



LINCOLN



Courtesy photo

Three Civil War veterans, whose graves are in York County, were honored among 72 other Medal of Honor recipients, during a ceremony held at the Nebraska State Capitol this week.

# Three Civil War veterans with local ties remembered

## Redesigned Medal of Honor plaque unveiled

YORK COUNTY – Three Civil War veterans, who were buried in York County, were among the 72 Medal of Honor recipients on the updated list on the new Medal of Honor plaque unveiled this week

by the governor.

A public ceremony was held in the Nebraska State Capitol in the second floor rotunda.

Joining Governor Dave Heineman in the unveiling was Lt. Col.

Charles Hagemeister, one of Nebraska's two living Medal of Honor recipients, and Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac, Nebraska Adjutant

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## VETERANS: Plaque unveiled

General.

The plaque will be placed in the Memorial Hall on the 14th floor of the Nebraska State Capitol, a chamber specifically designed to honor citizens in service of others.

The names on the plaque are Nebraskans who have received the nation's highest honor for military service "distinguishable by conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of life, above and beyond the call of duty."

The plaque was unveiled by Lt. Col. Hagemeister – who earned his Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War – following comments by both Maj. Gen. Bohac and Governor Heineman. Chief Justice of the Nebraska Supreme Court Michael Heavican read the honor roll of the 72 Nebraskans awarded the Medal of Honor.

Included in the listing is John Shapland, who was a private in Company D, 104th Illinois infantry. He was born in England and entered the service at Ottawa, Ill. He voluntarily joined a small party that, under heavy fire, captured a stockade and saved a bridge, at Elk River, Tenn., on July 2, 1863. Shapland died on Feb. 5, 1923, and was buried in Greenwood Cemetery in York.

Also included is James P. Miller. He was a private with Company D, 4th Iowa Cavalry. He was born in Franklin, Ohio, and entered the service at Henry County, Iowa. He was credited with assisting "in the capture of standard" at Selma, Ala., on April 2, 1865. He died July 2, 1918,

and was also buried at Greenwood Cemetery in York.

The third name is that of Samuel McConnell, who was a captain with Company H in the 119th Illinois infantry. He was born in Belmont County, Ohio. He entered the service at Bushnell, McDonough County in Illinois. While leading his company in an assault, Capt. McConnell braved an intense fire that mowed down his unit. Upon reaching the breastworks, he found that he had only one member of his company with him, a Pvt. Wagner. He was so close to an enemy gun that the blast knocked him into a ditch. Getting up, he entered the gun pit, a guncrew fleeing before him. About 30 paces away, he saw a Confederate flag bearer and guard which he captured. He died March 26, 1915 and was buried in the Arborville Cemetery.

The Medal of Honor was created during the Civil War and is awarded by the president in the name of Congress to United State Military personnel. Nationally, almost 3,500 Americans have received the medal. Two-thirds of Nebraska's recipients were awarded the Medals of Honor for service during either the Civil War or the Indian Wars when the Medal of Honor was the only military award available. Since then, two Nebraskans received it during World War I, 10 during World War II, two during the Korean War, seven during the Vietnam War and one for action in Somalia in 1993.