

Fort Taber Flag to honor Robert H. Andrews And Stephen B. Dahill First New Bedford Residents Killed in WWI

During the month of January, the 29th Lights for Peace flag to fly at the Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum honors the memory of both Robert H. Andrews and Stephen B. Dahill, the first New Bedford residents killed during WWI.

If you're a SouthCoast resident, you probably travel Rte. 195 in New Bedford. If so, you will pass over the bridge which is a tribute to these brave men. The bridge on Interstate Rte. 195 over the intersection of County St, Cedar Grove and Penniman Streets was designated as the Robert H. Andrew and Stephen B. Dahill Bridge. The bridge was named in memory of these brave men who were the first residents of New Bedford to be killed in WWI, according to the State Library of MA. This dedication was approved by the Department of Public Works on May 5, 1967.

PVT Andrews and PFC Dahill were "among the 18,556 American Gold Star casualties recorded in the archives with close ties to Massachusetts," according to honorstates.org.

PVT Robert H. Andrews enlisted in the U.S. Army during WWI. Although military records are difficult to locate for WWI veterans, honorstates.org listed PVT Andrew as serving in Battery Group D, 101st Field Artillery, 26th Infantry Division. He was killed in action on April 12, 1918 and later awarded the Purple Heart. His body was disinterred on March 8, 1921 and received by H.L. Potter for Thomas L. Andrews, Robert's father, on July 31, 1921.

PFC Stephen B. Dahill served in the U. S. Army, Battery Group

D, 102nd Field Artillery Regiment, 26th Infantry Division. He was killed in action 3 months after PVT Andrews, on July 22, 1918 and was buried or memorialized at Plot B, Row 28, Grave 37 at the Oise-Aisne American Cemetery, Fere-en-Tardenois, France.

To be clear, there was some confusion regarding the last name of PVT Andrews. Documentation from Honorstates.org listed his last name as Andrews, yet the State Library of MA listed his last name as Andrew. For the purpose of this article, Andrews was used as the name throughout.

Linda Ferreira, of **Empire Ford of New Bedford**, researches the life histories of area residents. American flags are provided by Empire Ford of New Bedford. Flags are raised by the staff at Fort Taber – Fort Rodman Military Museum. Those who would like to honor a local veteran in the future can contact Ferreira at lferreira@buyempireautogroup.com.