

## Milton M. Holland



<b>Birth name</b>	Milton Murray Holland
<b>Born</b>	August 1, 1844 Carthage, Texas
<b>Died</b>	May 15, 1910 (aged 65)
<b>Place of burial</b>	Arlington National Cemetery
<b>Allegiance</b>	United States of America Union
<b>Service/branch</b>	United States Army
<b>Years of service</b>	1862 - 1865
<b>Rank</b>	Sergeant Major
<b>Unit</b>	5th U.S. Colored Infantry Regiment
<b>Battles/wars</b>	American Civil War *Battle of Chaffin's Farm
<b>Awards</b>	Medal of Honor
<b>Other work</b>	Founder and president, Alpha Insurance Company

**Milton Murray Holland** (August 1, 1844 – May 15, 1910) was a Union Army soldier during the American Civil War and a recipient of America's highest military decoration—the Medal of Honor—for his actions at the Battle of Chaffin's Farm.

He was the son of Bird Holland (who later became Texas Secretary of State before the Civil War) and possibly a slave owned by Spearman "Major" Holland, Bird Holland's half-brother. Sometime in the 1850s, Bird Holland purchased the freedom of his three sons Milton, William, and Kemp, and sent them to school in Ohio. Milton Holland was enrolled in the Albany Enterprise Academy, a school run by free African Americans.

Holland tried to enlist at the start of the Civil War but was too young, so he worked for the quartermaster department of the U.S. Army as a shoemaker for a period of time before he was allowed into the Army. He joined the Army from Athens, Ohio. He joined the 11th Ohio Militia Infantry in 1862, which was mustered into service as the Fifth U.S. Colored Troops in Athens, Ohio, in 1863.

His father, Bird Holland, died at the Battle of Mansfield, Louisiana, in 1864, while serving as a Major in the Confederate Army.

Holland served in the Petersburg Campaign of 1864, where his unit participated in capturing Petersburg station and several Confederate officers there. Milton Holland climbed in rank, advancing to Sergeant Major by September 1864.

On September 29, 1864, while fighting near Richmond, Virginia, at the Battle of Chaffin's Farm, all white officers were killed during the advance. Holland took command and led them to victory. For his lead of the charge, during

which he was wounded, Holland was awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor. Holland was one of 16 black soldiers to receive the honor during the Civil War.

He was field promoted to captain for his action at Chaffin's Farm, but his commission was refused by the War Department, which did not allow African Americans to become officers.

Holland then took part in patrols around the lowlands of North Carolina surrounding Fort Fisher in January of 1865, capturing Confederate guerilla fighters and freeing slaves according to the Emancipation Proclamation. Three days before the end of the war, on April 6, 1865, he was issued the Medal of Honor for his actions at Chaffin's Farm. He mustered out of the Army on September 20, 1865.

Milton Holland's brother, William, served with the Sixteenth U.S. Colored Troops and returned to Texas after the war to become a prominent state legislator.



On October 24, 1865, immediately following his discharge, Milton married Virginia Dickey, in Columbus, where they made their first home.

After the war, Milton Holland lived in Washington D.C., where he worked for the government and established an insurance company. He died of a heart attack on his farm near Silver Springs, Maryland, on May 15, 1910, and was buried at Arlington National Cemetery.



### **Citation**

Took command of Company C, after all the officers had been killed or wounded, and gallantly led it.