

## Featured Artifact: Daniel Butterfield's Medal of Honor

*Era 5: Civil War and Reconstruction (1850-1877)*

<http://historyexplorer.americanhistory.si.edu/resource/?key=3964>



**Look at the artifact presented to you. In a few sentences, respond to the following questions:**

**Describe:** Objectively describe the artifact. What do you think it is made of? What does it look like? Does it look old or new? Is it intact, or is it damaged in some way?

**Analyze:** When, where or how do you think this item was used? What kind of person may have created or used this item? What significance do you think the object held, either for the creator or the user? Do you see words or images on the artifact that connect it to others (besides the creator and user)?

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**Share your conclusions with a partner, then discuss the following:**

**Evaluate :** Justify why you came to those conclusions about the artifact. What further questions do you have about the object? Of those questions, which could you solve by observing the object in person and which would you need to solve with research?

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### Background Information

Perhaps best known as the composer of the bugle call, "Taps", Daniel Butterfield began his Civil War service as a sergeant in the Washington D.C. militia. Two weeks later he transferred to the 12th New York Militia as a colonel. He was commissioned brigadier and major general of the Volunteers and he commanded a division of the 5th Corps. He fought at the First Battle of Bull Run on 21 July 1861. Butterfield was wounded at the Battle of Gaines's Mill, during the Peninsular Campaign; it was also at Gaines's Mill where he seized the flag of the 3rd Pennsylvania and rallied the troops, an act which eventually earned him a Medal of Honor. Butterfield later commanded successfully at Second Bull Run and Antietam, and also saw action at Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. During those campaigns he served as Chief of Staff, Army of the Potomac.

Butterfield is also credited with designing the system of corps badges, an idea which began with Major General Phillip Kearney's order to his troops to sew a two inch patch of red fabric to their hats in order to identify each other during the confusion of battle.

**After reading and considering the background information, compose a response to the following:**

**Analyze:** Address the following object-specific questions:

- When do you typically hear "Taps"? What tone or mood does this song evoke?
- How do you think Butterfield earned his medal of honor?

**Synthesize:** What does this object tell us about the era in which it was created, or the American experience as a whole? How would you describe the social, economic, or political climate of America during this time? What connections can you make between this object and other things that you have seen, read, or experienced?

**Analyze:** Address the following era-specific questions:

- How would you describe the course and character of the Civil War, and what were its effects on the American people?