. Mr. Overly, upon hearing people screaming and moaning, rushed to the van to see if there were any survivors. Upon reaching it, he noticed a fire coming from the engine at the same time that he heard the driver pleading for help. Without hesitating a second, Mr. Overly reached over and pulled the driver through the broken front windshield. As he brought her to safety, the driver begged for help in rescuing her "kids" from the van.

By this time other rescuers were on the scene and several attempts were made to open the doors of the van. A rear door was finally opened enough to allow one person to enter the van. Mr. Overly then jumped in the van and tried to remove the passengers' seat belts. However, because of their weight and semiconscious condition, Mr. Overly was unable to release the passengers' restraints. Remembering that he had a knife in his car, he ran to retrieve it. Reentering the van, he immediately began cutting each restraint, releasing the victims, and getting them to the rear of the van any way that he could. Others standing outside helped by pulling the victims through the partially opened door to safety outside.

Meanwhile, during the rescue operation, the smoke in the van was becoming more and more intense. Realizing the potential for danger, Mr. Overly frantically searched for additional victims. At this time, a loud noise was heard in the front of the van, which turned out to be a tire exploding. Breathing became almost impossible as the smoke turned into flames and Mr. Overly was forced to leave the vehicle. In a few moments, the van was engulfed in flames.

Mr. Overly's superhuman efforts succeeded in rescuing 8 seriously injured people from the van. Eight people perished in the accident.

Mr. Overly demonstrated extreme daring and disregard for his own life to save the lives of 8 passengers trapped in a burning van. He is hereby awarded the Presidential Medal of Honor for Lifesaving on the Highways.

Citation for Mr. Terry L. Overly

Death by Bureaucratic Disinterest: The Medals Just Go Away

The Highway Medal of Honor was not popular with either the Interstate Commerce Commission. An inquiry made to the Interstate Commerce Commission in January of 1965 concerning the status of the Railroad Lifesaving Medal produced a curious reply. The Acting Secretary of the ICC replied that, "The Interstate Commerce Commission has recommended to the Congress that the Medals of Honor Act be repealed. The basis for this recommendation, as stated in the Commission's 73rd Annual Report, is that the Act has adequately served its purpose..." After the medal was "transferred" to the Department of Transportation, it remained a source of aggravation. One problem was that each recommendation had to be properly investigated and the Department of Transportation did not feel it had adequate resources to conduct such investigations. It was also concerned that the broad scope of the medal included

far too many potentially purely *intrastate* incidents, which they did not feel fell within the proper authority of a Federal Agency. They were likewise not pleased at the prospect of having to fund travel to Washington for recipients to receive their medals.

The Federal officials were of the opinion that the Carnegie Hero Fund afforded a much more comprehensive recognition of heroism and that their existing staff and procedures were far better suited to investigating recommendations, and the Department of Transportation was in favor of legislation repealing the Act authorizing both the Railroad and Highway medals. However congress who created the medals still thought they had purpose, the legislation was not repealed, and still remains "on the books." In 1992 the author contacted the official who was responsible for the award, and she informed me that "they have nothing" on the subject and referred me to their Office of Public Affairs, which was equally unresponsive. When the Federal Railroad Commission was contacted and asked for information on the medal, they responded by saying "after conducting a thorough review of our files, we have determined that the FRA does not have in its possession records related to the aforementioned subject matter". In summary, it is apparent that the Department of Transportation lost interest in both medals, and failing to get Congress to revoke them, it appears that they simply abandoned them and purged their files, leaving awards for heroism on the railroads and highways to the discretion of the Carnegie Hero Fund.

The Carnegie Hero Fund began its awards about the same time as the Railroad Medal was authorized by congress. There have been 25 of 81 total RR LSM and 4 of 28 total Highways Medal award recipients that received both award medals. Both the Railroad and Highway medals were designed (but not limited to) to recognize valor by men and women working in the transportation industry. The original hearings in the US Senate in 1905 indicate that Congress was well aware of the then new Carnegie system of awards, but thought them inappropriate for those in public service. The Carnegie Hero fund currently recognizes all forms of individual valor in acts of life saving in both the US and Canada. The fund divides their awards into 20 categories, of which, the two Transportation Medals are covered in only two. It remains unlikely that the Carnegie Hero Fund can find and cover all of those who could and should be still recognized by the Department of Transportation. Only around one in ten of those considered actually receives an Carnegie Award medal. As of March 2014 medal number 9675 was awarded from some 85665 nominations in the past 100 years.

Then soon to be President George W H Bush, a former Commissioner of the ICC, became most interested in the act of valor preformed by Anthony Falzo in 1989. He knew of the Railroad medal and it was at his insistence that the additional twenty RR medals were acquired and one awarded to Falzo in 1991. The following is his Carnegie Medal Citation:

ANTHONY G. FALZO
Bloomfield, New Jersey

Anthony G. Falzo saved Todd R. and Scott K. Pritchard from being struck by a train, Ramsey, New Jersey, May 1, 1989. Todd, 3, and his brother, Scott, 1, were playing on a railroad track on which a freight train was approaching. Falzo, 35, road freight conductor, who was in the train's locomotive, saw the children, as did the engineer, who applied the train's emergency brakes and blew its horn. The children did not move. Falzo immediately left the cab of the locomotive and descended its steps to the level of the track. With the train only about 10 feet away from Todd and Scott, Falzo jumped from the locomotive, ran to the children, scooped them up, and dropped with them to the ground beside the track. The train passed over them, a portion of it striking Scott on the chin. Scott was treated at a hospital for cuts, which required suturing, and he recovered.

Both the Railroad and the Highway medals are considered extremely rare and seldom encountered, even by knowledgeable and experienced collectors. They are, however, an important part of this Nation's Medallion History, and still part of the Presidential Medallion Awards.

Sources:

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Hearing of the Committee on Interstate Commerce of the US Senate on Life Saving Medals on the Bill (S. 6965), GPO 1905, PP 3-8.

Public Law 85-50, 85th Congress S. 1463 dated June 13th 1957.

Interstate Commerce Commission Reports:

Dated Dec 23rd 1907, dated 1907 PP 286-8, listing the first 8 recipients and citations.

Chief of the Division of Safety to the ICC, FY 1915 page 12, recipients and citations, 15-17.

As above, FY 1916, page 12, recipients and citations, 18-20.

As above, FY 1917, pages 46&47, recipients and citations 21-22.

Director of the Bureau of Safety to the ICC, FY 1928, page 47, recipients and citations 28 and 29.

As above, FY 1929, page 101, recipients and citations 30-32.

As above, FY 1930, page 83, recipients and citations 33-35.

As above, FY 1931, page 70, recipients and citations 36-37.

As above, FY 1932, page 26, recipients and citations 38.

As above, FY 1933, page 24, recipients and citations 39.

As above, FY 1935, page ?, recipients and citations 40-41.

As above, FY 1936, page 52, recipients and citations 42.

As above, FY 1937, page 51, recipients and citations 43-44.

As above, FY 1940, page 19, recipients and citations 46-47.

As above, FY 1943, page 16, recipients and citations 48.

As above, FY 1944, page 14, recipients and citations 49-51.

As above, FY 1945, page 13, recipients and citations 52-56.

As above, FY 1946, page 13, recipients and citations 57.

As above, FY 1947, page 11, recipients and citations 58.

As above, FY 1948, page 12, recipients and citations 59.

As above, FY 1949, page 10, recipients and citations 60-61.

As above, FY 1950, page 10, recipients and citations 62.

As above, FY 1951, page 10, recipients and citations 63.

As above, FY 1953, page ?, recipients and citations 64-65

As above, FY 1955, page ?, recipients and citations 66-67.

As above, FY 1956, page ?, recipients and citations 68-69.

As above, FY 1957, page ?, recipients and citations 70.

As above, FY 1959, page 11-12, recipients and citations 71-72.

Summary of Cases Wherein Medals of Honor have been awarded under the act of February 23, 1905, 28 pages typed listing awards 1-72.

Director of the Bureau of Safety to the ICC FY 1964?, page ?, recipients and citations 73.

ICC 78th Annual report, page 61-62, recipients and citations 74-75 and recommendation that Congress terminate the act of 1905 and turn it over to the Carnegie Hero Fund.

Report of the Section of Railroad Safety Bureau of Railroad Safety and Service of the ICC, FY 1965, No new applications.

As above FY 66 Page? Recipient and citation 76.

Article from Atlantic City Press, May 30, 1991, Transportation Secretary Skinner presents RR medal to Anthony Falzo.

Article from the internet dated 1989 describing the event.

Photos of Transportation Secretary Volpe presenting RR Medals to Robert Garner, J J McLaughlin and S C Meyers.

USDOT Federal Highway Administration, Bureau of Motor Carrier Safety, Operations Manual Sept. 22, 1976, Volume 3 Accident Investigations, Presidential Medals of Honor pp 1-7.

USDOT FHA Motor Carrier Safety Manual, Volume 3 Accidents Chapter 3 Awards for Valor.

Medals of Honor Act (45 U.S.C. 44-46) amended June 13, 1957.

Summary List of Presidential Medals of Honor for Railroads Awarded from 1956 through 1987.

DOT FHA News releases for award of the Presidential Medal for Lifesaving on Highways to: Jon Eugene Harvey, Harold Dooley, Albert Mead, Raymond Earle Wilson, Robert Harry Thompson, John R. Rooney, Andrew Collins and Douglas B. Keltz.

Letter from DOT FHA to Mr. Morris R. Allen Letter announcing invitation for award presentation.

Copies of an Award Document and Citation to Terry L Overly for rescuing 8 of 15 people from a burning van.

The Carnegie Hero Fund Commission web site <http://carnegiehero.org/awardees/>

This site has an excellent search capability and is a great source for citations for cross over multiple awards.