



# NEWS RELEASE

## CENTRE COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DATE: January 26, 2024

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### ***Centre County's Black Civil War, Troops in the Struggle for Freedom***

History Talk by William A. Blair, Ph.D.

**Sunday, February 11 at 2:00 p.m.**

**At Centre Furnace Mansion, 1001 E. College Ave., State College, PA**

**RSVP Required**

**Visit [CentreHistory.org](http://CentreHistory.org) or call 814-234-4779.**

Dr. William Blair, emeritus professor of history from Penn State, will present an illustrated talk based on his fresh research into local history which, at times, unearths treasures. Such is the case with the story of the military service of Centre County's African American soldiers who served with the United States Colored Troops in the Civil War.

Find out how the experiences of 28 Black men from Centre County augments understanding of a broader story of the Civil War. Twenty-seven Black men from our region served in the United States Colored Troops and another one enlisted in the famed 54th Massachusetts Regiment depicted in the movie *Glory*. Their experiences shed light on an under-appreciated part of recruitment history—that free Black men in the North were drafted and otherwise enticed to join the military.

Dr. Blair is a historian of the Civil War era focusing primarily on the home front and political culture in the middle nineteenth century. His work has focused on use of ceremonies such as Memorial Days and Emancipation Days after the war to reinforce and contest political identities, treason as it was applied during and after the war, and racial violence in Reconstruction. He is an emeritus director of the Richards Civil War Era Center, and founding editor of "The Journal of the Civil War Era," published by the University of North Carolina Press.

This program is free to the public. Space is limited to 40 at the Centre Furnace Mansion and RSVPs are required and may be made by calling 814-234-4779 or reserving online at [CentreHistory.org](http://CentreHistory.org) under "Upcoming Events & Programs" on the home page. For general information and program updates, visit [www.CentreHistory.org](http://www.CentreHistory.org).

*Event parking is available in the Mansion lot off Porter Road. Visitors may also park behind Esber Home and Rugs.*

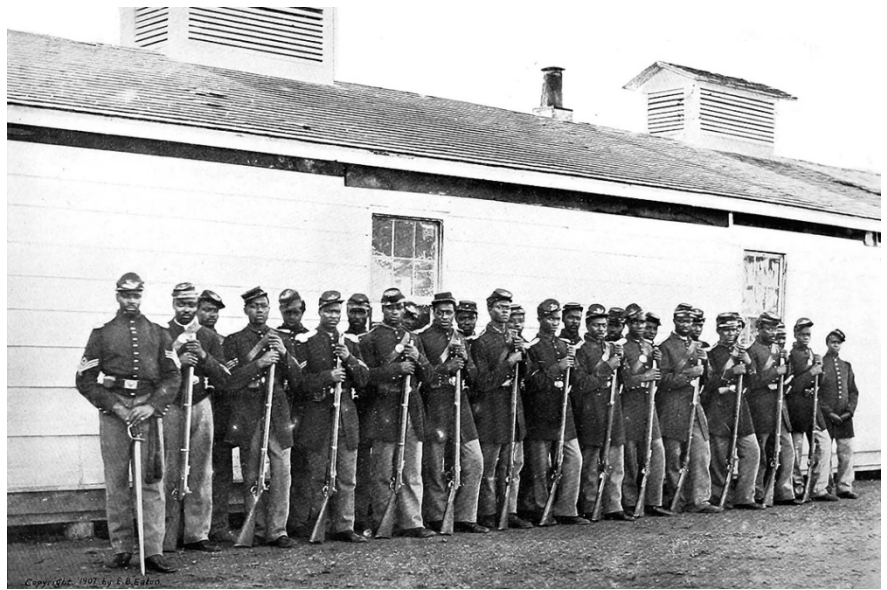
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CENTRE FURNACE MANSION

1001 East College Avenue • State College, Pennsylvania 16801 • 814-234-4779 • [centrehistory.org](http://centrehistory.org)



William A. Blair, Ph.D.



African American soldiers, 1865, near Petersburg, Va.



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Unidentified soldier, circa 1863, Smithsonian National Museum



An African American Corporal, Beinecke Rare Books Collection

