

PROVING THEIR VALOR: A MILITARY HISTORY OF THE U.S.C.T. SOLDIERS
FROM MONROE COUNTY, PENNSYLVANIA

By

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A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree of
Master of Arts in History to the office of Graduate and Extended Studies of
East Stroudsburg University of Pennsylvania

May 8, 2020

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ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This thesis adds to the literature on Monroe County, Pennsylvania, and Civil War history by examining the performance of U.S.C.T. soldiers from Monroe County in the face of institutionalized discrimination. The methodology of this research has been to consult the soldiers' military records in the Monroe County Historical Association, and to compare them to established literature and primary sources that document the discriminations suffered by black troops during the Civil War. The conclusion is that the U.S.C.T. soldiers from Monroe County served faithfully and bravely despite facing institutionalized forms of discrimination. The larger implication of this research is that the military performance of individuals is not necessarily impeded by discrimination on the part of their government.

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INTRODUCTION

This thesis argues that the United States Colored Troops from Monroe County, Pennsylvania, served faithfully and bravely in the Civil War despite facing discrimination from the federal government. In terms of historiography, the U.S.C.T. regiments have received far less scholarly attention than the white regiments, and the relevant scholarship has laid little emphasis on the fact that black soldiers did their duty despite the inequities levelled against them. This thesis corrects this shortcoming by following the development of the U.S.C.T. regiments and addressing, step by step, the forms of discrimination the men in the ranks faced. It then describes how the U.S.C.T. soldiers from Monroe County served faithfully and bravely despite these inequalities.

In consideration of the terminology popularly used at the time of this writing, it should be noted that the adjective “colored” is here often used to define the U.S.C.T. troops. There is reason to believe that some of the U.S.C.T. veterans from Monroe County were Native American to some degree, and thus the term “African-American” may be inaccurate. Moreover, contemporaries used the word “colored,” and this was the official designation employed by the federal government in 1863 when it organized the

United States Colored Troops. The frequent use of this term makes the narrative flow much better, because it allows the inclusion of Native American ancestry, and because it is in line with the quotations and sentiments of the primary sources.¹

The first two chapters draw heavily from the same sources, which in their own right are landmarks in the historiography of the U.S.C.T. For almost one hundred years after the Civil War, the literature on colored troops left much to be desired. Before 1890, only three books were published on the subject. Joseph T. Wilson's *The Black Phalanx: African-American Soldiers in the War of Independence, the War of 1812, and the Civil War* (1887) stands out among these. A former slave and veteran of the 2nd Louisiana Native Guards and 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry, Wilson rose to prominence after the war as a member of the Grand Army of the Republic and as a Republican bureaucrat. His work stands out because he used official orders, correspondence, reports, and speeches for his history. As a veteran and member of the Grand Army of the Republic, he also had access to first-hand anecdotes. However, Wilson never received graduate school training, and his book's organization has been heavily criticized by academics. Several other books were published after 1890, but they were either inaccurate or they marginalized the general contributions colored troops made to the war. Regimental histories, along with pamphlets, essays, and articles, were also published by the score, but they all focused on parts of the history rather than the whole.²

¹ David Pierce, "Monumental Effort Pays Off in Stroudsburg" (cited hereafter *Pierce*), *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), June 13, 2013, accessed June 23, 2019, <https://www.poconorecord.com/article/20130613/News/306130319>.

² Dudley T. Cornish, foreword to *The Black Phalanx: African-American Soldiers in the War of Independence, the War of 1812, and the Civil War*, by Joseph T. Wilson, rev. ed. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994); Dudley Taylor Cornish, preface to *The Sable Arm: Black Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865*, rev. ed. (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1987), xiv-xv.

This academic landscape changed in 1956 with the publication of Dudley Taylor Cornish's *The Sable Arm: Black Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865*. Cornish, for the first time, took a scholarly approach to the complete history of black troops in the Civil War. He traced the development of U.S. policy, the recruiting efforts, public opinion, the service of black troops, the hardships they faced, the process of appointing officers, and the Confederate policy towards black Union troops. *The Sable Arm* is a classic in Civil War historiography, and it serves as the foundation for more specialized research into the subfield of African-American troops in the Civil War.³

Several of these more specialized publications are cited in this work. One of the most informed scholars on the subject as of 2019 is Joseph T. Glatthaar, whose *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers* (1990) focuses on the history of the white officers who commanded the black regiments. Noah Andre Trudeau, who made his mark with histories of the Overland Campaign and the Siege of Petersburg, published *Like Men of War: Black Troops in the Civil War, 1862-1865* (1998), which focuses on the combat history of black troops. William A Dobak's *Freedom by the Sword: The U.S. Colored Troops, 1862-1867* (2013) is another general history, noteworthy for its coverage of events immediately after the war. James M. McPherson's seminal one volume history of the Civil War, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (1988) is also cited for its interesting and relevant details. Besides these books, several of

³ Herman Hattaway, foreword to Cornish, *The Sable Arm*, vii-ix.

the scores of journal articles available have been chosen to illuminate the more nuanced facets of the black military experience.⁴

The first chapter uses these sources largely to chronicle the development of the Lincoln administration's policy towards colored troops. It supports the main argument by demonstrating that the president and the public in the North were largely opposed to emancipation and the enrollment of blacks in the army, and that when Lincoln accepted black troops, he based his decision on military necessity rather than on a sense of social justice. In addition to the sources mentioned, some of Lincoln's own speeches and letters have been included to provide more detailed evidence of his reluctance to enlist black soldiers. His writings have been drawn from The Library of America's *Abraham Lincoln: Speeches and Writings, 1832-1858; Speeches, Letters, and Miscellaneous Writings The Lincoln-Douglas Debates* (1989) and *Abraham Lincoln: Speeches and Writings, 1859-1865; Speeches, Letters, and Miscellaneous Writings Presidential Messages and Proclamations* (1989). To buttress the main argument of chapter one, an analysis of Northern public opinion during the war has been added. In the absence of public opinion polls, the method taken has been to state the official positions taken by the presidential candidates in the 1860 election, and then to describe the election results. By comparing how many people in the Union voted for Abraham Lincoln to how many voted for John C. Breckenridge, Stephen A. Douglass, or John Bell, a fair estimate of public opinion is

⁴ Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers*, rev. ed. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000); Noah Andre Trudeau, *Like Men of War: Black Troops in the Civil War, 1862-1865* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998); William A. Dobak, *Freedom by the Sword: The U.S. Colored Troops, 1862-1867* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, Inc., 2013); James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989).

ascertained. And, as will be seen, the candidate that was most sympathetic to the plight of blacks received less than 50 percent of the popular vote.⁵

The second chapter uses many of the same sources as chapter one, and it outlines the organizational details of the U.S.C.T. It covers recruiting efforts, a description of the officers who commanded the regiments, soldiers' training, their general conduct in battle, the types of discrimination they faced, and their possible motives for serving despite being discriminated against. The first purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that colored troops served in segregated units almost entirely under white officers, and that they suffered institutional and day-to-day discrimination in a number of other ways. The second purpose is to describe the general history of the U.S.C.T. in order to provide the context for the soldiers from Monroe County's experiences.

In addition, an analysis of regional recruitment statistics has been added to chapter two. None of the consulted literature contains as thorough a breakdown of black enlistment by region, and the focus on troops from a Northern free state demands such an analysis for context's sake. Moreover, this analysis supports the thesis' main argument by demonstrating that black turn-out in the free states was exceptionally high despite the prejudice against them.

The history of select soldiers from Monroe County is given in chapter three, and the purpose of this chapter is to demonstrate that these troops served loyally and bravely despite the discriminations they faced. In the absence of primary sources written by these

⁵ The Library of America, *Abraham Lincoln: Speeches and Writings, 1832-1858; Speeches, Letters, and Miscellaneous Writings The Lincoln-Douglas Debates*, ed. Don E. Fehrenbacher (cited hereafter *Lincoln I*) (New York: Viking Press, 1989); The Library of America, *Abraham Lincoln: Speeches and Writings, 1859-1865; Speeches, Letters, and Miscellaneous Writings Presidential Messages and Proclamations*, ed. Don E. Fehrenbacher (cited hereafter *Lincoln II*) (New York: Viking Press, 1989).

soldiers, the evidence for such discrimination must come from the preceding chapters, which highlight the president's reluctance to enlist them, and the institutional biases they faced. In terms of day-to-day, personalized racism, the only evidence is how some troops and officers treated the men of the 3rd U.S.C.T. in the summer and fall of 1865. Despite these cases of bigotry, the men proved themselves to be steadfast soldiers.

The troops chosen for this chapter are the ones for whom information was readily available. Their muster rolls, medical records, and pension records are on file in the Monroe County Historical Association, while those of the other soldiers have to be obtained from the National Archives—a task that was precluded by time and financial limitations. In order to provide as much information on all the colored troops from Monroe County as possible, the complete list of known soldiers is given in Appendix B, but it is only a list.

The methodology for chapter three has been to examine these soldiers' records, then provide a table in Appendix A that describes their attributes. The information from this table is analyzed in the text in order to obtain deeper insight into the soldiers' backgrounds and community life. They served in different regiments, but since they all received their training at Camp William Penn, a brief history of that camp has been included. Most of the information on this camp comes from Jeffrey Wert's 1979, "Camp William Penn and the Black Soldier," which is perhaps the definitive journal article on the subject.⁶

⁶ Jeffrey D. Wert, "Camp William Penn and the Black Soldier," *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 46, no. 4 (October 1979), accessed June 17, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27772625>.

The regimental histories are then examined, with information coming from Samuel P. Bates' *History of Pennsylvania Volunteers, 1861-5: Prepared in Compliance with Acts of the Legislature* (1871), a five volume history of the war's Pennsylvania Regiments that still stands today as a solid reference work. Information is also derived from Trudeau's, Dobak's, and Glatthaar's books listed above. William H. Nulty's *Confederate Florida: The Road to Olustee* (1990) is used for parts of the Olustee Campaign. Frederick H. Dyer's *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion: Compiled and Arranged from the Official Records of the Federal and Confederate Armies Reports of the Adjutant Generals of the Several States, the Army Registers and Other Reliable Documents and Sources* (1908), a compendium of information derived from the Official Records and other sources, is used to identify which engagements the regiments took part in and what larger military units they were attached to. Primary sources include the Official Records, Edwin S. Redkey's collection of U.S.C.T. soldiers' letters, *A Grand Army of Black Men: Letters from African-American Soldiers in the Union Army, 1861-1865* (1992), and R.J.M. Blackett's edited collection of news dispatches, *Thomas Morris Chester, Black Civil War Correspondent: His Dispatches from the Virginia Front* (1989).⁷

⁷ Samuel P. Bates, *History of Pennsylvania Volunteers, 1861-5; Prepared in Compliance with Acts of the Legislature* (Harrisburg, PA: B. Singerly, State Printer, 1871); William H. Nulty, *Confederate Florida: The Road to Olustee*, 1st paperbound ed. (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1990); Frederick H. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion: Compiled and Arranged from the Official Records of the Federal and Confederate Armies Reports of the Adjutant Generals of the Several States, the Army Registers and Other Reliable Documents and Sources* (Des Moines, IA: The Dyer Publishing Company, 1908); United States, War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (cited hereafter *O.R.*) (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1880-1901); Edwin S. Redkey, ed., *A Grand Army of Black Men: Letters from African-American Soldiers in the Union Army, 1861-1865* (1993; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992); R.J.M. Blackett, ed., *Thomas Morris Chester, Black Civil War Correspondent: His Dispatches from the Virginia Front* (1989; repr., New York: Da Capo Press, n.d.).

The military biographies of the soldiers from Monroe County are woven into the regimental histories. Their dates of enlistment are given, and their promotions, demotions, wounds, absences, and deaths are described as they occur within the larger regimental history. Since the officers commanding the troops must have determined much of their men's morale, some information on them is included in order to shine more light on the Monroe County soldiers' experiences. For example, Colonel Benjamin C. Tilghman of the 3rd U.S.C.T. was a wealthy, inventive man who commanded the respect of his troops. After he left the regiment in 1865, the men in the ranks accused the remaining officers of racist behavior. The presence or absence of a certain officer may, therefore, determine the well-being of the enlisted men. Brief military biographies of the selected troops from Monroe County and the officers who commanded them will be found in Appendix C.

The issue of chronology must be considered when discussing these troops' regimental histories. The Civil War was fought across the South and in parts of the North, and different regiments were deployed in different states at the same time. For example, some regiments were deployed in the Mississippi Valley while others were stationed in South Carolina, Virginia, or other states. Thus in the presentation of these histories, there is some chronological overlap. To provide better clarity, the histories are grouped by geographic deployment. That is, the regiments who served primarily in Florida—the 3rd and 25th U.S.C.T.—are presented first; the 22nd U.S.C.T., which served primarily in Virginia, is discussed third; and the 8th U.S.C.T., which served in both states, is taken up last. This way, the reader can follow the different campaigns in different states, even though these campaigns took place simultaneously.

In terms of providing context for these campaigns, the decision has been to focus primarily on the point of view of the soldiers. Since they were focused on marching, fighting, and camping, the bulk of this chapter focuses on these activities. This is appropriate, because it was through these actions that the men proved themselves to be loyal and brave soldiers. But in order to highlight their strategic contributions to the war, a general discussion of the high command's plans has been included. Thus the Lincoln administration's interest in Florida is analyzed while discussing the 3rd U.S.C.T.'s transfer to that state. The same holds true for the other regiments and their campaigns.

In addition to the main argument, an epilogue has been added on the legacy of the U.S.C.T. and on the public's memory of the troops from Monroe County. The main point of this final section is that the African Methodist Episcopal Church heavily influenced the public's memory of these troops. The contrast between the main thesis and the history of the soldiers' memory highlights how strongly the church has come to dominate their public reputations.

Material on the U.S.C.T.'s legacy comes from Joseph T. Glatthaar's chapter, "Black Glory: The African-American Role in Union Victory" in the book, *Why the Confederacy Lost*, edited by Gabor S. Boritt (1992). The A.M.E. church's early history and mission is gathered mostly from Richard S. Newman's *Freedom's Prophet: Bishop Richard Allen, the AME Church, and the Black Founding Fathers* (2008), which is the most modern and up-to-date biography on the church's founder. The history of Little Bethel A.M.E. Church has been gleaned from various newspaper articles, pamphlets, and notes on file in the Monroe County Historical Association. In some cases, these are primary sources, but much information, including interviews, must be taken from

newspaper articles. Information on Shari Chambers, a descendent of some of the colored soldiers from Monroe County, and who led the effort to build a public memorial in their honor, is also drawn from press articles.⁸

The format of the epilogue is to discuss the U.S.C.T.'s general contribution to the war first, then to shift the topic to the memory of the troops from Monroe County. The history of the A.M.E. Church is delineated from its beginnings under Richard Allen up to his death, in order to show how much its mission revolves around black civil rights. The history of Little Bethel A.M.E. Church is then provided in order to demonstrate its connection to the soldiers from Monroe County and its legacy in maintaining Richard Allen's mission. Finally, Shari Chamber's efforts to build a memorial to the U.S.C.T. soldiers are documented, and the memorial's connection to the A.M.E. Church is defined.

⁸ Joseph T. Glatthaar, "Black Glory: The African-American Role in Union Victory," in *Why the Confederacy Lost*, ed. Gabor S. Boritt (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Richard S. Newman, *Freedom's Prophet: Bishop Richard Allen, the AME Church, and the Black Founding Fathers* (New York: New York University Press, 2008).

CHAPTER I

LINCOLN CALLS OUT THE TROOPS

In the Revolutionary War, the United States initially allowed blacks to serve in the army. They helped make up for insufficient numbers of white enlistments. About five thousand African-Americans served with the Continental Army during the American Revolution, and a small number served during the War of 1812. It was not until after the latter war that the states and federal government began excluding blacks from the Army, Marine Corps, and militias. In 1820, the Adjutant and Inspector General's Office of the War Department ordered that, "No negro or Mulatto will be received as a recruit of the Army," and the order stood until 1863. Thus when the Civil War began, the federal government already had a discriminatory policy in place against colored men.¹

In the navy, however, African-Americans continued to serve after the War of 1812. Separate records were not kept for white and black enlistments, so it is impossible to know how many served. But a letter written by Acting Secretary of the Navy, Isaac Chauncey, in 1839, and a report by the Secretary of the Navy, A.P. Usher, in 1842,

¹ "The Army and Diversity," U.S. Army Center of Military History, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://history.army.mil/html/faq/diversity.html>; as quoted in Herbert Aptheker, "The Negro in the Union Navy," *The Journal of Negro History* 32, no. 2 (April 1947): 174n17, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2714852>.

demonstrate that African-Americans served in this arm of the service, although not in any great number.²

U.S. policy towards black troops in the Civil War is therefore a milestone in American military history. The U.S. government not only renewed the enrollment of free-born blacks in the army, but it also enrolled freed slaves, and the total number of African-American enlistments surpassed that of all previous wars combined.

But this policy had slow beginnings, and it would have come much later, if it came at all, if it were not for the military setbacks the North experienced. In hindsight, the military benefit of enlisting former slaves and free-born blacks is obvious: the manpower of the Union armies was augmented by about 180,000 soldiers. But in spite of this statistic, whites in the North in 1861 were focused on preventing the spread of slavery, not abolishing it or enrolling blacks in the army. This viewpoint kept the U.S. army almost completely white until 1863, when military necessity demanded a change in policy. Proof of this political climate can be approximated by reviewing the policies of the presidential candidates in 1860 and the number of people who voted for each of them.³

Abraham Lincoln made his beliefs known during his rise to fame in the 1850s. In an 1854 public speech at Peoria, Illinois, he pointed out that U.S. policy since 1787 was to restrict the spread of slavery. In that year, Congress passed a law prohibiting slavery within the Northwest Territory. Likewise, the Missouri Compromise of 1820 prohibited

² Aptheker, 173-4.

³ Dudley Taylor Cornish, *The Sable Arm: Black Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865*, rev. ed. (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1987), 288.

slavery in most of Louisiana Territory. When most of the far western territories were gained as a result of the Mexican-American War, Congress once again set strict limitations on the extension of slavery. It was not until the Kansas-Nebraska Act was passed in 1854 that this policy was reversed. This act made slavery legal in all U.S. territories, and its supporters championed the idea of Popular Sovereignty, which held that territories, when applying for statehood, had the right to declare themselves free or slave states.⁴

The Kansas-Nebraska Act was the wedge that divided the country in the 1850s. Lincoln was part of the new Republican party, which was formed largely for the purpose of opposing it. At the Peoria speech, Lincoln went so far as to say of the act,

I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself. I hate it because it deprives our republican example of its just influence in the world—enables the enemies of free institutions, with plausibility, to taunt us as hypocrites—causes the real friends of freedom to doubt our sincerity, and especially because it forces so many really good men amongst ourselves into an open war with the very fundamental principles of civil liberty—criticizing the Declaration of Independence, and insisting that there is no right principle of action but *self-interest*.⁵

Four years later, Lincoln delivered his “House Divided Speech” in Springfield, Illinois. Once again, he outlined his public position, arguing that the country could not

⁴ Abraham Lincoln, “Speech on the Kansas-Nebraska Act at Peoria, Illinois, October 16, 1854” in The Library of America, *Abraham Lincoln: Speeches and Writings, 1832-1858; Speeches, Letters, and Miscellaneous Writings The Lincoln-Douglas Debates*, ed. Don E. Fehrenbacher (cited hereafter *Lincoln I*) (New York: Viking Press, 1989), 308-15.

⁵ Abraham Lincoln, “Speech on the Kansas-Nebraska Act at Peoria, Illinois, October 16, 1854” in *Lincoln I*, 315.

long remain half free and half slave. He believed that either slavery was on the course to ultimate extinction, or that it would become legal in all the states and territories.⁶

Lincoln rounded out his policy in 1860, when he endorsed the National Republican Platform after his nomination. As far as slavery was concerned, the platform argued that the principle “all men are created free and equal” was essential for maintaining republican government. It also held that the U.S. territories were inherently “free,” and that neither Congress, territorial legislatures, nor individuals could legalize slavery therein. It also protested against the enforcement of the Fugitive Slave Laws. These laws gave judges and magistrates the power to determine, finally and without a jury trial, the status of an alleged runaway slave. Persons declared fugitive slaves under these laws were to be returned to their owner, and stiff penalties were imposed on those who helped any of them escape.⁷

Lincoln’s policy on the eve of the election can thus be summarized in six points. First, he believed that the principle “all men are created free and equal” was necessary for maintaining republican government. Second, he held that all territories of the United States were inherently “free,” and that neither Congress, territorial legislatures, nor individuals had the power to introduce slavery therein. Third, he considered slavery to be unjust. Fourth, he believed slavery undermined the country’s example as a free

⁶ Abraham Lincoln, “House Divided Speech at Springfield, Illinois, June 16, 1858” in *Lincoln I*, 426.

⁷ Abraham Lincoln to George Ashmun, May 23, 1860, in The Library of America, *Abraham Lincoln: Speeches and Writings, 1859-1865; Speeches, Letters, and Miscellaneous Writings Presidential Messages and Proclamations*, ed. Don E. Fehrenbacher (cited hereafter *Lincoln II*) (New York: Viking Press, 1989), 157; Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Republican Party Platforms: Republican Party Platform of 1860,” The American Presidency Project, UC Santa Barbara, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/republican-party-platform-1860>.

republican society. Fifth, he argued that the Fugitive Slave Laws were unjust. Finally, he maintained that the country would eventually have to abolish slavery or legalize it in every state and territory.

The Democrat party in 1860 was divided over a disagreement on its party platform. At the national convention in Charleston, South Carolina, the southern delegates demanded a resolution that denied Congress and territorial legislatures the ability to interfere with slavery in the states and territories in any way whatsoever. The northern delegates would not accept this, promising only to support Supreme Court rulings on slavery in the territories. As a result, fifty delegates from the lower South walked out, and the party chose to reconvene six weeks later in Baltimore, Maryland, to attempt a settlement.⁸

At the Baltimore convention, a disagreement arose as to whether or not the delegates who walked out of the Charleston convention should be given seats. Northern delegates were willing to seat some of the bolters, but the Southerners wanted all or nothing. This disagreement led to a final split, and more than a third of the delegates walked out. Those who remained nominated Stephen A. Douglas of Illinois, while the bolters nominated John C. Breckenridge of Kentucky.⁹

Despite their differences, both Democratic Party factions shared common ground, as they both endorsed the party resolutions passed in 1856. These resolutions denied Congress' power to interfere with slavery in the states where it already existed, and they

⁸ James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989), 214-16; "1860 Charleston Democratic Platform," Furman University History Department, accessed January 2, 2019, <http://history.furman.edu/benson/civwar/show/CharlestonConvention.htm>.

⁹ McPherson, 216.

pledged support for Popular Sovereignty in the territories. They also pledged support for the Fugitive Slave Laws; in their 1860 platforms, both factions doubled down on their support for these laws.¹⁰

Their differences lay in the amount of protection slavery was to receive in the territories. Although the Douglas Democrats reaffirmed their support for Popular Sovereignty, they pledged to leave future decisions on the matter to the Supreme Court. This was not enough for the Breckenridge Democrats, who resolved outright that slavery should be protected in the territories.¹¹

The Constitutional Union party, the fourth contender in the election, nominated John Bell and issued just one resolution in its platform. This resolution, which was noncommittal on the slavery issue, pledged support for “the Constitution of the country, the union of the states, and the enforcement of the laws.”¹²

Lincoln won the election, because he carried all the free states except New Jersey, which split its electoral votes between himself and Douglas. The border states¹³ were

¹⁰ “Democratic Party Platform of 1860: (Breckenridge Faction),” Teaching American History, accessed January 2, 2019, <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/democratic-party-platform-of-1860-2/>; “Democratic Party Platform of 1860: (Douglas Faction),” Teaching American History, accessed January 2, 2019, <http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/democratic-party-platform-of-1860/>; Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Democratic Party Platforms: 1856 Democratic Party Platform,” The American Presidency Project, UC Santa Barbara, accessed January 2, 2019, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29576>.

¹¹ Peters and Woolley, “1856 Democratic Party Platform;” “Democratic Party Platform of 1860: (Breckenridge Faction);” “Democratic Party Platform of 1860: (Douglas Faction).”

¹² Gerhard Peters and John T. Woolley, “Minor/Third Party Platforms: Constitutional Union Party Platform of 1860,” The American Presidency Project, accessed January 2, 2019, <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/index.php?pid=29571>.

¹³ The border states—Missouri, Kentucky, Maryland, and Delaware—were slave states that later sided with the Union. Delaware retained its old allegiance from the start, but the other three were retained by military occupation and Lincoln’s initially mild policy towards slavery.

split: Missouri voted for Douglas, Kentucky voted for Bell, and Maryland and Delaware both voted for Breckenridge. Breckenridge carried nine of the eleven states that later formed the Confederacy, while the other two, Tennessee and Virginia, voted for Bell (See Figure 1).¹⁴

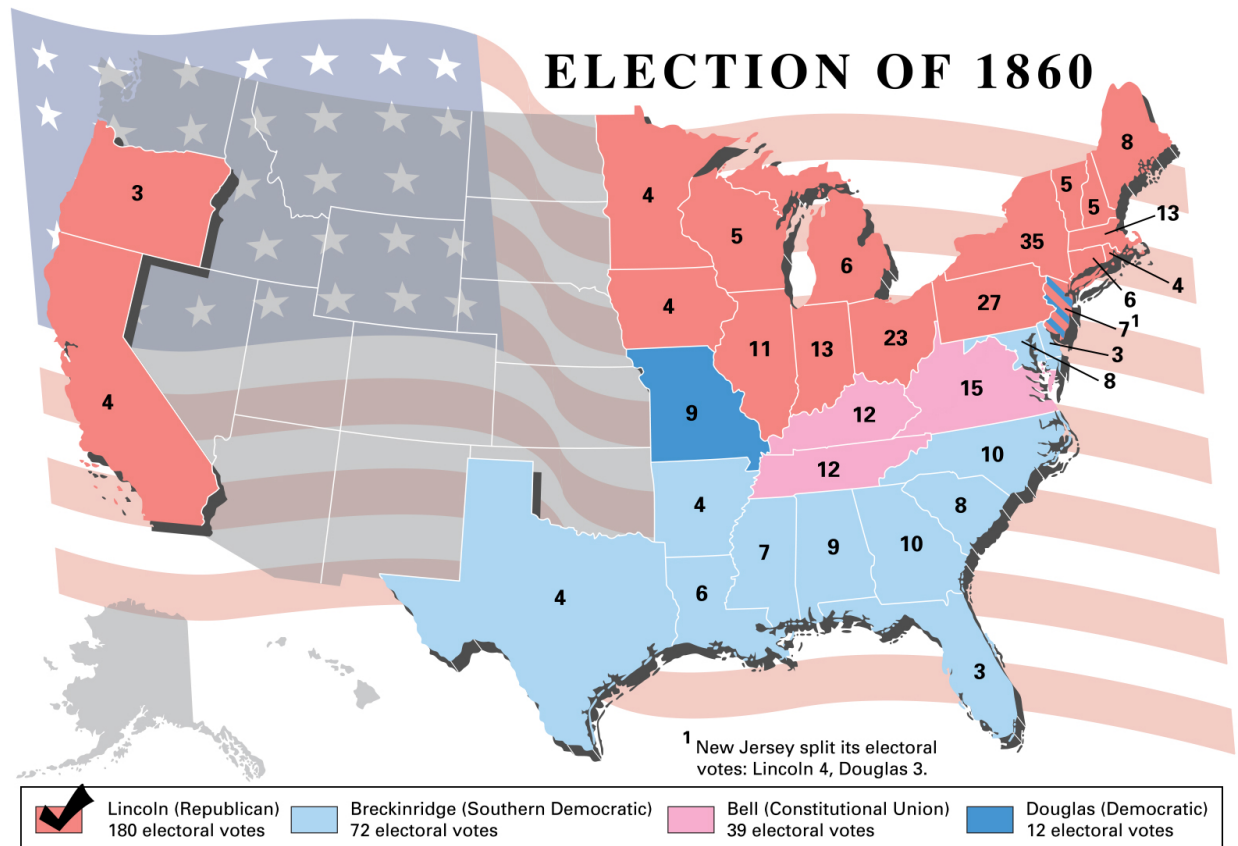


Figure 1. Election map of the 1860 presidential election. “Election of 1860,” Encyclopædia Britannica, accessed June 15, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/event/United-States-presidential-election-of-1860/media/1779925/67666>.

¹⁴ Michael Levy, “United States Presidential Election of 1860,” Encyclopædia Britannica, October 30, 2018, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/event/United-States-presidential-election-of-1860/media/1779925/67666>.

Despite winning almost every electoral vote in the free states, a close examination of the election results shows that Lincoln would not be working with the unanimous support of the Northern people. In the states that later formed the Union, including the border states, the Republicans won less than half the popular vote, with about 48.68 percent. Douglas and Breckinridge won about 34.2 percent and 10.7 percent respectively, a total of 44.9 percent. Bell won the approximately 6.4 percent remaining.¹⁵

Taken together, this suggests that less than half of the people in the Union States who voted for president in 1860 opposed the spread of slavery outright. This public opinion would have to be considered by the Lincoln administration, and, as will be demonstrated, President Lincoln was reluctant to emancipate the slaves and immediately enlist blacks in the army. This was, in effect, a form of discrimination against colored troops by the federal government. It should not be understood, however, that Lincoln was totally opposed to emancipation. As will be shown, he preferred the idea of gradual instead of immediate emancipation, and he worked towards his party platform of restricting the spread of slavery into the territories.

The first demonstration of Lincoln's policy came a little more than a month after the election. The Senate had created a Committee of Thirteen, composed of Republicans and Democrats, some of whom, like Jefferson Davis, would go on to become leaders of the Confederacy. This committee drafted a compromise proposal, that was intended to heal the sectional strife and prevent secession. It was called the Crittenden Compromise, after John J. Crittenden, a Kentucky senator who had supported John Bell for president. It proposed a series of constitutional amendments, which were to be perpetual so that no

¹⁵ "Statistics: 1860," The American Presidency Project, UC Santa Barbara, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/statistics/elections/1860>.

future amendment could override them. Some of the amendments stipulated that slavery would be protected from the federal government in states where it already existed, and that it would be protected in any territory acquired in the future south of the line 36° 30'. This was the line drawn for the Missouri Compromise, and it was important because Southerners intended to annex Cuba and other territories south of it.¹⁶

When Lincoln heard of this proposal, he wrote to his friend and Illinois senator, Lyman Trumbull, "Let there be no compromise on the question of *extending* slavery. If there be, all our labor is lost, and, ere long, must be done again...Have none of it. Stand firm. The tug has to come, & better now, than any time hereafter." Following this advice, all five Republicans on the Committee of Thirteen voted against the compromise. When the bill was laid before the Senate on January 16, 1861, it was defeated 25-23, with all 25 negative votes cast by Republicans. Fourteen senators from states that had seceded or were about to secede did not vote. Thus Lincoln defended one of the central planks of his party platform.¹⁷

Lincoln was sworn into office and delivered his first inaugural address on March 4, 1861. Seven states had already seceded, and most of the speech dwelled on the illegality of secession and the importance of preserving the Union. However, he did make an appeal to Southerners concerning slavery. He told them, "I have no purpose, directly or indirectly, to interfere with the institution of slavery in the States where it exists. I believe I have no lawful right to do so, and I have no inclination to do so... Those who

¹⁶ McPherson, 252-3.

¹⁷ Abraham Lincoln to Lyman Trumbull, December 10, 1860, in *Lincoln II*, 190; McPherson, 253-4.

nominated and elected me did so with full knowledge that I had made this, and many similar declarations, and had never recanted them.” This appeal showed that Lincoln was devoted to preventing the spread of slavery, not to interfering with it in the states where it already existed. As war had yet to break out, there was no question of arming slaves or free-born African-Americans.¹⁸

At least one major newspaper stood by Lincoln’s moderate position. The *New York Times*, in an article of April 1, 1861, expressed an opinion that may have found favor with northern Democrats and moderate Republicans. Repudiating a charge made by the *Charleston (South Carolina) Mercury*, which claimed that Lincoln was planning to arm the free blacks of the North, the *Times* decried the “journalism that inculcates and a people who believe such monstrous inventions.” This article and Lincoln’s inaugural address both demonstrate how elements of the Northern government and people were opposed to freeing or arming blacks.¹⁹

Two weeks after the *Times* article was published, the Confederates attacked the U.S. garrison at Fort Sumter. When Lincoln responded by calling for 75,000 troops, he addressed the need to preserve the integrity and existence of the Union. In regards to Southern “property,” he urged soldiers not to interfere with it. Thus when war broke out, Lincoln’s express policy was to preserve the Union, not to end slavery or enroll blacks in the army.²⁰

¹⁸ Abraham Lincoln, “First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1861” in *Lincoln II*, 215, 217-24.

¹⁹ As quoted in Cornish, 7.

²⁰ Abraham Lincoln, *Proclamation Calling Militia and Convening Congress, April 15, 1861* in *Lincoln II*, 232.

There were almost immediate calls for enlisting black troops, however. Frederick Douglass, a former slave and noted abolitionist, was working at the time as a journalist; he wrote on behalf of blacks both in the United States and in Africa. Shortly after the attack on Fort Sumter, he wrote, “Would to God you would let us do something. We lack nothing but your consent. We are ready and would go [to fight in the war]...But you won’t let us go.”²¹

Interestingly enough, it was the Confederacy that first employed blacks in a military capacity. Louisiana, with its history of French, Spanish, and African influences, had fewer taboos towards enrolling black soldiers than other Southern states. On May 22, 1861, the New Orleans city government organized the all-black Planche Guards. Before the year was over, the state would have fourteen companies of black infantry enrolled in its Native Guards, Louisiana Militia. However, this state action received no support from the Confederate government. The majority of blacks in Southern service were slaves who were put to work erecting fortifications and building defenses around key strategic points.²²

This Southern strategy of employing slaves was to play into Union hands almost immediately, because it gave the Northern government a reason to act on the slavery issue. In May 1861, Major General Benjamin Butler was commanding Union forces at Fortress Monroe, Virginia, when three blacks were allowed into his lines. These individuals were slaves who had been working on Confederate fortifications and had

²¹ As quoted in Cornish, 5.

²² Noah Andre Trudeau, *Like Men of War: Black Troops in the Civil War, 1862-1865* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1998), 9-10.

managed to escape to the Union fort. When their owner, a Confederate colonel, appeared under a flag of truce to demand their return, Butler employed the logic of the Dred Scott decision against him.²³ The slaves were, he said, property, and as Virginia was in a state of rebellion, this property was now considered “contraband of war.” Butler kept the prizes in his camp and put them to work. As the press spread word of this incident, slaves who came into Union lines were received as contraband.²⁴

Since Butler’s decision was controversial, the issue was taken up by Congress and the president. On August 6, after much hesitation, Lincoln signed *An Act to confiscate Property used for Insurrectionary Purposes*, which declared property used by the Confederate military subject to confiscation. This “confiscation act” confirmed Butler’s action, but it made no mention of freeing the slaves after they were confiscated. While this was far from what Frederick Douglass and other abolitionists desired, it was the first policy that breached bipartisan support for the war. All but six Republican congressmen voted for the bill, while all but three Democrat and border state congressmen voted against it.²⁵

On the heels of this sensitive decision, another event took place which forced Lincoln to act on the slavery issue. On August 30, 1861, Major General John C. Frémont, commanding the Department of the West, issued an edict declaring all slaves, and not just

²³ Melvin I. Urofsky, “Dred Scott Decision,” Encyclopædia Britannica, September 10, 2018, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.britannica.com/event/Dred-Scott-decision>. In *Dred Scott v. Sandford*, 60 US 393 (1856), the Supreme Court ruled that slaves were property and that blacks could not be United States citizens.

²⁴ McPherson, 355.

²⁵ McPherson, 355-6.

those used for military purposes, to be free. Three days after this edict was issued, Lincoln wrote to Frémont,

I think there is great danger that [your edict], in relation to the confiscation of property, and the liberating slaves of traitorous owners, will alarm our Southern Union friends, and turn them against us—perhaps ruin our rather fair prospect for [keeping Kentucky in the Union]. Allow me therefore to ask, that you will...modify that paragraph so as to conform to...the act of Congress, entitled, “An act to confiscate property used for insurrectionary purposes,”...This letter is written in a spirit of caution and not of censure.²⁶

Lincoln was hardly ready to sign the “confiscation act” when it passed Congress. Congress itself was divided on that legislation, which in hindsight seems mild in regards to slavery. So when one of Lincoln’s generals declared all slaves held by rebels free, his political acumen told him to revoke the order.

In regards to the navy, however, the Lincoln administration was ready to sail forward. That arm of the service had been enrolling African-Americans since the Revolution, and in 1861, with contraband migrating to Union-held territory, it found itself with an abundance of labor. In September of that year, Secretary of the Navy Gideon Welles gave permission for contrabands to be formally enlisted, although they were to remain at the rank of “boys,” which was the lowest in the navy.²⁷

A month later, Secretary of War Simon Cameron made a move for changing the role of contraband in the army. On October 14, he ordered Brigadier General Thomas W. Sherman, who was commanding troops in South Carolina, to

avail yourself of the service of any persons, whether fugitives from labor or not, who may offer them to the National Government. You will employ such persons in such services as they may be fitted for—either as ordinary

²⁶ McPherson, 356; Abraham Lincoln to John C. Frémont, September 2, 1861, in *Lincoln II*, 266.

²⁷ Cornish, 17-8; Aptheker, 175-6.

employees, or, if special circumstances seem to require it, in any other capacity, with such organization (in squads, companies, or otherwise) as you may deem most beneficial to the service...²⁸

While the order did not mention “arming” contraband or “enlisting” them as “soldiers,” the phrases “in any other capacity” and “in squads, companies, or otherwise” were suggestive enough for Sherman to make his own assumptions. Lincoln did not countermand it. Sherman, for his part, never recruited any contraband soldiers, and the order came to naught.²⁹

In the final months of the year, Lincoln held to his original policy as his cabinet members were drafting their annual reports, which were to be approved by the president before their submissions to Congress. In his report, Secretary Cameron compared slaves to other property, essentially supporting the contraband policy. He then wrote, “If it shall be found that the men who have been held by the rebels as slaves are capable of bearing arms and performing efficient military service, it is the right...of this Government to arm and equip them, and employ their services against the rebels, under proper military regulations, discipline, and command.” Lincoln made Cameron strike out this part of the report before he would endorse it, therefore continuing his discriminatory policy against blacks in the army.³⁰

The federal government’s policy towards slavery and black troops at the end of 1861 can thus be summarized in two points. First, slavery would not be allowed to extend

²⁸ As quoted in Cornish, 19.

²⁹ Cornish, 19-20.

³⁰ As quoted in William A. Dobak, *Freedom by the Sword: The U.S. Colored Troops, 1862-1867* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, Inc., 2013), 6-7.

into the territories. Second, the president would not interfere with slavery where it already existed unless slaves in those states were being used by the Confederate military. These slaves would be used as contraband in the Union army and could be enrolled as “boys” in the navy, but their status after the war was left undefined. This was hardly the type of policy that aspiring black soldiers could rally behind, but it would change slowly over the months to come.

By the spring of 1862, events were convincing greater numbers of Republicans that the fate of the nation was tied to the fate of slavery, and this conviction gained momentum throughout the year. Wendell Phillips, one of the most ardent abolitionists, lectured to packed houses across the Union states in the winter and spring of 1862. He received a formal introduction on the floor of the Senate, where he was greeted by Vice President Hannibal Hamlin. In January, the *New York Times* sent a correspondent to the convention of the Massachusetts Anti-Slavery Society and reported the growing trend towards abolitionism:

In years heretofore a great deal has been said and much fun has been made...of these gatherings...The facts that black and white met socially here, and that with equal freedom men and women addressed the conglomerate audience, have furnished themes for humorous reporters and facetious editors; but no such motives have drawn here the representatives of fifteen of the most widely circulated journals of the North. Peculiar circumstances have given to [abolitionist meetings] an importance that has hitherto not been theirs.³¹

In that same January, George W. Julian, a Radical Republican from Indiana, said in a speech before the House, “When I say that this rebellion has its source and life in slavery, I only repeat a simple truism...[The four million slaves] cannot be neutral. As

³¹ As quoted in McPherson, 495.

laborers, if not as soldiers, they will be the allies of the rebels, or of the Union.” By the end of August 1862, the *Boston Advertiser*, which had previously been timid in its support of abolition, reported, “the great phenomenon of the year is the terrible intensity which this [support for emancipation] has acquired. A year ago men might have faltered at the thought of proceeding to this extremity, [but now] they are in great measure prepared for it.”³²

Lincoln, an anti-slavery man at heart, embraced this shift in public opinion. However, he did not call for the immediate abolition of slavery like some in his party were demanding. Instead, he supported a policy of gradually freeing the slaves with the consent of the states. On March 6, 1862, he asked Congress to pass a resolution granting financial aid to states that adopted gradual emancipation. The aid was to be “used by such state in it’s [sic] discretion, to compensate for the inconveniences public and private, produced by such change of system.” In other words, the money could be used to reimburse slave owners for their loss. The resolution theoretically applied to all states, because Lincoln never recognized the validity of Southern secession, but in practice it applied to the border states. The resolution would, he argued, induce the border states to adopt gradual emancipation, thus destroying any Confederate hopes that they would come to their side. Lincoln also made it clear that he believed gradual was preferable to immediate emancipation, and that the decision was left to the states. Towards the end of his request, however, Lincoln anticipated more uncomfortable measures for the slave owners in the border states. As he worded it, “If, however, resistance continues [against the national authority], the war must also continue; and it is impossible to foresee all the

³² As quoted in McPherson, 495-6.

incidents, which may attend and all the ruin which may follow it. Such [means] as may seem indispensable, or may obviously promise great efficiency towards ending the struggle, must and will come.” Congress passed the resolution, with all Republicans supporting it and 85 percent of the Democrats and border state Unionists opposing it. None of the border states, however, took Lincoln up on his offer.³³

After Congress passed this resolution, Lincoln had to deal with another independent-minded general. On May 9, Major General David Hunter, commanding the Department of the South, issued an edict declaring all slaves in the states of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida free. Lincoln responded by issuing a formal “Proclamation Revoking General Hunter’s Emancipation Order,” which was signed by both himself and Secretary of State William H. Seward. This proclamation sternly denounced Hunter’s edict. Lincoln pointed to the gradual emancipation resolution that just passed Congress as his administration’s formal policy. He also wrote,

I further make known that whether it be competent for me, as Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy, to declare the Slaves of any state or states, free, and whether at any time, in any case, it shall have become a necessity indispensable to the maintenance of the government, to exercise such supposed power, are questions which, under my responsibility, I reserve to myself, and which I can not feel justified in leaving to the decision of commanders in the field.³⁴

This statement was decisive; it was a formal proclamation signed by the president and the secretary of state, forbidding generals in the field from issuing anymore

³³ McPherson, 498-9; Abraham Lincoln, “Message to Congress, March 6, 1862” in *Lincoln II*, 307-8.

³⁴ McPherson, 499; Abraham Lincoln, “Proclamation Revoking General Hunter’s Emancipation Order, May 19, 1862” in *Lincoln II*, 318-9.

emancipation edicts. Lincoln reserved for himself, as commander-in-chief, the power to declare slaves free in case it was necessary for the “maintenance of the government.”

Hunter was doing more than “freeing” the slaves, however. On the same day he issued his emancipation edict, he began recruiting them into the army. His initial tactic, forcibly removing them from plantations, sometimes with threats of force in front of their families, raised an outcry in the press. Although he later provided the slaves with comfortable quarters and offered them the choice between military service or returning to their plantations, Hunter’s actions made African-American military service a topic of conversation. Newspapers published column after column discussing the pros or cons of arming the slaves. The *New York Post*, for example, reported, “It is believed that, both with soldiers and officers, the movement will be popular when it is seen how completely it is in the interest of the white soldier as well as the black—by furnishing a force for those kinds of duty and those locations in which the black is safe, while the white soldier can only serve at a great hazard.” Meanwhile, the *National Intelligencer* debated which weapons black soldiers should use, opining, “in the clumsy hands of the unskilled negro the savage pike would be vastly more effective than the civilized carbine.”³⁵

When Cameron’s replacement as secretary of war, Edwin Stanton, ordered Hunter to report on his actions, the general defended himself by explaining he was acting on the orders Cameron issued to Sherman the previous October. He also apologized for not recruiting more troops, and pointed out that he had raised the only loyal regiment in South Carolina. Although the Radical Republicans in Congress found this response

³⁵ As quoted in Cornish, 37-43.

humorous, it offended the more conservative elements in the North. The administration refused to support Hunter with officers and pay for his recruits. On August 6, Lincoln finally issued a public statement making it clear he was not willing to enlist black soldiers. In a private interview, he backed his decision by arguing that Kentucky would join the Confederacy if he enrolled blacks in the army.³⁶

While Hunter's actions were being discussed, two new laws and one executive decision made July 1862 an historic month in America. The first law was a militia act, which gave the president authority to "receive into the service of the United States, for the purpose of...any military or naval service for which they may be found competent, persons of African descent..." Free blacks were now legally allowed to serve in the army, provided the president accepted them. Contraband slaves were also permitted to serve, and in doing so would receive their freedom. Moreover, the contraband's mother, wife, and children were to be freed, provided they were not slaves belonging to a loyal Unionist. Hunter was perhaps hoping Lincoln would accept the enrollment of his South Carolina troops under this law, but, as stated above, the president was unwilling as yet to employ this newly legalized source of manpower.³⁷

The second law was a second "confiscation act," which expanded on the first one passed to endorse Butler's actions at Fortress Monroe. It declared all slaves belonging to

³⁶ Cornish, 44-5, 47-8, 50-1.

³⁷ Steven F. Miller, "The Militia Act of 1862," Freedmen & Southern Society Project, December 10, 2017, accessed January 2, 2019, <http://www.freedmen.umd.edu/milact.htm>.

rebels, and not just the ones being employed for military purposes, subject to confiscation. Furthermore, it gave these confiscated slaves their freedom.³⁸

The “confiscation acts,” which did not apply to the slaves of Southern Unionists, were one step shy of granting all slaves in the Confederacy their freedom. Lincoln knew it, and he finally decided to take executive action on the slavery issue. On July 13, the same day he received notice that the border states were still unwilling to implement gradual emancipation, Lincoln informed Secretaries Seward and Welles of his decision to issue an emancipation proclamation. It was perhaps unfair, he argued, that the border states were asked to abolish slavery while the states in rebellion still maintained it. Moreover, the proclamation was, “a military necessity, absolutely essential to the preservation of the Union. We must free the slaves or be ourselves subdued. The slaves were undeniably an element of strength to those who had their service, and we must decide whether that element should be with us or against us.” On July 22, Lincoln informed the rest of his cabinet of his decision, adding that he would wait for a substantial Union military victory before issuing the proclamation.³⁹

Shortly after Lincoln made his decision known to his cabinet, Secretary of the Treasury Salmon P. Chase wrote a letter to General Butler, of “contraband” fame, who was then commanding the Department of the Gulf. In his letter, Chase intimated that Lincoln’s slavery policy had become more sympathetic to abolitionism. He added, “It

³⁸ Abraham Lincoln, “Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, September 22, 1862” in *Lincoln II*, 369-70.

³⁹ As quoted in McPherson, 503-4; “Lincoln tells his cabinet about Emancipation Proclamation,” History, A&E Television Networks, August 21, 2018, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/lincoln-tells-his-cabinet-about-emancipation-proclamation>.

would hardly be too much to ask you to call, like Jackson [in the War of 1812], colored soldiers to the defence [sic] of the Union; but you must judge of this. Of one thing be assured—you can hardly go too far to satisfy the exigency of public sentiment now.” Chase knew his man. On August 22, Butler issued an order calling for members of the Native Guards, Louisiana Militia to switch allegiance and join the U.S. army. In practice, however, Butler made no inquisition as to whether his new recruits were members of the militia or escaped slaves. On September 27, the 1st Regiment Louisiana Native Guards was mustered into the U.S. army, becoming the first black regiment to enter U.S. service during the Civil War. By the end of November, Butler had enrolled three regiments of Louisiana colored infantry. This was the first act of enrolling blacks in the army, and although Lincoln did not censure his general, the half-hearted instructions had come from the secretary of the treasury rather than the commander-in-chief.⁴⁰

While Butler was raising troops in Louisiana, another effort to enroll colored troops was underway in Kansas. Here the effort was led by Brigadier General James Lane, who was engaged in the guerilla warfare on the frontier. In August, Lane began enlisting blacks in a state regiment, officially as laborers. But in October, he sent these men into combat, seemingly without the administration’s consent.⁴¹

During this same historic August, a third effort to enroll colored troops was made. On the twenty-fifth, Secretary Stanton ordered Brigadier General Rufus Saxton, who replaced Hunter in command of the Department of the South, to enroll five thousand

⁴⁰ As quoted in Cornish, 63-7; Dobak, 96; Trudeau, 27.

⁴¹ Cornish, 73-4, 77; Trudeau, 3-4.

black troops for the defense of Union-held plantations. Although these troops were diverted to the quartermaster's department, they were provided with weapons with which to defend themselves. On November 3, Saxton sent these men on a raid, and their success improved public confidence in black soldiers.⁴²

Taken together, the actions of Generals Butler, Lane, and Saxton were promising for aspiring black soldiers, but they did not have the president's ringing endorsement. In Lane's case, he seems to have acted entirely on his own initiative. The other two generals were acting on behalf of cabinet members rather than the commander-in-chief. In fact, Lincoln had yet to publicly declare his willingness to enlist blacks in the army.

On September 17, the Battle of Antietam was fought in Maryland, and two days later the Confederate army fell back to Virginia. Then, on the twenty-second, Lincoln issued his "Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation." He stated his chief aim was to preserve the Union, and he reiterated his policy for providing financial aid to states that adopted gradual emancipation. He extended this benefit to states that granted immediate emancipation. The most important part of the proclamation, however, stated that all slaves in areas of the country still in rebellion on January 1, 1863, would be granted freedom.⁴³

Since this was a preliminary proclamation, it had no effect at the time except on public opinion. Personal opinions and those of the press were mixed, but perhaps leaned in favor of Lincoln. In the November midterm elections, the Democrats won the

⁴² Cornish, 80-1, 85-88; Trudeau, 17-8.

⁴³ Abraham Lincoln, "Preliminary Emancipation Proclamation, September 22, 1862" in *Lincoln II*, 368-70.

governorship of New York, the governorship and a majority of the legislature in New Jersey, a legislative majority in Illinois and Indiana, and an increase of thirty-four congressmen. While the Democrat press hailed these victories, the Republicans retained control of seventeen of the nineteen free state governorships and sixteen of the legislatures, elected several congressmen in Missouri for the first time, retained a twenty-five vote majority in the House, and gained five seats in the Senate. In December, the House passed an endorsement of the Emancipation Proclamation on a party-line vote. In the same month, Congress passed an act requiring the abolition of slavery as a condition of West Virginia's admission to statehood.⁴⁴

On January 1, 1863, Lincoln issued the "Final Emancipation Proclamation." This proclamation declared all the Confederate states except Tennessee and parts of Louisiana and Virginia to be in rebellion. The slaves in rebellious territories were immediately declared free, and the executive branch of government was charged with maintaining their freedom. Freed slaves were enjoined to refrain from violence, but Lincoln announced his willingness to accept colored troops into the army.⁴⁵

At first glance, it seems the Emancipation Proclamation did not free a single slave, because the slaves that were "freed" were in Confederate-held territory. However, Union armies at the time already occupied Northern Virginia, parts of the Atlantic coast, Tennessee, and most of the Mississippi River Valley, down to its mouth at New Orleans. Campaign plans for 1863 centered around further advances into Confederate territory.

⁴⁴ McPherson, 561-2.

⁴⁵ McPherson, 562-3; Abraham Lincoln, "Final Emancipation Proclamation, January 1, 1863" in *Lincoln II*, 424-5.

Slaves so far accepted as contraband had been granted their freedom, and now, as Union armies advanced further into the South, any slave who came into Union lines would be automatically accepted as free without contraband status. The Emancipation Proclamation thus laid the groundwork for freeing all slaves in areas subject to future occupation. Moreover, these freed slaves would be eligible for military service.

Lincoln's decision to issue the Emancipation Proclamation was part of his grand strategy for preserving the Union. On August 22, 1862, he had written to Horace Greeley, editor of the *New-York Tribune*, a letter that laid out his fundamental policy towards slavery:

...My paramount object in this struggle *is* to save the Union, and is *not* either to save or to destroy slavery. If I could save the Union without freeing *any* slave I would do it, and if I could save it by freeing *all* the slaves I would do it; and if I could save it by freeing some and leaving others alone I would also do that. What I do about slavery, and the colored race, I do because I believe it helps to save the Union; and what I forbear, I forbear because I do *not* believe it would help to save the Union. I shall do *less* whenever I shall believe what I am doing hurts the cause, and I shall do *more* whenever I shall believe doing more will help the cause. I shall try to correct errors when shown to be errors; and I shall adopt new views so fast as they shall appear to be true views.

I have here stated my purpose according to my views of *official* duty; and I intend no modification of my oft-expressed *personal* wish that all men every where could be free.⁴⁶

The proclamation served Lincoln's strategy in several ways. First, he believed slavery was the root of the rebellion, so eradicating it would destroy the motive for war. Second, he believed emancipation would make Europe look more favorably on the North's war aims, making European countries less inclined to intervene in favor of the

⁴⁶ Abraham Lincoln to Horace Greeley, August 22, 1862, in *Lincoln II*, 358.

South. Third, he hoped it would improve Northern morale. And fourth, he believed it would weaken the rebels by removing their laborers.⁴⁷

Enrolling blacks in the army was perhaps more controversial than freeing more slaves. Although the examples set in Louisiana, Kansas, and South Carolina had already introduced the public to the idea, Lincoln said in an interview on October 22, 1862, “[enlisting blacks] would drive many of our friends from us. The people are not prepared for it.”⁴⁸

Practically, however, colored troops would provide an immense benefit. The casualty rates of the war were unprecedented. At the Battle of Shiloh, casualties on both sides exceeded 20,000, more than all previous wars in American history combined. The Seven Days Battles witnessed about 16,000 Union casualties alone. In the Battle of Antietam, the North suffered over 10,000 casualties in a single day. In the Battle of Fredericksburg, the North lost another 10,000. Meanwhile, the 1860 census showed about 100,000 free blacks and over 800,000 slaves who would be of military age by 1863. Although most of the slave population lived in territory still under Confederate control, the Union armies would make further advances and liberate these slaves by enforcing the Emancipation Proclamation.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Abraham Lincoln, “Reply to Chicago Emancipation Memorial, Washington, D.C., September 13, 1862” in *Lincoln II*, 365.

⁴⁸ As quoted in Cornish, 100.

⁴⁹ Dobak, 8-9; Cornish, 96-8; United States, Census Bureau, “Map Showing the Distribution of the Slave Population of the Southern States of the United States Compiled from the Census of 1860,” accessed January 2, 2019, https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/1860_slave_distribution.pdf.

These facts explain several letters Lincoln wrote in early 1863. To Major General John Dix, commanding at Fortress Monroe, he wrote on January 24,

The proclamation has been issued. We were not succeeding—at best, were progressing too slowly—without it. Now... we must also take some benefit from it, if practicable. I therefore will thank you for your well considered opinion whether Fortress-Monroe, and Yorktown, one or both, could not, in whole or in part, be garrisoned by colored troops, leaving the white forces now necessary at those places, to be employed elsewhere.⁵⁰

Lincoln wrote another letter that appealed to military necessity on March 26. This was to Andrew Johnson, the military governor of Tennessee. “The colored population is the great *available* and yet *unavailed* of, force for restoring the Union,” he wrote. “The bare sight of fifty thousand armed, and drilled black soldiers on the banks of the Mississippi, would end the rebellion at once.”⁵¹

In a third letter, written three days later to Major General Nathaniel P. Banks, Lincoln wrote, “To now avail ourselves of [colored troops], is very important, if not indispensable... The necessity of this is palpable if, as I understand, you are now unable to effect anything with your present force; and which force is soon to be greatly diminished by the expiration of terms of service, as well as by ordinary causes.”⁵²

By August 16, 1863, Lincoln was able to write to James Conkling, a Republican from Illinois,

I know as fully as one can know the opinions of others, that some of the commanders of our armies in the field who have given us our most important successes, believe the emancipation policy, and the use of colored troops, constitute the heaviest blow yet dealt to the rebellion; and that, at least one of

⁵⁰ Abraham Lincoln to John A. Dix, January 14, 1863, in *Lincoln II*, 429.

⁵¹ Abraham Lincoln to Andrew Johnson, March 26, 1863, in *Lincoln II*, 440.

⁵² Abraham Lincoln to Nathaniel P. Banks, March 29, 1863, in *Lincoln II*, 442-3.

those important successes, could not have been achieved when it was, but for the aid of black soldiers. Among the commanders holding these views are some who have never had any affinity with what is called abolitionism, or with republican [sic] party politics; but who hold them purely as military opinions.⁵³

Lincoln's decision to arm blacks paid off: black soldiers augmented the strength of the army, Europe never interfered on behalf of the Confederacy, and it helped end slavery in the South. In his "Annual Message to Congress" on December 8, 1863, Lincoln pointed out,

A month later the final proclamation came, including the announcement that colored men of suitable condition would be received into the war service. The policy of emancipation, and of employing black soldiers, gave to the future a new aspect, about which hope, and fear, and doubt contended in uncertain conflict... Tennessee and Arkansas have been substantially cleared of insurgent control, and influential citizens in each, owners of slaves and advocates of slavery at the beginning of the rebellion, now declare openly for emancipation in their respective States. Of those States not included in the emancipation proclamation, Maryland, and Missouri, neither of which three years ago would tolerate any restraint upon the extension of slavery into new territories, only dispute now as to the best mode of removing it within their own limits.⁵⁴

Thus, Lincoln's decision to enroll blacks in the army came reluctantly. He first felt the need to abolish slavery in the Confederacy, and he did not adopt this policy until the war had been going on for over a year. And when he included his policy of enlisting blacks in the "Final Emancipation Proclamation," his motive was military necessity rather than a sense of social justice.

⁵³ Abraham Lincoln to James C. Conkling, August 26, 1863, in *Lincoln II*, 497-8.

⁵⁴ Abraham Lincoln, "Annual Message to Congress, December 8, 1863" in *Lincoln II*, 550-1.

CHAPTER II

THE U.S.C.T. TAKE THE FIELD

After Lincoln announced his decision to enlist colored troops, the next steps were to recruit them and to organize them as regiments. In a fully integrated system, they would have received the same pay as whites, served in the same regiments as them, and have had the chance to rise through the ranks. In the Civil War, however, no such system existed. Although Lincoln's decision to enlist colored soldiers was inclusive by contemporary standards, and even though their organization required much effort and commitment, the men in the ranks still had to contend with inequalities that set them apart from whites. They were recruited into segregated units, were placed almost entirely under the command of white officers, and suffered other forms of both institutional and day-to-day discrimination.

Chronologically, the first proof of discrimination was the segregation of colored troops into their own units, and this happened immediately. The first colored regiments enrolled in the army were those already organized in 1862. Butler's three regiments in Louisiana were the first to be mustered in. Lane's Kansas regiment was the fourth as well

as the first to be enrolled in a free state, and Saxton's South Carolina regiment was the fifth.¹

In the first month of 1863, Lincoln approved the enrollment of at least seven new colored regiments. Colonel Daniel Ullman, who in 1862 had urged Lincoln to arm blacks, was promoted to brigadier general and ordered to raise a brigade consisting of four regiments of Louisiana volunteers. Colonel James Montgomery, who had served in Kansas and was a friend of General Hunter, was authorized to raise a colored regiment in South Carolina. William Sprague IV, governor of Rhode Island, was authorized to raise a regiment in his state. And Governor John Andrew of Massachusetts was authorized to enroll as many colored regiments as he saw fit, but the 1860 census showed only 1,973 African-Americans of military age in his state.²

While these units were being organized, the administration decided that piecemeal recruitment by individual officers and governors would not be enough. The War Department needed to lead an integrated, centralized recruitment effort. Union armies by that time had occupied most of the Mississippi Valley, where slaves made up about 75 percent of the population. Accordingly, on March 25, 1863, Secretary Stanton ordered Lorenzo Thomas, adjutant general of the army, to proceed to the Mississippi Valley and begin black recruitment on a wholesale level.³

¹ Dudley Taylor Cornish, *The Sable Arm: Black Troops in the Union Army, 1861-1865*, rev. ed. (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1987), 78, 92.

² John T. Hubbell, "Abraham Lincoln and the Recruitment of Black Soldiers," *Papers of the Abraham Lincoln Association* 2 (1980): 15-6, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20148805>; Cornish, 100-1, 103-7.

³ Hubbell, 16; Cornish, 113-4; United States, Census Bureau, "Map Showing the Distribution of the Slave Population of the Southern States of the United States Compiled from the Census of 1860," accessed January 2, 2019, https://www.census.gov/history/pdf/1860_slave_distribution.pdf.

Thomas acted with skill and energy. By April 1, one week after he received his orders, he had reached Cairo, Illinois, and had filed a report with the War Department on the condition of the colored population and their potential for military service. The next day he began a speaking tour to raise recruits. By the seventh, he had traveled from Kentucky to Arkansas, had given several speeches, and had requested from the War Department enough blank registration cards for ten regiments. On the eighth he wrote, “the difficulty will be to restrict them to that number, for at least ten regiments can be obtained.” By the eighteenth, less than three weeks after his arrival in the west, Thomas had ordered muster rolls for twenty regiments. These regiments were organized by the end of the year. By the end of the war, Thomas had had a hand in the enrollment of seventy colored regiments. With the backing of the War Department, he was responsible for initiating the organization of 40 percent of all U.S. colored regiments during the war.⁴

Major General Nathaniel P. Banks, who then commanded the Department of the Gulf, intensified recruitment in the Mississippi Valley. On May 1, 1863, he announced his intention to form a corps of black soldiers consisting of eighteen regiments of infantry, artillery, and cavalry. By September 1, Brigadier General George L. Andrews, the corps’ commanding officer, was able to report that he had “twenty regiments of infantry organized...and nearly all filled to the required numbers,” and “in addition...four regiments of engineers...three of which are full.” These numbers may be misleading, however. Nine of the corps’ regiments had already been recruited by Butler and Ullman before Banks took them over. Moreover, Banks’ treatment of recruits was so off-putting

⁴ As quoted in Cornish, 115-7, 125.

that blacks stopped volunteering. As the government had recently begun conscripting white soldiers, Banks felt it necessary to use the same method for his colored recruits.⁵

Thomas' and Banks' initial success probably influenced the administration's decision to create the Bureau of Colored Troops, which would oversee all future recruitment. On May 22, 1863, the Adjutant General's Office issued General Order, No. 143, which established the bureau and outlined its organization. The adjutant general was charged with establishing recruiting stations at his discretion, and only specially authorized personnel were allowed to recruit colored troops. The War Department was to establish boards at posts it saw fit, which would examine applicants for the command of colored regiments. Regiments thus organized were to be numbered and called "Regiment of U.S. Colored Troops." Major Charles W. Foster was appointed chief of the bureau, and he established his headquarters in Washington, D.C.⁶

On June 30, one day before the Battle of Gettysburg, the Bureau of Colored Troops mustered in the 1st Regiment of U.S. Colored Troops in Washington, D.C., the first regiment to be enrolled under its supervision. From this point on, unit names such as "Louisiana Native Guards" and "Corps D'Afrique" ceased to exist. For example, Thomas' 1st Arkansas became the 46th U.S.C.T., Butler's 1st Louisiana Native Guards

⁵ As quoted in Cornish, 126, 128-9; Joseph T. Wilson, *The Black Phalanx: African-American Soldiers in the War of Independence, the War of 1812, and the Civil War*, rev. ed. (New York: Da Capo Press, 1994), 120-3.

⁶ Cornish, 130; "Document for May 22nd": War Department General Order 143; Creation of the U.S. Colored Troops," National Archives, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.archives.gov/historical-docs/todays-doc/index.html?dod-date=522>.

became the 73rd U.S.C.T., and Lane's 1st Kansas Colored Volunteers became the 79th U.S.C.T.⁷

Recruiting across the Deep South proved difficult. Most slave masters owned just a couple of slaves, and most residences were separated by acres of farmland. Recruiters had to travel from farm to farm, where they often met resistance from slave owners. For their troubles, they were usually rewarded with just a handful of recruits. Moreover, slaves were suspicious of Northern whites. To overcome these difficulties, at least one recruiter devised the method of waiting until Sunday every week, when the slaves of the neighborhood would get together for a "shin dig." Once they were congregated, he would urge the group to enlist. To overcome suspicion, recruiters often had enlisted colored troops appeal to the slaves.⁸

While recruitment was being pushed in the Deep South, Lincoln did not press the issue in the border states, although he did authorize recruitment in Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri. His caution was vindicated by the reaction in Kentucky. In that state, he held off on pushing for extensive recruitment until 1864, when he established a recruiting post in Paducah. The governor of Kentucky, Thomas E. Bramlette, traveled to Washington to protest to Lincoln directly. Lincoln informed him that, early in the war, he did not believe arming blacks was a necessity. However, being convinced by events that the Union would be lost unless he laid "a strong hand on the colored element," he had decided to enroll them in the army. Lincoln then reasoned,

⁷ Cornish, 130-1.

⁸ Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers*, rev. ed. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 72-4.

We have the men [130,000]; and we could not have had them without the measure. And now let any Union man who complains of the measure, test himself by writing down in one line that he is for subduing the rebellion by force of arms; and in the next, that he is for taking these hundred and thirty thousand men from the Union side, and placing them where they would be but for the measure he condemns. If he can not face his case so stated, it is only because he can not face the truth.⁹

Kentuckians continued to resent black recruitment more intensely than the people of any other Union state. But from 1863 until the end of the war, Lincoln continuously repeated his conviction that the Union could not be saved without the support of black troops.¹⁰

In the Northern free states, recruiting got off to a slow start. By the end of July 1863, only two Massachusetts regiments, one Philadelphia regiment, and one Rhode Island artillery company, had been organized and equipped. Another Philadelphia regiment and one Ohio regiment were in the course of organization. There were various reasons for this. The North had a smaller black population than did other states. Unlike white soldiers, blacks were not given a bounty unless they enrolled as substitutes, and their families did not receive pensions. And when blacks did enlist, they were usually employed as servants, teamsters, and other assistants instead of soldiers.¹¹

Since most Northern regiments were enrolled after May 22, 1863, their recruitment was standardized by the Bureau of Colored Troops. The bureau delegated

⁹ Hubbell, 19-20; Lincoln to Albert G. Hodges, April 4, 1864, in *The Library of America, Abraham Lincoln: Speeches and Writings, 1859-1865; Speeches, Letters, and Miscellaneous Writings Presidential Messages and Proclamations*, ed. Don E. Fehrenbacher (cited hereafter *Lincoln II*) (New York: Viking Press, 1989), 585-6.

¹⁰ Hubbell, 20.

¹¹ Cornish, 233-4.

authority to governors and to public and private organizations, who then went on with the work, and made frequent reports and relied on the bureau to settle questions of policy. To improve free state recruiting, the bureau hired George L. Stearns as a recruiting commissioner. This abolitionist had previously set up an organization that spanned most of the larger Northern cities. It was composed of salaried recruiting agents and sub-agents who received a commission for each volunteer they brought in. Stearns also organized public speeches by noted abolitionists such as Wendell Phillips, William Lloyd Garrison, and Frederick Douglass, who urged blacks to enlist.¹²

In 1864, Congress bolstered Northern recruiting by granting state authorities the right to enlist blacks from Confederate states and count them as part of their quotas. This work, however, was slow. While more than one thousand free state recruiting agents registered with the Provost Marshal General's Office, they enrolled just 5,052 former slaves by the end of the war.¹³

The official army records from the Civil War state that 178,975 colored troops served in the Union army.¹⁴ Included in this list are about 7,000 noncommissioned officers and about 100 commissioned officers, most of whom served at company-grade levels, while a few made it to field-grades. Colored troops made up almost 7 percent of all Union enlistments. By the end of the war, the number of colored troops in the Union

¹² Cornish, 108-10, 233-5, 239.

¹³ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 64.

¹⁴ Cornish, 288; J.T. Wilson, 123. The records of some colored regiments were incorrectly kept or lost. Moreover, some officers replaced deceased soldiers by having new recruits answer to the dead men's names during roll call. Thus it is impossible to determine the exact number of blacks that served in the army.

army roughly equaled the number of soldiers remaining in Confederate service. On July 15, 1865, at the end of the war, colored troops were organized into 120 infantry regiments, 12 heavy artillery regiments, 10 batteries of light artillery, and 7 cavalry regiments, constituting about 12 percent of the estimated one million men then in the Union army. Throughout the war, these units took part in 449 engagements, 39 of them major. More than a third of the men died in service.¹⁵

While the Union state governments were charged with meeting quotas, the federal government was responsible for recruiting in the Confederate states and in the territories. All told, the federal government enrolled under its direct authority 99,337 of the 178,975 colored troops who served in the war. Subtracting the recruits from “at large” (5,896) and from Colorado Territory (95), the remaining 93,346, about 52 percent of all colored troops, were enrolled from Confederate states. Of these, 62,054, about 66 percent of Confederate state enrollments and 35 percent of total enrollments, were from the states of Mississippi, Louisiana, and Tennessee, which were occupied in the first half of the war and composed part of the Mississippi Valley.¹⁶

The border states, plus West Virginia and the District of Columbia, enrolled 45,184 troops, about 25 percent of the total. Kentucky contributed about 53 percent of these, despite the many grumblings from whites in that state. The Northern free states enrolled 34,454, about 19 percent of the total. Pennsylvania contributed the most out of

¹⁵ Cornish, ix, 288; United States, War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (cited hereafter *O.R.*) (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series 3, Volume 4, Section 2, 1269-70.

¹⁶ United States, *O.R.*, ser. 3, vol. 4, sec. 2, 1269-70.

this group with 8,612 enrollments, about 25 percent of the free state total. Of all border and free state enrollments, 5,052 were former slaves taken from Confederate states.¹⁷

These numbers are even more interesting when compared to the size of the country's African-American population. According to the 1860 census, the total African-American population in the U.S., free and slave, was 4,441,830. Total colored troop enrollment equals 4 percent of this number. The number of African-American men, free and slave, who were fifteen to forty-nine years of age in 1860 was 1,048,003. This was the demographic almost all colored troops would be recruited from, and total colored troops enrolled equals 17 percent of this number. By comparison, total white enrollment in the Union army equaled 9 percent of the total U.S. white population in 1860 and 35 percent of white men from fifteen to forty-nine years of age. The facts that the border states did not abolish slavery until the end of the war, and that it was difficult to access the slave population in the South, may have been the biggest reasons the African-American enrollment percentage fell below that of whites. In the states that were free in the beginning of the war, the colored troop enrollment equaled 14 percent of their entire African-American population and 58 percent of their African-American men of military age. This shows that a high percentage of free blacks served despite the discrimination they faced, and as will be shown, this was the case in Monroe County.¹⁸

¹⁷ United States, *O.R.*, ser. 3, vol. 4, sec. 2, 1269-70.

¹⁸ United States, *O.R.*, ser. 3, vol. 4, sec. 2, 1269-70; United States, Census Bureau, "Recapitulation of the Tables of Population, Nativity, and Occupation," (Table), *Population of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census, Under the Direction of the Secretary of the Interior* (cited hereafter *1860 Census*) (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 594-5, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1860/population/1860a-46.pdf?#>.

When the colored recruits were organized into regiments, they came under the command of commissioned officers. The War Department's general policy was that these officers be white. The Emancipation Proclamation and the enlistment of black soldiers was radical enough in 1863, and the administration did not want to push too far by filling the regiments with black officers. Another reason the federal government employed white officers was that it could raise support for colored troops by compensating whites with military promotion. And a third reason was the popularly-held belief that blacks would make inferior soldiers, and that whites would have to be in command in order to ensure their efficiency. This segregation of rank, as well as the justifications for it, are, of course, more proofs of discrimination.¹⁹

Although rank was segregated, whites in the North took pains to ensure that black regiments were placed in competent hands. When General Hunter experimented with black troops in 1862, he promoted "the most intelligent and energetic of our non-commissioned officers" to their command. His replacement, General Saxton, appointed Captain Thomas Wentworth Higginson, a prominent Massachusetts abolitionist, to command of the colored regiment. Higginson made sure to appoint "the finest, sharpest men I could find." When Governor Andrew of Massachusetts recruited officers for his state's colored regiments, he looked for "young men of military experience, of firm anti-slavery principles, ambitious, superior to a vulgar contempt for color, and having faith in the capacity of colored men for military service." Similarly, Lorenzo Thomas, during his recruitment efforts in the Mississippi Valley, looked exclusively for men who were

¹⁹ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 35-6.

serving in existing volunteer units. In addition, he wanted “only those for Officers whose hearts were in the work and who would exert themselves to the uttermost and treat the Negro kindly.”²⁰

The War Department, after creating the Bureau of Colored Troops, issued General Order, No. 144, which outlined the requirements for commissions in colored regiments. Applicants for commissions had to provide “satisfactory recommendations of good moral character and standing in the community in which [they] resided, or, if in the military service, on testimonials from his commanding officers.” Applicants with approved references would undergo a “physical, mental, and moral fitness” examination. These examinations were administered by boards that were convened at such locations as the War Department deemed fit. These boards would then determine which rank the candidates qualified for, and appointments were to be made in order of merit. Candidates who failed to qualify were barred from reapplying.²¹

The men who applied for commissions had various motives. Some considered the responsibility of leading colored troops an act of Christian piety or the culmination of their abolitionist beliefs. Another segment of applicants were simply strong supporters of the war effort, and were determined to support the government in its war policies. Others applied because of their ambition for rank or increased pay. The war weary also applied, because officers were able to resign whenever they wanted.²²

²⁰ As quoted in Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 36-37, 39.

²¹ J.T. Wilson, 125n1.; “General Order Number 144,” *Lest We Forget: African American Military History* by Historian, Author, and Veteran Bennie McRae, Jr., accessed January 2, 2019, <http://lestweforget.hamptonu.edu/page.cfm?uuid=9FEC3FC3-E924-03EF-C44E0EB26F82593C>.

²² Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 40-1.

Whatever a man's motive for applying, he did not always find support in his current unit. Some officers of white regiments would not write recommendations for their subordinates if they feared losing a competent soldier. At least one applicant found a way around this by seeking recommendation from his captain rather than his colonel. In other cases, officers were only too willing to oblige. Major General William Rosecrans had to issue guidelines for applications because some of his officers were trying to get rid of incompetent men by passing them off onto colored regiments.²³

Once candidates received their recommendations, many of them prepared for the board examinations. While some studied by themselves or in small groups, others enrolled in the Free Military School for Applicants for Commands of Colored Troops. This school was the brainchild of Thomas Webster, an abolitionist and philanthropist from Philadelphia. He led the effort to establish it when he learned that nearly 50 percent of the applicants who took the bureau's examinations failed, and he opened the school in Philadelphia in December 1863.²⁴

The school's chief preceptor was John H. Taggart, formerly colonel of the 12th Pennsylvania Reserve. He saw to it that students spent three hours in class a day, six days a week, learning remedial arithmetic, algebra, geography, and ancient history. Students also conducted drill, dress parade, and nighttime study duties. They practiced command by drilling colored recruits in nearby Camp William Penn. Students hailed from

²³ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 43.

²⁴ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 45; Daniel V. Van Every, "The Role of Officer Selection and Training on the Successful Formation and Employment of U.S. Colored Troops in the American Civil War, 1863-1865" (master's thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 2011), 53, accessed January 2, 2019, Defense Technical Information Center, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a547407.pdf>.

seventeen states as well as the District of Columbia. Ninety-Six percent of the school's graduates passed the bureau's board examinations. In March 1864, the Bureau of Colored Troops granted privates and non-commissioned officers applying for colored troop commissions a thirty day furlough to attend the school.²⁵

When candidates appeared for their board examinations, they were tested on tactics, army regulations, general military knowledge, history, geography, and mathematics. Candidates for cavalry or artillery assignments had different questions on tactics than did candidates for infantry. Those applying for the quartermaster's department were tested less on tactics than on army regulations. And it appears that the higher the rank being sought, the longer the examination lasted.²⁶

The Bureau of Colored Troops' records on applications and examinations are incomplete. They show the statistics for the boards which sat in Washington, D.C., Cincinnati, St. Louis, Davenport, New Orleans, and Richmond. These boards received over 9,000 applications. Nearly 4,000, about 44 percent, took the examinations. Of these, 60 percent passed. Thus about 2,400 applicants, just 25 percent of those who applied, were offered commissions. Not all of them accepted, however. Many who were offered equal or lower rank than they held in their white regiment turned down the offer. But these numbers are only for the sitting boards, and exclude the divisional examining boards which operated in the field. Since the total number of commissioned officers in

²⁵ Cornish, 218-20; Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 46; John W. Blassingame, "The Selection of Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers of Negro Troops in the Union Army, 1863-1865," *Negro History Bulletin* 30, no. 1 (January 1967), 8, accessed November 15, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24766664>.

²⁶ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 49.

the U.S.C.T. was 7,122, the application and examination statistics for most candidates are unavailable.²⁷

Applicants who accepted commissions were generally pleased with their fellow officers. Several of them commented, “Any one with a good education no matter what his other qualifications are is sure to get a commission”; “It seems to be the determination to make this one of the most effective branches of the service”; “Any one if he has money can get a position in a white reg’t but not so here”; and “[Officers in colored regiments are] a better class of men, more moral, more religious, better educated and understand their business better than those in white reg’ts.”²⁸

The vetting process was not perfect, however. In some instances, individuals were automatically accepted due to personal connections. In another case, Andrew Johnson, the military governor of Tennessee, controlled all commissions for U.S.C.T. regiments raised in his state, and he usually appointed unqualified whites in order to win their support for the war.²⁹

Although most officers in the U.S.C.T. were white, about one hundred were black, and over 75 percent of these served in the Department of the Gulf. There, in 1862, when Butler organized his Louisiana Native Guards, he received into his service the colored officers who had previously served the Confederate state government of Louisiana. General Banks, however, reported in 1863 that he was replacing these officers

²⁷ Cornish, 211, 214; United States, *O.R.*, ser. 4, vol. 5, 138; Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 53.

²⁸ As quoted in Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 39.

²⁹ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 55.

with whites as vacancies occurred. Other black officers served in Kansas, in the regiments raised by Governor Andrew of Massachusetts, and under General Saxton in the Department of the South. There were also mixed race officers, even in white regiments, whose complexions were so light that they passed as whites.³⁰

The officers of U.S.C.T. regiments were responsible for training their enlisted men. As a general rule, these officers had served in white regiments, but they lacked command experience. Moreover, while white regiments underwent months of training early in the war before seeing combat, the colored regiments were expected to go to the front shortly after organization. Therefore, officers had to apply the practical experience they gained in white regiments and the knowledge they gained by studying for board examinations as quickly as possible. To maximize efficiency, they began by enforcing discipline and teaching basic skills. More elaborate training came with time and experience.³¹

Like other aspects of U.S.C.T. organization, the training process contained its share of discrimination. Uniforms were the first example. General Hunter's recruits were originally issued red pants, which happened to make them attractive targets. And when the 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry was being organized, well-intentioned supporters wanted to issue the troops yellow and scarlet uniforms in the belief that black

³⁰ Cornish, 202, 214; J.T. Wilson, 179-80.

³¹ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 99-100.

men favored bright colors. It was not until the colored regiments came under federal control that they were issued standard blue uniforms.³²

When training began, officers' racial viewpoints influenced their methods. For example, those who believed that blacks were naturally ineffective soldiers could be overly strict and punitive, sometimes striking their men with their sword or fist. On the other hand, open-minded officers focused on constructively developing their men. They promoted competent troops to non-commissioned officers, and they formed close professional relationships by teaching them tactics, regulations, and in many cases reading and writing. Oftentimes, officers taught their NCOs how to perform administrative duties such as preparing muster rolls and handling returns on clothing and camp equipment. Delegation of this type of work was more common in regiments that were raised in the North, where free blacks enlisted with reading and writing skills.³³

Inculcating discipline was perhaps the officers' most important duty. At least one officer ceased enforcing army regulations, because discipline was so poor that he would have depleted his regiment by arresting the men. The more narrow-minded officers sometimes lost patience with their men, such as the one who wrote to his brother, "I no longer wonder slave drivers were cruel. I am. I no longer have any bowels of mercy." More constructive officers, however, either learned or knew from the outset that a milder approach to discipline would be more effective. They concentrated on making sure their men knew army regulations, that a proper example of behavior was set by the officers,

³² Bob Luke and John David Smith, *Soldiering for Freedom: How the Union Army Recruited, Trained, and Deployed the U.S. Colored Troops* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014), 76-77, Google Play.

³³ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 100-2; Luke and Smith, 80-2.

and that officers who committed offences were shamed in front of the men. These officers, however, also made sure to punish their troops when they transgressed regulations.³⁴

Major General Silas Casey, head of the examination board in Washington, D.C., attempted to simplify training by publishing a new tactical manual that was used by the U.S.C.T. He wrote of the book, “The tactics are about as simple as they can be made now and require but little intelligence in the individual in the ranks...I don’t see how they can be simplified more without destroying the efficiency of the system.” Although this manual was published with good intentions, it established a system of tactics for the U.S.C.T. that differed from the one used by white regiments.³⁵

Training focused on three essentials: drill, guard duty, and target practice. While troops easily fell into the routine of hours upon hours of drill, they had more trouble with guard duty. Some of the common problems in this area were that troops forgot the password for admission into the lines, or they fell asleep. Training for guard duty was tedious, because officers had to monitor a new handful of guards every night. Colored troops eventually became as good at guard duty as any.³⁶

When it came to firearms, colored soldiers were at a disadvantage. Many of them were issued discarded weapons such as smoothbore muskets, which had far less range

³⁴ As quoted in Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 108-9, 112-3.

³⁵ As quoted in Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 103-4; William A. Dobak, *Freedom by the Sword: The U.S. Colored Troops, 1862-1867* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, Inc., 2013), 16.

³⁶ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 104; Luke and Smith, 83-6.

than the rifles the whites on both sides were using. Some of the men carried concealed pistols as safeguards, but these were confiscated for not meeting regulations.³⁷

Target practice was a unique discipline in the U.S.C.T. Since whites were expected to have handled firearms in private life, they did not receive as much training in this area. Blacks, however, especially former slaves, were expected to have little experience with these self-defense and hunting tools. To increase their men's accuracy, some officers erected targets and personally coached the soldiers on how to shoot. Some even required that weekly reports be submitted on how many rounds had been fired, the distance, the ratio of hits on target per one hundred rounds, and the best marksmen in each company.³⁸

Many of the troops adjusted well to life as soldiers and were confident in themselves. After one officer gave a lengthy description of campaigning and fighting, one soldier responded, "I know all about that." When another was warned about the risks of dying in combat, he responded, "But my people will be free."³⁹

On the other hand, some of the troops could not tolerate being subservient to whites. One private wrote that he was "no slave to be driven," while another wrote, "I am as good as any white man, and I'll be damned if I will be bossed over by any of them." Some of these soldiers were quick to take offense at orders, and there were mutinies in the camps. They particularly resented the punishment of bondage, which allowed officers

³⁷ Luke and Smith, 77-80.

³⁸ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 105.

³⁹ As quoted in Luke and Smith, 78-80.

to tie up any man who disobeyed orders. Officers responded to the more serious mutinies with force, but in most cases resorted to courts-martial. As one officer put it, apparently referring to troops that had been slaves, “They had got an idea in their head that as they were free that they could do as they wished without fear of punishment but this idea is being driven out of their heads fast.”⁴⁰

The courts-martial for colored troops were fair in their verdicts, as almost every guilty verdict was accompanied by overwhelming evidence. The sentencing, however, was harsher than that inflicted on white troops. This was particularly true in the general courts-martial, which heard cases for more serious offenses. Twenty-one percent of all soldiers executed were black, although they composed about 7 percent of all enlistments. A disproportionate number of black soldiers were executed for rape and mutiny. Blacks convicted of theft could receive longer jail sentences than whites who committed the same crime. In the regiment courts-martial, however, which heard cases for minor infractions, justice was meted out with more equity.⁴¹

Whether their methods were harsh or sympathetic, officers were held responsible for their own and their men’s poor behavior. An inspector said of the 56th U.S.C.T. that it had, “good material, and its bad condition is the fault of its company officers.” When a major of one regiment was convicted of cowardice, his commanding officer ripped off his buttons, tore off his insignia, broke his sword, and had him driven out of camp to the song, “Rogue’s March.” Perhaps the most infamous case was the 63rd U.S.C.T., which

⁴⁰ As quoted in Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 113-6.

⁴¹ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 117-20; Cornish, 288.

was deemed “disgraceful,” and its officers and men “grossly unmilitary and ignorant in their duties.”⁴²

Overall, troops in the U.S.C.T. gradually began feeling and acting like soldiers rather than civilians or slaves. When the time came to prove themselves in combat, they exceeded expectations.⁴³

These expectations, however, were set low by the white population, which had grave doubts about the efficacy of black soldiers. This was, of course, another form of discrimination. Fortunately for the Union war effort, colored troops began laying these doubts to rest even before Lincoln issued his “Final Emancipation Proclamation.”⁴⁴

General Lane’s colored regiment in Kansas was the first to test its mettle. In August 1862, Lane recruited blacks to serve as laborers, and two months later he sent them on a campaign into Missouri, although no evidence has been found that he had the administration’s consent.⁴⁵

The troops in this historic campaign were composed of detachments from five companies of Lane’s colored regiment. The general ordered them to cross into Missouri and break up a gang of Confederate guerillas who were operating in Bates County along the Osage River. The column departed Fort Lincoln, Kansas, on October 26, and in one day marched twenty miles to the Osage. The troops encountered a stronger force than

⁴² As quoted in Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 106-7, 120; Luke and Smith, 83-5.

⁴³ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 120.

⁴⁴ Cornish, 131.

⁴⁵ Cornish, 77.

they anticipated, so they erected slight barricades which they dubbed, "Fort Africa." Minor skirmishing took place on the twenty-eighth. On the next day, fighting broke out in earnest, and the colored troops drove the Confederates from the field. "I have witnessed some hard fights," wrote Captain Ward, who commanded part of the Kansas troops, "but I never saw a braver sight than that handful of brave men fighting." One Confederate leader recalled, "The black devils fought like tigers." Interestingly enough, the *Leavenworth Daily Conservative* compared the men to the same animal, reporting, "It is useless to talk any more about negro courage... The men fought like tigers, each and every one of them, and the main difficulty was to hold them well in hand... These are the boys to clean out the bushwhackers." This engagement became known as the Skirmish of Island Mound, the first action of the war where colored troops fought Confederate forces.⁴⁶

Colored troops made another proof of their fighting ability less than a week later in the Department of the South. On November 3, General Saxton sent Company A of his colored regiment on a marauding expedition down the Georgia and northern Florida coast, with occasional support fire provided by a gunboat. Over the next seven days, the troops drove in successive enemy pickets, killed nine, took three prisoners, destroyed nine different salt works, destroyed about \$20,000 worth of horses, wagons, rice, corn, and other property, and carried off over one hundred and fifty slaves. The colonel commanding the raid reflected, "The colored men fought with astonishing coolness and bravery. For alacrity in effecting landings, for determination, and for bush fighting I

⁴⁶ As quoted in Noah Andre Trudeau, *Like Men of War: Black Troops in the Civil War, 1862-1865* (Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1998), 3-7; as quoted in Cornish, 77.

found them all I could desire,—more than I had hoped. They behaved bravely, gloriously, and deserve all praise.” Their casualties amounted to four wounded men.⁴⁷

After colored troops mobilized on a large scale, their valor was employed from the banks of the Mississippi River and the hinterland of Florida to the last defensive lines around Richmond. They fought well, and they stayed with the army. Their desertion rate, about 8 percent, was perhaps lower than that of white soldiers, for whom the records are incomplete. A full combat history of the U.S.C.T. is beyond the scope of this work, but a description of several operations will demonstrate how the colored regiments behaved in battle.⁴⁸

Port Hudson is a small community in Louisiana that rests on the eastern bank of the Mississippi River. In 1863, this position was fortified by Confederate troops, who disputed Union mastery of the “Father of Waters.” Port Hudson was protected on the land side by a line of defensive works placed on top a series of ridges. On its water side, Port Hudson was defended by artillery that, on March 14, was strong enough to sink one Union ship and badly damage four others (See Figure 2).⁴⁹

General Banks, who had put in his best efforts to recruit colored troops in the Department of the Gulf, decided to capture Port Hudson by attacking it on the land side, and the 1st and 3rd Louisiana Native Guards were employed as part of his force. As Banks drew his lines around the Confederate town, these regiments were sent to the far Union

⁴⁷ As quoted in Cornish, 85-6.

⁴⁸ Cornish, 288-9; United States, *O.R.*, ser. 3, vol. 5, 1029-30.

⁴⁹ Dobak, 104; Trudeau, 34-5, 40.

right. From this position, they were to cross Foster's Creek and Big Sandy Creek, then attack the northwestern end of the Confederate line.⁵⁰

On May 26, these troops protected an engineering detail that was constructing a pontoon bridge across Big Sandy Creek. According to a Massachusetts soldier who observed them, the Louisianans performed their task "in a cool, collected manner."⁵¹



Figure 2. Historical Map of the Siege of Port Hudson. "Civil War: Historical Map; The Siege of Port Hudson," American Battlefield Trust, accessed June 15, 2019, <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/siege-port-hudson>.

⁵⁰ Dobak, 104; Trudeau, 35-7.

⁵¹ As quoted in Trudeau, 37.

The next day, May 27, the real test came. Six companies of the 1st regiment and nine from the 3rd crossed the pontoon bridge at Big Sandy Creek and formed line of battle in a grove of willow trees. Two cannon from the 6th Massachusetts also crossed and opened fire, but were quickly overwhelmed by enemy counter-fire. The Massachusetts artillerymen fell back across the creek, leaving the Louisianans to attack the enemy position without artillery support.⁵²

At 10:00am, Captain André Cailloux, an ex-slave, led the troops from the 1st regiment forward. He was supported by men from the 3rd regiment, raising the strength of the attacking force to about one thousand. The column advanced two hundred yards under the fire of enemy sharpshooters. It was probably about this time that Cailloux took a projectile in his left arm, although he continued to lead the advance. When the troops got within four hundred yards of the fortifications, the enemy artillery opened with a torrent of shells. An officer observed, “Valiantly did the heroic descendants of Africa move forward, cool as if marshaled for dress parade.” Under this fire, the men advanced two hundred yards, to within rifle range of the enemy. In the midst of shells and bullets, Cailloux was hit again and killed. The men of the 1st regiment fired a single volley before they were overwhelmed by the storm of projectiles. They fell back to the grove of willow trees, and the men from the 3rd joined them.⁵³

Two more charges were made with the same result. A reporter from the *New Orleans Era* wrote, “There were several instances of wounded returning to the field after

⁵² Trudeau, 41.

⁵³ As quoted in Trudeau, 41-3; Dobak, 105.

their wounds had been dressed, and fighting with their comrades the balance of the day.” A hospital steward for the 3rd regiment summed up the action by writing that the men “maid [sic] three charges and held thire [sic] ground.” Casualties for the two regiments have not been definitely ascertained, but are estimated at 37 killed, 155 wounded, and 116 missing, perhaps 30 percent of their strength.⁵⁴

The soldiers of the 1st and 3rd Louisiana Native Guards proved their abilities in this battle. General Banks reported, “In many respects their conduct was heroic. No troops could be more determined or more daring.” Their inability to take the Confederate position was due to their lack of artillery support and the strength of the enemy line. In terms of valor, they performed as bravely as any soldiers; on other parts of the field, the white soldiers’ attacks also failed.⁵⁵

The next example comes from the other side of the country. The 54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry was the most famous colored regiment of the Civil War. Governor John Andrew organized it in January 1863 after Lincoln authorized him to organize as many regiments as he saw fit, and it was the first colored regiment raised in the North. As the colored population of Massachusetts was too low to fill its ranks, additional recruits were brought in from other free states. Frederick Douglass worked to recruit troops, and his two sons enlisted. The colonelcy was given to twenty-five year old Robert Gould Shaw, previously a captain in the 2nd Massachusetts Infantry who came from a wealthy abolitionist family.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Dobak, 105; as quoted in Trudeau, 44.

⁵⁵ As quoted in Dobak, 106.

⁵⁶ Cornish, 106-8; Trudeau, 71-2.

Embarking in Boston in May 1863, the 54th Massachusetts sailed down to Hilton Head and Beaufort, South Carolina, then proceeded to St. Simon's Island, Georgia. Not long after it arrived, Colonel James Montgomery took the regiment and the 2nd Regiment South Carolina Infantry (A.D.)⁵⁷ on a raid through the surrounding country. After capturing cattle, sheep, pigs, and other supplies, Montgomery ordered his men to burn the undefended town of Darien, Georgia. Shaw protested this order, and only one company of his regiment took part in the arson.⁵⁸

After its raid, the 54th Massachusetts was transported to Sol Legare's Island, close to the mouth of Charleston Harbor. Sol Legare's Island was connected by two causeways to James Island, on which a Confederate force encamped. To protect against an attack from this force, the 54th Massachusetts was placed on picket duty at the two causeways.⁵⁹

On the morning of July 16, while three companies were on picket duty, three hundred Confederates stormed one of the causeways. The men of the 54th were pushed back by sheer force of numbers, but they fell back slowly enough for reinforcements to arrive, and the Confederates retreated.⁶⁰

The 54th Massachusetts was then selected to lead an assault on nearby Morris Island. Morris Island is situated at the southern entrance to Charleston Harbor, and at its

⁵⁷ Trudeau, xxi. "A.D" stood for "African Descent." It was one of the designations applied to colored regiments before General Order, No. 143 was issued.

⁵⁸ Trudeau, 73; Dobak, 45.

⁵⁹ Trudeau, 74.

⁶⁰ Dobak, 49; Trudeau, 74-6.

northern extremity a thin peninsula extends into the harbor itself. At the tip of this peninsula was Battery Gregg, whose guns defended the harbor entrance. At the base of the peninsula, Fort Wagner was built to defend Battery Gregg from attacks made from the land side (See Figure 3). Union Brigadier General Quincy A. Gillmore had cleared the island up to the fort, which he attacked with three regiments. He was repulsed after his leading unit suffered about 50 percent casualties.⁶¹

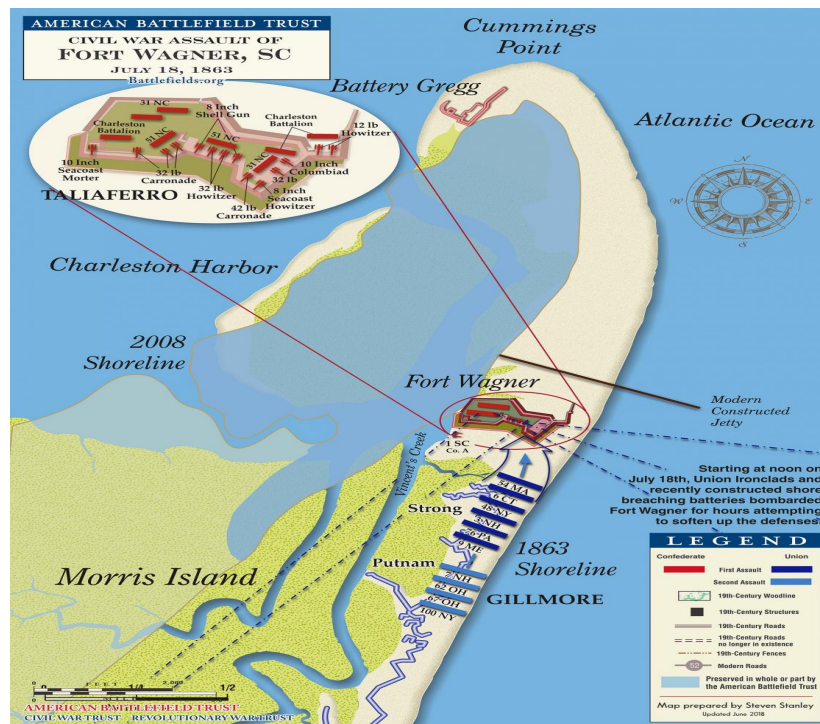


Figure 3. Battle Map: Assault on Fort Wagner. “Civil War: Battle Map; Assault on Fort Wagner,” accessed June 15, 2019, <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/maps/assault-fort-wagner>.

But Gillmore did not quit. To prepare for a second assault, he ordered an intensive artillery bombardment on the fort. As the bombardment was underway, he believed the shells were doing great damage. Large clouds of sand burst into the air, craters spread across the face of the earthworks, and shells continuously exploded within the enclosure.

⁶¹ Trudeau, 73-4; Cornish, 151.

This promised a successful infantry assault, so Gillmore turned his attention to preparing his troops.⁶²

The general's plan was for a column to advance up the beach to Fort Wagner, with the 54th Massachusetts in front. His decision to lead the advance with this regiment is controversial, because they just spent two nights without rest and two days without rations. The exact reasoning behind the decision is unclear, but it may have been because the regiment was the largest on the island. A witness later testified before the American Freedmen's Inquiry Commission that the decision was based on a willingness to sacrifice black troops, but there is no corroborating evidence to back this up.⁶³

As the 54th formed into line, Gillmore ordered the men to load their guns but not cap them—the standard procedure for making sure soldiers charged without pausing to fire. They were to charge with bayonets. As Colonel Shaw was preparing his men for the charge, he told his second-in-command, “I shall go in advance with the National Flag... You will keep the State flag with you; it will give the men something to rally round. We shall take the fort or die there! Good-bye!”⁶⁴

Shaw gave the order to advance, and the 54th Massachusetts moved forward. A captain observed, “With Colonel Shaw leading, sword in hand, the long advance over three quarters of a mile of sand had begun, with wings closed up and company officers admonishing their men to preserve the alignment. Guns from Sumter, Sullivan's Island,

⁶² Trudeau, 77.

⁶³ Cornish, 153; Dobak, 51.

⁶⁴ As quoted in Trudeau, 80-1; Dobak, 51.

and James Island began to play upon the regiment.” Sergeant Lewis Douglass, son of Frederick Douglass, wrote, “not a man flinched although it was a trying time. Men fell all around me. A shell would explode and clear a space of twenty feet, our men would close up again.”⁶⁵

When the troops got within one hundred yards of the fort, fire erupted from nearly every corner and embrasure. Men fell by the hundreds as bullets and grape shot tore through the ranks. They continued the charge until they reached the batteries themselves. They closed the enemy infantry and fought with bayonets. Shaw stood on top of the parapet calling out, “Come on men! Follow me!” when he was shot in the chest and killed.⁶⁶

Officers went down along the line, so command devolved to Captain Luis F. Emilio. He looked back and saw that no regiments were coming up in support, so he ordered a retreat. The 54th sustained further casualties as it crossed the beach in reverse. What Emilio missed in all the confusion was that the 6th Connecticut and 48th New York had been attacking the ocean side of the fort while his own regiment was attacking the center.⁶⁷

When the men found time to rest and reflect on the battle, they had every reason to be proud of themselves. Although they were tired, hungry, and had never been under

⁶⁵ As quoted in Trudeau, 81; Cornish, 154.

⁶⁶ As quoted in Trudeau, 82-3; Dobak, 52.

⁶⁷ Dobak, 52; Trudeau, 84.

heavy fire before, they had charged under a storm of projectiles to the batteries of the fort, and they retreated only after receiving the order to do so.⁶⁸

The cause of failure must be sought elsewhere. General Gillmore was accustomed to attacking stone forts, which crumbled under intense artillery fire. Since Fort Wagner was built with sand and logs, it absorbed most of the explosive shock of the preliminary bombardment. The soldiers inside the fort were also hunkered down in a bombproof shelter. Of the approximately 1,620 men stationed in Fort Wagner, only eight were killed and twenty wounded during the cannonade. While Gillmore was preparing for what he thought was an easy infantry charge, the Confederates were dusting the sand off their guns and preparing to hold their ground.⁶⁹

The 54th Massachusetts was also handicapped because it received no reinforcements. Brigadier General George Stone and Colonel Haldimand Putnam did not bring their seven regiments into action until after the 54th had retreated. The battle was similar to Port Hudson, where colored troops did their duty, but they were misled and were not properly supported.⁷⁰

The U.S.C.T. also took part in the 1864 Overland and Bermuda Hundred Campaigns, two of the highest profile operations of the war. In the first, Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant led the Army of the Potomac overland from the Rapidan River,

⁶⁸ Dobak, 54.

⁶⁹ Cornish, 153; Dobak, 54; Trudeau, 77.

⁷⁰ Trudeau, 77.

in northern Virginia, south towards Richmond. At the same time, Major General Butler led his Army of the James up the James River to the same destination.

In Grant's advance, two colored brigades under Brigadier General Edward Ferrero protected the rear of the army as it advanced south. Eleven days after the campaign began, Ferrero's troops repulsed a Confederate cavalry attack. The Record of Events for the 23rd U.S.C.T., which participated in the attack, stated, "We...had a skirmish with rebel dismounted cavalry, whom we drove back."⁷¹

Four days later, Ferrero's troops reinforced Union cavalry that were fighting their Confederate counterparts. In this engagement, the colored infantry held the enemy in check until nightfall ended the conflict, and their conduct was said to have been "above criticism."⁷²

The soldiers in this campaign had the added satisfaction of liberating slaves. Sergeant John C. Brok of the 43rd U.S.C.T. wrote, "We have been instrumental in liberating some five hundred of our sisters and brothers from the accursed yoke of human bondage...What a glorious prospect it is to behold this glorious Army of black men as they march with martial tread over the sacred soil of Virginia."⁷³

In Butler's simultaneous advance, known as the Bermuda Hundred Campaign, colored troops provided a similar complimentary role. When Butler sailed up the James River, his colored troops were the first to come ashore. The 1st and 22nd U.S.C.T. landed

⁷¹ As quoted in Trudeau, 211.

⁷² As quoted in Trudeau, 212.

⁷³ As quoted in Trudeau, 211-2.

at Wilson's Wharf, which they proceeded to fortify with entrenchments. When these were complete, the main force came up and went into camp within the new defensive works. The 10th and 37th U.S.C.T. occupied the abandoned Confederate position of Fort Powhatan on the south bank of the James River. They proceeded to reconnoiter the surrounding country while the main force entrenched the new position. The 5th U.S.C.T. occupied City Point, capturing an enemy lieutenant and thirty men in the process.⁷⁴

Besides leading the landing parties, the colored regiments took part in several engagements. On May 21, 1864, the regiments at Fort Powhatan repulsed a Confederate cavalry attack. Three days later, the colored troops at Wilson's Wharf repulsed another such attack. Although these actions were not as intense as the assaults at Port Hudson and Fort Wagner, they proved to the military command that colored troops could play a supporting role in major campaigns.⁷⁵

Although U.S.C.T. regiments proved their worth in campaigns and battles, they still faced various forms of institutional and day-to-day discrimination. The same prejudices that kept blacks out of the army until 1863 kept them in a degraded state even after they enlisted.

One of the major forms of institutionalized discrimination was unequal pay. The Militia Act of July 1862 provided that colored troops be paid "ten dollars per month and one ration, three dollars of which monthly pay may be in clothing." At the same time, white soldiers were paid \$13 per month and one ration per day, \$3 of which constituted

⁷⁴ Trudeau, 215-16; Dobak, 343-4.

⁷⁵ Trudeau, 217; Dobak, 346-7.

an allowance for clothing. William Whiting, solicitor of the War Department, confirmed this policy shortly after the Bureau of Colored Troops was established. His reasoning, which many agreed with at the time, was that blacks served on garrison duty behind the lines, and therefore deserved less pay than whites who fought in combat. This premise changed as colored troops took a more active role in combat, but for two years their main hope of additional pay was from state contributions.⁷⁶

Governor Andrew of Massachusetts opposed unequal pay in September 1863 by visiting Washington and making his views known to Lincoln and his cabinet. Although he was assured of fair treatment, he found that Congress was averse at the time to raising the pay for colored troops. Unwilling to see his state's 54th Massachusetts receive the same pay as laborers, Andrew requested and received from his state legislature funds to increase their pay to the level of whites. However, the men of the 54th refused to accept any pay whatsoever until Congress guaranteed equal wages for all soldiers, white and black.⁷⁷

Pay discrimination extended beyond monthly wages. From the outset, colored troops were denied the \$100 bounty given to white volunteers. The federal government also refused to make any provision for the wives and families of colored troops who died in federal service.⁷⁸

⁷⁶ As quoted in Cornish, 184-5, 187; James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Ballantine Books, 1989), 789; Dobak, 57.

⁷⁷ McPherson, 788-9; Cornish, 187-8; Dobak, 57.

⁷⁸ Cornish, 188.

Although Lincoln and Stanton both personally desired equal pay across the board, they decided to leave the issue to Congress. When Congress acted in June 1864, it provided equal pay, bounties, and clothing for colored troops retroactive only to January 1, 1864. In order to qualify for retroactive pay before that date, soldiers had to have been free before April 19, 1861. Since this applied only to free-born blacks and not those liberated from slavery, advocates for colored soldiers opposed the measure.⁷⁹

It was not until the middle of 1864 that the federal government decided to pay the \$100 bounty and to pay pensions to the families of colored troops who died in the service as long as the widows and orphans were not slaves. Full equal payment for all black soldiers, retroactive to their dates of enlistment, was not granted until March 1865.⁸⁰

Besides receiving unequal pay during most of their service, colored troops suffered from disproportionate assignment to fatigue duty. A private in Louisiana described his service by writing, "Instead of the musket It is the spad[e] and the Wheelbarrow and Axe." Another private wrote, "Slavery with all its horrors can not Equalize this for it is nothing but work from morning till night." Around Petersburg, Virginia in 1864, colored troops were sent into the field to retrieve corpses that had been baking in the June sun for ten days. In another instance, Major General George G. Meade selected black soldiers for "the construction of Warren's redoubts, as they work so much better than the white troops, and save the latter for fighting." This practice became so

⁷⁹ Cornish, 189-90.

⁸⁰ Cornish, 188, 194-5.

prevalent that Adjutant General Thomas had to issue an order forbidding the unequal use of colored troops for fatigue duty.⁸¹

Another disadvantage of serving in the U.S.C.T. was the inadequate medical care. Since the government believed colored troops were less susceptible to tropical diseases, it assigned them to unhealthy locations, usually for long term occupation duties. According to the official medical records, which understate the workload, several hundred physicians were tasked with treating over 600,000 cases of illness among enlisted colored men in addition to the more than 10,000 wounded.⁸²

The War Department had trouble procuring enough properly trained physicians for the army, and oftentimes anyone with minor medical knowledge was assigned as a hospital steward. Since the majority of colored regiments were not enrolled until 1863, most of the competent physicians had already taken their places with white troops. While a few skilled physicians made it to the U.S.C.T. regiments, many of them were incompetent or racist. Sometimes they beat their patients or refused to provide treatment when they did not feel like working. In some cases, the mortality rates spoke to the quality of medical care. At Vicksburg, Mississippi, after six months in service, the colored hospital suffered 30.5 percent casualties, while the white hospital's casualties were 14 percent.⁸³

⁸¹ As quoted in Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 182-5.

⁸² Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 187.

⁸³ Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle*, 189-93.

Colored troops also faced discrimination from the enemy. Confederates did not forget that they were fighting “their slaves,” and they were ill disposed to ask or give quarter. As early as November 1862, Confederate Secretary of War James A. Seddon and President Jefferson Davis approved the “summary execution” of four black soldiers captured in South Carolina as an “example” of what would happen to armed slaves.⁸⁴

On May 1, 1863, Davis approved Congressional resolutions declaring that white officers captured while commanding colored troops were to be tried by military courts for inciting servile insurrection. The penalty if found guilty was death. The colored troops themselves were to be tried by the states in which they were captured and were likewise subject to execution.⁸⁵

Confederate soldiers were sometimes too impatient for the judicial process, however. One Confederate colonel ordered a squad of colored troops he captured to be shot after they tried to escape. “[W]ith my Six Shooter I assisted in the execution of the order,” he wrote. A North Carolina soldier wrote home to his mother after a fight against colored troops, “several [were] taken prisoner & afterwards either bayoneted or burnt. The men were perfectly exasperated at the idea of negroes opposed to them & rushed at them like so many devils.” After the Battle of Milliken’s Bend in June 1863, some of the captured colored soldiers were sold into slavery. Not all Confederates were disparaging towards black troops, however. In the trenches outside Petersburg, many of them saluted

⁸⁴ As quoted in McPherson, 566.

⁸⁵ United States, *O.R.*, ser. 2, vol. 5, 940-1; McPherson, 566.

their colored enemies as “Uncle,” a word Southerners used as a term of respect towards blacks.⁸⁶

Since one of the corollaries of the Confederate resolutions was that colored soldiers would not be exchanged as prisoners of war, a breakdown occurred in the prisoner exchange system. The U.S. government would not exchange Confederate prisoners unless they received colored soldiers in return. Moreover, as some captured blacks were summarily executed or sent into slavery, not all of them made it to the prisoner of war camps to begin with.⁸⁷

By the end of 1863, the Confederates expressed a willingness to exchange black prisoners whom they considered to have been legally free when they enlisted, but they held fast to former slaves. The U.S. government refused to compromise and demanded full and equal exchange. The deadlock continued until January 24, 1865, when the Confederate government agreed to a general prisoner exchange.⁸⁸

While the prisoner of war debate was taking place between the U.S. and Confederate governments, the most controversial Southern action against black soldiers during the war—the Fort Pillow Massacre—took place. Fort Pillow was built in western Tennessee along the bank of the Mississippi River. Originally constructed by

⁸⁶ As quoted in McPherson, 566, 634; R.J.M. Blackett, ed., *Thomas Morris Chester, Black Civil War Correspondent: His Dispatches from the Virginia Front* (1989; repr., New York: Da Capo Press, n.d.), 261.

⁸⁷ Cornish, 170-3.

⁸⁸ Cornish, 170-2.; McPherson, 791-3; “Confederate Congress to Resume Prisoner Exchanges,” History, A&E Television Networks, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/confederate-congress-to-resume-prisoner-exchanges>.

Confederates, it was abandoned in 1862, occupied by Union forces, abandoned again, then reopened by Union troops under orders from Major General Stephen A. Hurlbut.⁸⁹

Hurlbut placed Major Lionel F. Booth in command of the fort, which was garrisoned with the 13th Tennessee Cavalry, a white regiment containing Tennessee Unionists and a handful of former Confederates, the 6th U.S.C.H.A., a colored heavy artillery regiment, and the 2nd U.S.C.L.A., a colored light artillery regiment. Many of the colored troops were former slaves who had been recruited in the region. Overall, a little more than half the force was black.⁹⁰

Fort Pillow and its garrison lay in the war path of Confederate cavalry commander Nathan B. Forrest, who was attacking isolated federal outposts in the region. Forrest and his men appeared in front of the fort on the morning of April 12, 1864.⁹¹

Forrest executed a sharp attack. After fighting for several hours, he sent a message to the garrison under flag of truce, offering terms of surrender. The terms were stiff: either the Union troops surrender unconditionally, or else Forrest could not “be responsible for the fate of [their] command.” Since Major Booth was killed early in the action, command of the garrison had devolved to Major William F. Bradford. While Bradford was considering the terms, his troops of both races spent the ceasefire engaging

⁸⁹ Trudeau, 158-9.

⁹⁰ Trudeau, 157-61.

⁹¹ Trudeau, 160-3; “‘The Most Terrible Ordeal of My Life’: The Battle of Fort Pillow,” American Battlefield Trust, accessed September 29, 2019, <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/most-terrible-ordeal-my-life-battle-fort-pillow>.

in provocative banter with the enemy. When Bradford sent back word that he would not surrender, Forrest attacked and successfully stormed the fort.⁹²

The Confederates followed their victory with slaughter. Union troops, white and black, were shot down even after they surrendered. Colored troops who were on their knees in submission were ordered to stand, then shot down. One Confederate soldier was heard to say, “Damn you, you are fighting against your master.” Although the garrison lost only 25 to 30 men before the flag of truce had been sent, about half their number—between 277 and 297—were either killed or fatally wounded by the time the massacre was over. Sixty-four percent of the colored troops were killed as opposed to thirty-one to thirty-four percent of the white troops. Of the 226 prisoners taken, 168 were white and 58 were black. Forrest wrote after the action, “The victory was complete...The river was dyed with the blood of the slaughtered for 200 yards...It is hoped that these facts will demonstrate to the Northern people that negro soldiers cannot cope with Southerners.”⁹³

According to Dudley Taylor Cornish, when reports of the Battle of Fort Pillow spread across the North, colored soldiers were fired with a new enthusiasm for the war. They attacked Confederate lines with more power and persistence. Many made their battle cry, “Remember Fort Pillow!” Blacks continued to enlist by the thousands until the end of the war. Confederate fury, rather than cowing blacks into submission, increased their ardor for war.⁹⁴

⁹² As quoted in Trudeau, 163-6; Dobak, 207; “‘The Most Terrible Ordeal of My Life’: The Battle of Fort Pillow.”

⁹³ As quoted in Trudeau, 166-8; Dobak, 207.

⁹⁴ Cornish, 177, 180.

In order to put their lives on the line for their country in the face of such discrimination, black soldiers needed a motive. In the face of such discrimination, it seems at first appearance that they were fighting for a government that used them solely for military purposes. While this was true for the commander-in-chief and for a varying degree of the white population, American blacks had the opportunity to improve their lives immeasurably by joining the army. The topmost benefit in their mind was perhaps the abolition of slavery. Beyond this, the army offered opportunities for enriching the lives of soldiers in ways that would benefit them as free citizens. It should be noted, however, that even though these benefits were a net gain for black soldiers, they highlight the social gap that existed between the races in the 1860s.⁹⁵

These benefits were especially attractive to the freed slaves, who had been deprived of even the most rudimentary education. To prepare for their new lives as freedmen, these soldiers sought out every opportunity for an education. Fortunately, whites in the North were eager to assist them. Chaplain H.H. Moore published an article in the *Western Christian Advocate* arguing that since slavery had done nothing to prepare blacks for a role in free society, it was up to the government to elevate them to higher levels of “citizenship, intelligence, virtue and prosperity.” Others agreed, arguing that slavery had kept blacks in a state of despondency which prohibited them from reaching their full potential as individuals. The best way to reverse generations of this mental

⁹⁵ Luke and Smith, 78-80.

depression, they argued, was through education, and the soldiers of the U.S.C.T. were to be the recipients of many education initiatives.⁹⁶

Since Congress did not act on this issue until it created the Freedmen's Bureau in March 1865, the task was taken up by church organizations, missionary societies, and various philanthropic groups who had the consent of the War Department. While these groups differed in their methods, they generally focused on providing blacks with a general education, economic stability, and social equality and acceptance.⁹⁷

Army chaplains often acted voluntarily, in unofficial capacities, to take the lead in soldier education. For example, Chaplain Arthur B. Fuller organized a Sunday school for contrabands and poor whites in Warrenton, Virginia. Chaplain William K. Talbot instructed black convalescents in the hospitals of Beaufort, South Carolina, and Chaplain William Eaton maintained his own school for the men of his regiment, the 12th U.S.C.T.⁹⁸

Major General Ulysses S. Grant initiated the most systematic and continuous program for black education prior to the creation of the Freedmen's Bureau. On November 11, 1862, while commanding in the Mississippi Valley, he ordered Chaplain John Eaton to oversee the supervision of contraband who were performing military duties such as roadbuilding, repairing bridges, cooking, and serving as hospital aides. Eaton jumped into his new role with enthusiasm, because he believed his primary task was to

⁹⁶ As quoted in Warren B. Armstrong, "Union Chaplains and the Education of the Freedmen," *The Journal of Negro History* 52, no. 2 (April 1967): 105-6, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2716128>.

⁹⁷ Armstrong, 106-7.

⁹⁸ Armstrong, 107.

provide the men with moral and mental enlightenment, not just to ensure their completion of military duties.⁹⁹

Since he had no official bureaucracy to work with, Eaton coordinated the efforts of various chaplains and several different charity groups, including the American Missionary Association, the Western Freedman's Aid Commission, and the Society of Friends, all of which he praised. Grant assisted in the project by providing transportation, quarters, rations, and classroom facilities to the volunteers.¹⁰⁰

Eaton worked at his task, managing low funds, few facilities, and several independent organizations. He was rewarded in September 1863 when Secretary Stanton gave formal War Department consent to the program. A year later, in September 1864, the War Department ordered Eaton to coordinate all educational efforts in the Department of the Tennessee, which eventually included all of Mississippi, Arkansas, Kentucky, Tennessee, and parts of Louisiana.¹⁰¹

On the basis of this order, Eaton designated officers with whom he arranged the location of all schools, the teachers, the occupation of houses, and other details pertaining to the education of freed slaves. He appointed seven district superintendents—four of whom were ministers and had been army chaplains—who oversaw all the schools in the department. He also appointed clerical help for the several districts, and he subdivided

⁹⁹ Armstrong, 108-10.

¹⁰⁰ Armstrong, 110.

¹⁰¹ Armstrong, 109, 111-12.

cities and towns into wards, wherein pupils were required to attend school unless they received special exemptions from him.¹⁰²

The district superintendents established school hours, textbooks, and discipline. A monthly fee, not to exceed \$1.25, was instituted to help defray expenses and to instill a sense of responsibility in the students. This fee was flexible, however, based on a parent's ability to pay. Night schools were created to assist adult freedmen who had to work during the day.¹⁰³

It is not possible to state exactly how many students enrolled in this program, but 1863 saw 113,650 students enrolled in a department that had 770,000 blacks according to the 1860 census. During 1864 and the spring of 1865, as Union armies advanced further into Confederate territory, an undetermined number of additional students enrolled. An initiative that originally catered to contraband had blossomed into a program for over 100,000 freed slaves.¹⁰⁴

Similar initiatives, though not as systematic or continuous, followed in the wake of the army's advances. In villages, cities, and camps throughout the South, educated Northerners established schools for freedmen and colored soldiers who were enthusiastic about acquiring as much education as they could.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Armstrong, 111n18, 112.

¹⁰³ Armstrong, 112-3.

¹⁰⁴ Armstrong, 113-4.

¹⁰⁵ J.T. Wilson, 503-4.

Colored soldiers spent their leisure time generally doing one of three things: discussing religion, cleaning their muskets and accoutrements, or learning to read. Frequently, their zeal for the latter led them to neglect eating. Many of the camps had teachers who taught the soldiers how to read, and after the war some of these soldiers became preachers, lawmakers, or entered college. One colonel described this literary culture, which served as a motive for black soldiers:

Aside from the military duties required of the men forming the [colored] regiments, the school teacher was drilling and preparing them in the comprehension of letters and figures. In nearly every regiment a school, during encampment, was established... Their ambition to learn to read and write was as strong as their love of freedom, and no opportunity was lost by them to acquire a knowledge of letters. So ardent were they that they formed squads and hired teachers, paying them out of their pittance of seven dollars per month... When the truce was sounded after a day or night's hard fighting, many of these men renewed their courage by studying and reading in the 'New England Speller'... [when they] died where they fell, and their bodies left to the enemy's mercy, they often found in the dead soldier's knapsack a spelling-book and a Testament... and upon more than one occasion have these soldiers been found in the trenches with the speller in hand, muttering, bla, ble.¹⁰⁶

When textbooks were unavailable, instruction was given orally. In some cases, officers added teaching to their list of responsibilities. Not all instructors were white, however. Many were colored chaplains, and colored non-commissioned officers and men who knew how to read instructed their budding comrades.¹⁰⁷

Members of the U.S.C.T. launched long term initiatives as well. In the 62nd U.S.C.T., the officers contributed \$1,034.60, and the men \$3,966.50, for the founding of a school that became known as the Lincoln Institute, in Jefferson City, Missouri. The 65th

¹⁰⁶ As quoted in J.T. Wilson, 504-5.

¹⁰⁷ J.T. Wilson, 506-7.

U.S.C.T. contributed an additional \$1,379.50 to this school through the efforts of its officers, and over time a total of \$20,000 was donated to the new establishment.¹⁰⁸

Another motivational force in the colored regiments was the implementation of band music. Some Northerners believed that blacks were an inherently musical people. Surgeon Seth Rodgers of the 33rd U.S.C.T. attributed this to their lack of higher education, which would, theoretically, diminish musical inclinations once acquired. Lorenzo Thomas supported his argument for black enrollments by saying they were a “musical people,” and would therefore “learn to march and accurately perform their maneuvers.”¹⁰⁹

While whites believed blacks were keenly sensitive to music, they also thought traditional black songs lacked cultural value because they were tied to religion. A lieutenant of colored troops described the soldiers as behaving like “crazy persons” when he witnessed them celebrate a baptismal ceremony. Other officers found the African cadence and rhythm to be unusual, and in one case, “as good as a play...for they made noise enough for a New York fire company.”¹¹⁰

Officers had several reasons for implementing bands in their colored regiments. For one, they found that soldiers had an easier time performing drill routines when accompanied by band music. Another reason was that black bands proclaiming Union

¹⁰⁸ J.T. Wilson, 508.

¹⁰⁹ As quoted in Keith Wilson, “Black Bands and Black Culture: A Study of Black Military Bands in the Union Army During the Civil War,” *Australasian Journal of American Studies* 9, no. 1 (July 1990): 31-2, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41054165>.

¹¹⁰ As quoted in Keith Wilson, 32.

victories served as excellent recruiting tools for colored regiments. Perhaps most important was the social status that instruments conveyed in slave communities. Since instruments were possessed by a minority of slaves on a plantation, they had come to denote status. Thus the chance to enlist in a military band appealed to the individuals' ambitions.¹¹¹

Once colored bands were formed, the improvement of morale was obvious. Black musicians were able to expand their creative traditions with new instruments, and traditionally black melodies and tunes were adopted by white regiments. Dances and concerts with women eased tensions after a day's work of drilling, labor, and study. And even though regulations continued to reduce the number of bandsmen allowed in military units, officers of the U.S.C.T. continued to exploit technicalities in order to maintain this morale-building practice.¹¹²

While most blacks served in the U.S. Army, many continued the time-honored tradition of serving in the navy, which treated African-Americans with far less discrimination. In this branch of the service, they made up a larger percentage of enlistments, were paid the same as whites, and were less segregated. This culture was rooted in the branch's history, which never witnessed the exclusion of blacks. When the Civil War broke out, they were immediately allowed to volunteer. About 18,000 blacks

¹¹¹ Keith Wilson, 33.

¹¹² Keith Wilson, 33-5.

served in the navy during the war, making up about 20 percent of the total enlisted naval force, almost three times their percentage in the army.¹¹³

In the first ninety days after the attack on Fort Sumter, 300 blacks enlisted, and 20 percent of them had an average of five years of prior naval service per man. After General Butler initiated the contraband policy in May 1861, escaped slaves flocked into Union lines, and the navy looked after many of them. In September of that year, Secretary Welles approved the naval enlistment of contraband, provided they remained at the rank of “boys,” which was the lowest in the service.¹¹⁴

The government’s recruiting policy virtually assured a greater percentage of blacks in the navy than in the army. Blacks in the navy were paid \$10 per month, while those in the army received \$7 after their allowance for clothing was deducted. Whites who volunteered for the navy would not receive the \$100 bounty the army offered. When the draft was enforced, it sent recruits into the army but not into the navy. In addition, these policies kept naval manpower so low that in 1862 and 1863 Secretary Welles had to siphon off some of the contraband and colored recruits from the army. The results were telling. During the calendar year 1862, blacks made up 15 percent of naval enlistments, and in 1863 that number increased to 23 percent.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Joseph P. Reidy, “Black Men in Navy Blue During the Civil War,” *Prologue Magazine* 33, no. 3 (Fall 2001), in National Archives, accessed January 3, 2019, <https://www.archives.gov/publications/prologue/2001/fall/black-sailors-1.html>; Herbert Aptheker, “The Negro in the Union Navy,” *The Journal of Negro History* 32, no. 2 (April 1947): 171, 173-4,, accessed January 2, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/2714852>.

¹¹⁴ Reidy; Aptheker, 175-6.

¹¹⁵ Aptheker, 176-8.

Secretary Welles' moratorium on rank did not last long. In October 1862, Rear Admiral David D. Porter, commander of the Mississippi Squadron, experienced a shortage of manpower when four hundred of his men became sick. He replaced them with colored sailors, who took on the roles of firemen and coal-heavers. The Department of the Navy formally adopted this policy two months later, allowing contraband to serve as coal-heavers, firemen, ordinary seamen, and seamen, that is, all ranks short of petty officers.¹¹⁶

Not a few colored sailors served as pilots. While pilots were technically considered technicians, whites who served in this position were paid about \$250 a month—more than most commissioned officers—and were called “Mister.” At least some colored pilots made \$30 to \$40 a month.¹¹⁷

Discrimination was not officially practiced against free black sailors, although none of them appear to have risen above the rank of seaman. They messed and were quartered with whites, whom they frequently outranked. Freed slaves, however, were discriminated against, although not as severely as in the army. They were often assigned duties that belonged to higher ranking and higher paid positions—without the added authority or wages—and they were disproportionately assigned to unhealthy, laborious, and dangerous work. In some cases, officers had them trained separately from whites.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁶ Aptheker, 182-3.

¹¹⁷ Aptheker, 183, 185.

¹¹⁸ Aptheker, 186-8; Reidy.

Colored sailors conducted themselves well in combat, just like their counterparts in the army. Herbert Aptheker, author of “The Negro in the Union Navy,” found few criticisms of colored sailors in his research, while he found many positive comments. When Lorenzo Thomas was thinking about forming colored artillery units he remarked, “The experience of the Navy is that the Blacks handle heavy guns well.”¹¹⁹

Of the approximately 17,000 black sailors whose places of nativity are recorded, about 7,700 came from Union states, particularly those with busy ports. The largest contributor of these was Maryland, who sent more than 2,300. New York and Pennsylvania sent roughly 1,200 each, while Massachusetts sent about 400. About 1,500 colored sailors were foreigners, mostly from Canada and the Caribbean Islands. The remaining 7,800 came from Confederate states. Virginia contributed about 2,800, the most of any state. The Chesapeake Bay states, Virginia and Maryland, with their maritime culture, contributed almost 30 percent of all black sailors. The enrollments from other Southern states matched the pattern indicated in the army, with recruits coming heavily from Louisiana, Mississippi, and South Carolina.¹²⁰

The discriminations imposed on black soldiers and sailors in the Civil War is therefore obvious. Despite the fact that they served bravely, they were recruited into segregated units, served almost entirely under white officers, were issued outdated weapons, suffered harsh penalties from courts-martial, received less pay for most of the war, performed more fatigue duty, and received inadequate medical care. The

¹¹⁹ As quoted in Aptheker, 190-2.

¹²⁰ Reidy; “The Civil War: Search for Sailors,” National Park Service, accessed January 3, 2019, <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-sailors.htm>.

discrimination they faced from Confederates was even harsher. Yet in spite of all this, the U.S.C.T. regiments performed their duty above and beyond expectations, and it may be concluded that they fought for a more promising future rather than for a love of their country as it then existed.

CHAPTER 3

THE SOLDIERS FROM MONROE COUNTY

The U.S.C.T. soldiers from Monroe County, Pennsylvania experienced many of the same forms of discrimination as other colored troops. They also hailed from a locality that was heavily Democratic in political sentiment, making their commitment to the war stand out in sharp contrast to that of local whites. Monroe County was, in fact, one of the most Democratic counties in the state in the years preceding and during the Civil War. In the 1856 presidential election, for example, county voters cast 2,276 ballots for Democrat and native Pennsylvanian James Buchanan, while they cast just 617 for the Union ticket, which was a coalition between the Republican party and the anti-immigrant, anti-Catholic Know-Nothing party. The next year, Monroe County voters selected Democrat William Packer for governor by a margin of 1,750 votes over Union candidate David Wilmot. In the 1860 gubernatorial race, the county again preferred the Democrat candidate, Henry Foster, by 1,368 votes over Andrew Curtin of the People's party, which was the new name of the Union coalition. In the presidential election of that year, Monroe County voters cast 1,262 ballots for a combined Douglas-Breckenridge ticket, 291 for a strictly Douglas ticket, and 844 for Lincoln. Even the votes for Curtin and Lincoln in this year

may have reflected the county's conservative politics, because Republican campaigners in Monroe County emphasized economic policies to the exclusion of the slavery issue.¹

The inclinations of Monroe County Democrats may be gathered by their actions during the secession crisis. After Lincoln was elected and Southern states began seceding from the Union, Monroe County Democrats believed Lincoln would use force and “stave off a peaceful settlement.” They sent R.R. DePuy, John DeYoung, and Moses Coolbaugh as delegates to a Democratic state convention at Harrisburg, which passed resolutions that endorsed the Crittenden Compromise, opposed armed force as long as Northern states retained laws that interfered with Southern rights, and objected to the appointment of only Republicans to a future peace conference. It was not until the Confederates fired on Fort Sumter that Monroe County Democrats issued calls for patriotism and saving the Union.²

Monroe County's citizens'—both Republican and Democrat—commitment to the war may be partially gleaned by examining their military enlistment rates. An enrollment of the state militia in 1862 revealed that there were 3,238 persons in Monroe County eligible for military service, while 460 of them had already joined the army as volunteers. The Pennsylvania state draft of the same year placed a quota of 515 recruits on the county, and this was filled by conscription, the enlistment of new volunteers, and by drafted men who hired substitutes to serve in their place. The combined 975 soldiers

¹ John F. Coleman, *The Disruption of The Pennsylvania Democracy, 1848-1860* (Harrisburg, PA: The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1975), 89-90, 107, 173, 175; LeRoy Jennings Koehler, *The History of Monroe County, Pennsylvania, During the Civil War: A Study of a Community in Action from 1840 to 1873* (Monroe County, PA, 1950), 75.

² As quoted in Koehler, 87, 97-9.

enlisted by the end of 1862 equaled thirty percent of the men eligible for military service. In 1863, the federal government prepared for the first federal draft by placing Provost Marshall Samuel Yohe in charge of Pennsylvania's 11th federal district, which was composed of Monroe, Lehigh, Pike, Northampton, and Carbon Counties. No reports were filed for the individual counties, but Yohe's report for the 11th district states that from 1863 to July 1864, 259 men were drafted into the service, 234 hired substitutes, and 2,548 volunteered. Thus the federal draft may have increased the percentage of Monroe County men who enlisted.³

Focusing on the colored soldiers, it is interesting to observe what percentage of "freed colored" persons from Monroe County enlisted. Since the argument of this chapter is that these men made loyal soldiers, it should be pointed out that a very high percentage of them served. According to the 1860 Census, 16,640 whites and 127 "free colored" lived in Monroe County. Sixty of the free coloreds were men, and since 29 served as soldiers and 1 of them as a sailor, 50 percent of the total colored male population of 1860 served in the war. Age played a factor in these statistics. Twenty-six of the colored men in 1860 would have been of military age—from eighteen to forty-two years old—in 1863, and the records on hand indicate that at least 21 of these, 72 percent, served in the war. Since the ages for 8 soldiers are not available, it is possible that 5 of them composed the remaining 28 percent of the men of military age. In other words, there is a chance that

³ Koehler, 121-3, 154, 159-60.

100 percent of the “free colored” men of military age from Monroe County served in the war.⁴

The table in Appendix A shows the military units and attributes of the soldiers discussed in this thesis. Their average age at enlistment was twenty-four; 68 percent of them ranged from seventeen to twenty-five years old. In terms of livelihood, about 48 percent listed “laborer” as their sole occupation, almost 22 percent listed farming, and almost 17 percent listed farming along with a second occupation. One soldier was a teamster, one was a tanner, and one was a waiter. In terms of enlistment statuses, 59 percent were volunteers, 36 percent were drafted, and one soldier was a substitute. Thirty-two percent of them held a rank higher than private at some point.

Over half of Monroe County’s colored population lived in Stroudsburg in 1860, which suggests that many of the soldiers may have known each other. This is important, because it indicates an *esprit de corps* that may have contributed to their performance in the army. Edward and Burnese Haines, Moses and Daniel Washington, and John and John A. Quako appear to have been related judging by their surnames, ages, and birth locations. The first two pairs may have been siblings or cousins, while the last pair may have been father and son, because the younger uses his middle initial to distinguish himself from the elder. Jacob Quako may have been related to the last pair as well, perhaps as a cousin or as an elder son who enlisted before the younger John came of age. Oliver H.P. Quoco’s name is sometimes spelled “Quacko” on his muster rolls, but

⁴ United States, Census Bureau, “State of Pennsylvania: Table No. 1—Population by age and sex” (Table), *Population of the United States in 1860: Compiled from the Original Returns of the Eighth Census, Under the Direction of the Secretary of the Interior* (cited hereafter *1860 Census*) (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864), 410, accessed June 17, 2019, <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1860/population/1860a-30.pdf?#>.

“Quoco” is most commonly used; this undoubtedly reflects the fact that blacks were accustomed to expressing their names phonetically instead of in writing, and he was most likely related to the “Quakos.” Ogden and Amos Huff may have been related, but they have different birth places. Perhaps the family moved to Monroe County after Ogden was born. The same may be true with William and Robert Smith. The elder William may be Robert’s father, or they may be related in some other way.⁵

Some idea of relationships may also be gained by looking at enlistment dates. Jacob Quako was the first to enlist—months before the other Quakos. John Lee does not have any connection to the other soldiers either in name or date of enlistment. The draft swept through Monroe County in the fall of 1863, and the volunteers who enlisted at this time may have known the draftees and decided to serve with them. Four men enlisted on December 30, 1863, which indicates they may have known each other and decided to volunteer together. The same holds true for the four men, including John and John A. Quako, who enlisted on January 29, 1864.

When the soldiers enlisted, they headed to Camp William Penn to receive their training. Before this camp was founded, colored Pennsylvanians had to leave the state to enlist, because no one in Pennsylvania had the authority to enroll them. Some volunteers traveled to Massachusetts, where they signed up for the 54th and 55th Massachusetts

⁵ United States, Census Bureau, “State of Pennsylvania: Table No. 1-Population by age and sex” (Table), *1860 Census*, 430, accessed June 17, 2019, <https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1860/population/1860a-30.pdf?#>; United States, Department of War, Oliver H.P. Quoco Muster Rolls, “African-American Civil War Vets I” folder, Monroe County Historical Association, Stroudsburg, PA. All Department of War and Department of the Interior records for Monroe County soldiers will hereafter be cited by soldier name and the title of the folder in which the records are located; folder “African-American Civil War Vets I” hereafter cited “A.A. I;” folder “African-American Civil War Vets II” hereafter cited “A.A. II.” Since “Quoco” is the most common spelling of Oliver H.P.’s surname, it is the one used in this thesis. Thus a distinction, however tenuous, is to be made between him and the Quakos. See the appendix for a summary of the muster rolls and a brief history of the officers who commanded these troops.

regiments. Then a committee of white citizens in Philadelphia met on March 23, 1863, to discuss plans for enlisting colored troops in Pennsylvania regiments. They selected Colonel William Frismuth, a former cavalry officer, as their chairman. That same day, they delegated to a man named James Logan the task of visiting Washington, D.C., and obtaining the administration's permission to enlist colored troops. When the meeting adjourned, they met with local blacks at the Colored Institute on Lombard Street, who claimed that almost two regiments worth of men were prepared to offer their services.⁶

Three days later Logan returned, and the committee reconvened to discuss his news. In Washington, Logan had met with Andrew Curtin, the governor of Pennsylvania, and Edwin Stanton, the secretary of war. Both these men assured him that authority to enlist colored troops in Pennsylvania would be granted. Logan also met with a Mr. Holmes, a black man from the interior of the state, who claimed that many of his people were willing to enlist.⁷

The records on the committee are silent for the next few months. The promised authority to raise colored troops did not arrive. A group of Philadelphians, perhaps containing some of the original committee members, designated themselves the Citizen's Bounty Fund Committee, and they petitioned Secretary Stanton for permission to recruit colored troops. Before Stanton sent his reply, the War Department created the Bureau of Colored Troops on May 22. Major George L. Stearns, a noted abolitionist and recruiting commissioner for the bureau, then arrived in the city and opened headquarters at the

⁶ Jeffrey D. Wert, "Camp William Penn and the Black Soldier," *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 46, no. 4 (October 1979), 336-7, accessed June 17, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27772625>.

⁷ Wert, 337-8.

Continental Hotel in early June. Provided with a \$5,000 recruiting fund, he sought out recruits and citizen support. The committee received Stanton's telegraphed response on June 17 informing them that "proper orders have been issued for raising the troops. The views of the department will be explained to you by Major Stearns."⁸

The committee met at the Sansom Street Hotel on June 19, where it created the Supervising Committee for Recruiting Colored Troops, consisting of twenty-seven men with Thomas Webster as chairman. Three days later, the new committee received its official orders from Major Charles W. Foster, chief of the Bureau of Colored Troops. The orders laid out the specific instructions for recruitment. For example, only one regiment could be raised at a time, and the soldiers were to receive the standard pay for colored troops. The orders then read, "The troops raised under the foregoing instructions will rendezvous at Camp William Penn, Cheltenham Hills, near Philadelphia, where they will be received and subsisted as soon as they are enlisted, and an officer will be assigned to duty at that post to take command of them on their arrival and make the necessary requisitions for supplies."⁹

On June 26, 1863, Camp William Penn opened. It is not known who selected the site. According to Jeffrey Wert, someone probably recommended it to the War Department, because it is unlikely they would know of the availability of so specific a

⁸ As quoted in Wert, 338-9.

⁹ Wert, 339-40; United States, War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (cited hereafter *O.R.*) (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Series. 3, Volume 3, 404-5.

location that hitherto had no military value. The orders from Foster also provided the first official appellation for Camp William Penn.¹⁰

The location of the camp was admirably suited to its task. The land was owned by Edward M. Davis, a member of the Union League of Philadelphia. His mother-in-law, Lucretia Mott, was an abolitionist, and the Mott family estate, known as “Roadside,” was adjacent to the property and once served as a major stop on the Underground Railroad. The camp encompassed thirteen acres of land, including an elevation that commanded a view of the rolling countryside and of the nearby streams supplying the necessary water. It was close to a station of the North Pennsylvania Railroad, which facilitated transportation between the city and the training ground.¹¹

When the camp officially opened, the volunteers’ response was immediate. Colonel Louis Wagner, commander of the site and a former officer of the 88th Pennsylvania Volunteers, mustered in one company the opening day. Recruits came in from Philadelphia, Schuylkill County, and Scranton. Two of them walked from Lancaster. The first regiment mustered into service at the camp was designated the Third Regiment of United States Colored Troops. The new regiment paraded with fife and drum through the camp streets during a “pitiless storm.”¹²

Blacks in Philadelphia had been meeting to support the recruiting drive, and a rally was held at Independence Hall on July 6. A band playing “national airs” preceded

¹⁰ Wert, 340.

¹¹ Wert, 340; Donald Scott, “Camp William Penn,” PA Civil War 150, accessed June 17, 2019, <http://pacivilwar150.com/TheWar/CampWilliamPenn.html>.

¹² Wert, 340-1.

the addresses by noted speakers. Congressman William D. Kelly became the first elected politician to address a group of black Philadelphians. On the platform with Kelly was Frederick A. Douglass, who made a speech concluding, “Young men of Philadelphia, you are without excuse. The hour has arrived, and your place is in the Union Army. Remember that the musket—the United States musket with its bayonet of steel—is better than all mere parchment guarantees of liberty.”¹³

On July 18, Douglass addressed a speech at Camp William Penn to the 3rd U.S.C.T. “The fortunes of the whole race for generations to come are bound up in the success or failure of the 3rd regiment of colored troops from the North,” he said. “You are a spectacle for men and angels. You are in a manner to answer the question, can the black man be a soldier? That we can now make soldiers of these men, there can be no doubt!”¹⁴

The physical layout of the camp developed during those early weeks. Shelter tents for the recruits and wall tents for the officers were arranged along intersecting company streets. A headquarters tent sheltered Colonel Wagner and his staff. A large flag pole was erected on July 15. The camp regulations, also developed during this time, paralleled those of training sites for white soldiers.¹⁵

The recruits’ training matched the standards set for white regiments. Individual companies drilled separately for two hours in the morning, and the regiment trained as a

¹³ As quoted in Wert, 341.

¹⁴ As quoted in Donald Scott, “Camp William Penn: Training Ground for Freedom,” HistoryNet, accessed November 15, 2019, <https://www.historynet.com/camp-william-penn-training-ground-for-freedom.htm>.

¹⁵ Wert, 342.

whole in the afternoon. Standard U.S. Army tactics, maneuvers, and marching routines were practiced. The program was intensive and was directed by Colonel Wagner, his staff, and the regimental officers.¹⁶

Most of the regiments mustered into service at the camp trained for two months, which was hardly enough time for the men to master maneuvers. Their presence at the front was in such high demand, however, that more time could not be spared. As one regiment began its training, the next batch of recruits was mustered in. This procedure continued throughout most of the camp's existence, with two regiments in different states of organization sharing the facilities.¹⁷

Incidents in camp paralleled those at white training sites. Soldiers sometimes complained about the poor quality of bread or engaged in brawls. On occasion, a recruit visiting Philadelphia would find himself the victim of some sort of personal attack. Colonel Wagner and the Supervising Committee paid attention to these incidents, and took care to ensure that the soldiers were well cared for and reasonably protected.¹⁸

Despite these forms of fair treatment, recruits still felt they were discriminated against. One soldier wrote a letter to President Lincoln, complaining that he was not allowed to visit home while severely ill, although white officers and recruits were allowed this privilege. The men of the 3rd U.S.C.T. were likewise disappointed when they had to cancel their planned parade through Philadelphia because of continuing racism.¹⁹

¹⁶ Wert, 342.

¹⁷ Wert, 342.

¹⁸ Wert, 344.

¹⁹ Scott, "Camp William Penn: Training Ground for Freedom."

Others had pleasant reminiscences of their times at the camp. One officer described his experience by writing, “The stay at Camp William Penn was a very bright spot in my army experience. We were just in the suburbs of Philadelphia and went into the city often. Situated among thoroughly enthusiastic Union people, our service with the colored men made us heroes to our good Quaker friends.” A newspaper reported, “[Camp William Penn] presents a neat and orderly appearance, which will at once attract the attention of any one who may visit it.” One group of visitors erected a large tent to serve as a school for the recruits. Sometimes locals would come to watch troop reviews, packing the inbound train cars and sitting on the hillsides near the camp. Lucretia Mott wrote, “Is not this change in feeling and conduct towards this oppressed class beyond all that we could have anticipated, and marvelous in our eyes?”²⁰

Secretary Stanton also approved of the camp; he designated it a general training site for colored recruits from Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware on September 22, 1863. He also ordered materials for barracks and other buildings. Within three months, barracks, officers’ quarters, mess halls, guard houses, and a chapel replaced the shelter and wall tents. By the end of construction, the camp contained forty-four buildings. On December 8, 1863, the 8th U.S.C.T. moved into the new barracks. According to Second Lieutenant Oliver W. Norton of that regiment, Christmas 1863 “went ‘merry as a marriage bell,’ big dinner, sham battle, etc. etc.,”²¹

²⁰ As quoted in Wert, 344-5; as quoted in Donald Scott, Sr., *Camp William Penn: 1863-1865* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Military History, 2012), 78.

²¹ As quoted in Wert, 345-6; Scott, *Camp William Penn*, 85.

The Supervising Committee opened the Free Military School for Applicants for Commands of Colored Troops in Philadelphia in December. The founders of this school intended to improve the board examination scores of applicants who sought officer commissions in the United States Colored Troops. As part of their education, the applicants spent time training the recruits at Camp William Penn. “The regiments that went from this camp were among the best in the army,” wrote historian George Washington Williams. “Their officers had been carefully selected and specially trained in a military school under competent teachers, and the troops themselves were noted for intelligence, proficiency, and pluck.”²²

In order to design the regimental flags for these units, the Supervisory Committee hired artist David Bustill Bowser. Bowser was an African-American whose grandfather was a baker in the Continental Army and later became one of the first black school teachers in Pennsylvania. David became an artist at an early age, and he specialized in emblems and banners for fire companies and fraternal organizations. His U.S.C.T. flags were of regulation size and usually contained the national arms on the reverse side and allegorical paintings depicting the new colored troops on the obverse side. He varied the designs for each regiment (See Figures 4, 5, and 7).²³

²² Daniel V. Van Every, “The Role of Officer Selection and Training on the Successful Formation and Employment of U.S. Colored Troops in the American Civil War, 1863-1865” (master’s thesis, U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, 2011), 54-5, accessed January 2, 2019, Defense Technical Information Center, <https://apps.dtic.mil/dtic/tr/fulltext/u2/a547407.pdf>; William A. Dobak, *Freedom by the Sword: The U.S. Colored Troops, 1862-1867* (New York: Skyhorse Publishing, Inc., 2013), 16; as quoted in Wert, 346.

²³ Richard A. Sauer, *Advance the Colors! Pennsylvania Civil War Battle Flags* (Pennsylvania: Capitol Preservation Committee, 1987), 41-2.

None of this training would have been possible without the aid and support of the Supervising Committee for Recruiting Colored Troops. The members of this committee raised ample funds from businesses and private donors, and they looked after the well-being of the colored recruits. The camp was the training site of 10,940 soldiers before the war ended, and these men were organized into eleven regiments: The Third, Sixth, Eighth, Twenty-Second, Twenty-Fourth, Twenty-Fifth, Thirty-Second, Forty-First, Forty-Third, Forty-Fifth, and One Hundred Twenty-Seventh Regiments of United States Colored Troops. After the war the camp was dismantled, and although no physical markings survive, it lives on in the history of the U.S. Army.²⁴

²⁴ Wert, 335, 346; ‘Regiments,’ Camp William Penn Museum, accessed June 17, 2019, <https://usct.weebly.com/regiments1.html>.

3rd U.S.C.T.



Figure 4. Regimental flag of the 3rd U.S.C.T. Obverse: The Goddess of Liberty presenting a flag to a colored sergeant. Reverse: the national arms. Gwen Spicer, “Flags of the United States Colored Troops,” Inside the Conservator’s Studio, June 14, 2014, accessed June 15, 2019, <http://insidetheconservatorsstudio.blogspot.com/2014/06/flags-of-united-states-colored-troops.html>; *Advance the Colors*, 44.

The first troops to volunteer from Monroe County were Jacob Quako and John Lee, and most of the enlisted men of their regiment also came from the interior of Pennsylvania. Jacob enlisted on July 15, 1863, and he may have arrived at Camp William Penn in time to hear Frederick Douglass’ speech on the eighteenth. He was enrolled in

Company G under Captain Frank W. Webster, First Lieutenant John G. Haap, and Second Lieutenant George Heimach. John enlisted on the twenty-second of July, reached Camp William Penn in August, and enrolled in Company I under Captain Charles F. Smith, First Lieutenant Robert R. Martin, and Second Lieutenant Frederick W. Schroeder. The field officers leading the regiment were Frederick W. Bardwell, major, Ulysses Doubleday, lieutenant colonel, and Benjamin T. Tilghman, colonel. The 3rd U.S.C.T. was the first regiment to be organized at Camp William Penn, and it was the one to parade with fife and drum through the camp streets during a “pitiless storm.”²⁵

Colonel Tilghman commanded the 26th Pennsylvania Volunteers until he was wounded in the Battle of Chancellorsville in May 1863. One sergeant of the 3rd U.S.C.T. wrote during the war of him,

With our duties before us, and with a good leader such as we have in the gallant Colonel [Benjamin C.] Tilghman, formerly of the 26th Pennsylvania, who has left his luxurious home to aid in elevating our race; with a firm confidence in his abilities as a commander, we are ready to follow wherever he may lead us. He has three noble traits as a commander: justice, humanity, and firmness in all his orders to both officers and men.²⁶

Not all of the regiment’s officers were held in such high regard, however. One soldier complained in June 1864 that, “We have a set officers here who apparently think

²⁵ Samuel P. Bates, *History of Pennsylvania Volunteers, 1861-5; Prepared in Compliance with Acts of the Legislature* (Harrisburg, PA: B. Singerly, State Printer, 1871), 5:925-6, 937; *John Lee*, A.A.I; Wert, 340-1, 344.

²⁶ Bates, 5:925; Edwin S. Redkey, ed., *A Grand Army of Black Men: Letters from African-American Soldiers in the Union Army, 1861-1865* (1993; repr., Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 36; United States, United States Patent Office, *Improvement in Cutting and Engraving Stone, Metal, Glass, &c.: Specification of Letters Patent No. 108,408, dated October 18, 1870*, by Benjamin C. Tilghman, accessed June 17, 2019, <https://todayinsci.com/Events/Patent/Sandblasting108,408.htm>; After the war, Tilghman went on to patent an “improvement in cutting and engraving stone, metal, glass, &c.,” that became known as sandblasting.

that their commissions are licenses to debauch and mingle with deluded freedwomen, under cover of darkness...their very presence amongst us is loathsome in the extreme.”²⁷

Whether they approved of their officers or not, the men of the 3rd proved to be stubborn fighters; the regiment never lost a man as a prisoner of war. The men seemed to believe that death was preferable to the treatment they would suffer as Confederate prisoners. On one occasion, a soldier who had been surrounded and driven into a river refused repeated calls to surrender, and he was killed on the spot.²⁸

Jacob’s and John’s—and the regiment’s—first assignment was in the Department of the South, which is famous in the history of African-American soldiers. It was here that Generals Hunter and Saxton undertook some of the first efforts to raise colored units, and where on July 18, 1863, General Gillmore ordered the ill-fated assault on Fort Wagner.

Gillmore was still campaigning against this fort when the 3rd arrived on Morris Island. He despaired of taking the fort by direct assault, so he had his men dig trenches and lay siege to it. On August 24, the 3rd U.S.C.T. was organized into the 4th Brigade, U.S. Forces Morris Island, along with the 54th Massachusetts and the 2nd South Carolina Colored Infantry, and these regiments were assigned to the trenches around Fort Wagner.²⁹

²⁷ As quoted in Joseph T. Glatthaar, *Forged in Battle: The Civil War Alliance of Black Soldiers and White Officers*, rev. ed. (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2000), 92n26.

²⁸ Bates, 5:926.

²⁹ Bates, 5:925; Frederick H. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion: Compiled and Arranged from the Official Records of the Federal and Confederate Armies Reports of the Adjutant Generals of the Several States, the Army Registers and Other Reliable Documents and Sources* (Des Moines, IA: The Dyer Publishing Company, 1908), 369, 1723.

Day by day, the troops gradually dug their trenches up to the fort's parapet, and they were often bombarded by artillery. Their first engagement was on August 26, and before two weeks had passed, they made several night attacks which resulted in the capture of enemy rifle pits. The men faced more than the usual risks of combat, because the Confederates at Fort Wagner created booby-traps by burying explosives in the sand, then attaching them by string to dead Union soldiers. Men of the 3rd had to carefully examine the bodies of the deceased before removing them from the field. They continued fighting in spite of these risks, and the Confederates abandoned the fort in early September; on September 7, the Union troops occupied Fort Wagner and nearby Battery Gregg. The regiment's loss during the siege was six killed and twelve wounded.³⁰

General Gillmore awarded medals to some of the men for bravery. He instructed the company officers to give two medals to men in their company, but these officers left it to the soldiers to decide by a vote which two should be awarded. Each man was eager to vote the medals to someone else, and they seem to have been justly conferred.³¹

Although operations against Fort Wagner were over, Union forces remained in Charleston Harbor laying siege to the city. Sickness sent many men to the hospitals by October. The troops who kept healthy alternated between training and laboring on the forts and batteries, while Confederates in nearby forts fired on them. "All [had] an opportunity of displaying their courage," a corporal wrote, "for the enemy [was] determined we shall not work in peace." John Lee was promoted to corporal on October

³⁰ Bates, 5:925; Dyer, 829, 1723; Redkey, 35.

³¹ Redkey, 36-7. The names of the recipients are not given.

25, and Second Lieutenant Scroeder of his company was discharged on a surgeon's certificate on November 25, before he was replaced by Jacob E. Barr. The 3rd remained on Morris Island until January 1864, when it was transferred to Hilton Head Island, South Carolina.³²

In February, the regiment was transferred to the District of Florida. The administration's interest in this state was twofold. First, Confederates were driving cattle from the interior of the state up to Charleston, South Carolina, thereby hindering the Union siege effort; Washington aimed to stop these shipments at their source. Second, Lincoln hoped that Union operations in the state would lead to the creation of a Unionist government there, through which electors would be provided for the Republican party in the 1864 presidential election.³³

Shortly after it landed in its new theater of operations, the 3rd U.S.C.T. took part in the easy capture of Camp Finnegan, from which most of the Confederates fled. The regiment was reorganized along with the 35th U.S.C.T. into the 2nd Brigade, Vodge's 2nd Division, and Colonel Tilghman was promoted to command of the brigade.³⁴

The regiment was stationed in Jacksonville by February 7, where it garrisoned the forts around town and drilled as a heavy artillery regiment. The 2nd Brigade was broken up in April, and the 3rd U.S.C.T. was grouped with thirteen other regiments into the

³² Dobak, 57; Redkey, 34-6; *John Lee*, A.A. I; Dyer, 1723.

³³ Dyer, 1723; Dobak, 61-2.

³⁴ Noah Andre Trudeau, *Like Men of War: Black Troops in the Civil War, 1862-1865* (Boston, Little, Brown and Company, 1998), 132-3; Dyer, 371, 1723.

District of Florida. John Lee was demoted to the rank of private on May 3, possibly due to illness.³⁵

After four months of garrison duty and training as a heavy artillery unit, the regiment was sent against a Confederate camp on May 31. John Lee did not go along, however. On June 1, he died of dysentery in a hospital at Jacksonville.³⁶

Monroe County's history with the 3rd U.S.C.T. does not end with John Lee's life. Jacob Quako was still enlisted, and in December 1864, Oliver H.P. Quoco joined its ranks. From June until October, the regiment engaged in several small raids deep into the Florida interior, liberating slaves and destroying Confederate property. Since Colonel Tilghman was on detached duty up north for the summer, Lieutenant Colonel Doubleday oversaw most of these raids. In October the regiment became part of the 4th Separate Brigade, District of Florida. Around that time, Doubleday was promoted to colonel of the 45th U.S.C.T. His commission was not refilled, and Major Bardwell acted as second-in-command under Tilghman.³⁷

The presidential election of 1864 came and went without any Unionist government being formed in Florida. However, the 3rd U.S.C.T. and other troops were still kept in the state, and they continued to disrupt the Confederates' shipments of supplies to the north.³⁸

³⁵ Bates, 5:925; *John Lee*, A.A. I.

³⁶ Dyer, 1723; *John Lee*, A.A. I.

³⁷ Bates, 5:925; Dyer, 1723, 373.

³⁸ William H. Nulty, *Confederate Florida: The Road to Olustee*, 1st paperbound ed. (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 1990), 222-3.

Oliver H.P. Quoco enlisted as a substitute for William Penticost of Wayne County, Pennsylvania, on December 12, 1864. It is not known when he arrived in camp, but he was assigned to Company G, the same as Jacob Quako. He arrived during a period of inactivity, as the most recent raid had taken place on October 21. In late January 1865, the district was so devoid of enemy troops that a detachment sent out to bring in a Unionist family had hopes for capturing just a single Confederate soldier that was reported in the area.³⁹

In March, Sergeant Major Henry James of the 3rd U.S.C.T., “who...is not a surrendering man,” led a raid into the Florida interior. His force was composed of twenty-four men drawn from his own regiment and the 34th U.S.C.T., one soldier from a white regiment, and seven black civilians. It is not known if either Jacob Quako or Oliver Quoco took part in the raid, but it garnered so much attention that they doubtless talked about it in camp.⁴⁰

Venturing over forty-five miles inland, the raiding party burned a sugar mill and a distillery, captured four white prisoners, and set ninety-one slaves free. On their return, this force of twenty-five soldiers and seven civilians drove off more than fifty Confederate cavalry. Their losses during the raid were two killed and four wounded. Tilghman reported, “I think that this expedition, planned and executed by colored Soldiers and civilians, reflects great credit upon the parties engaged in it, and I respectfully suggest that some public recognition of it, would have a good effect upon the

³⁹ *Oliver H.P. Quoco*, A.A. I; Dyer, 1723; Dobak, 85.

⁴⁰ Dobak, 87; Redkey, 57-8.

troops.” General Gillmore, commanding the Department of the South, then praised the raid in general orders to the department. “This expedition,” he wrote, “planned and executed by colored men under the command of a colored non-commissioned officer, reflects great credit upon the brave participants and their leader. The major-general commanding thanks these courageous soldiers and scouts, and holds up their conduct to their comrade in arms as an example worthy of emulation.”⁴¹

After this raid, two months of relative quiet passed. When the Confederate commander in Florida surrendered in May, seventy-five men of the regiment were detailed to guard surrendered property until it could be brought to Jacksonville. The regiment was then ordered to Tallahassee for occupation duty. Jacob Quako and Oliver Quoco also received a new second lieutenant around this time: George Heimach, who had served with Company G since Camp William Penn, was promoted to first lieutenant of Company F, and he was replaced by Joseph N. Allen.⁴²

On the way to Tallahassee, the troops stopped at Olustee station, and a crowd of white and black spectators crowded the train cars in order to catch a glimpse of colored Union soldiers. To quote a witness, one citizen remarked that “all the niggers should be in ___ (a place of not very moderate temperature).” Twenty guns were immediately pointed at his head, and one soldier fired at the man—the bullet grazing his head. For about half an hour the crowd was at a high pitch of excitement. Tilghman then arrived,

⁴¹ As quoted in Dobak, 87.

⁴² Dobak, 87; Bates, 5:936.

found the man who made the comment, and convinced him to depart before anything worse happened to him.⁴³

Arriving at the state capital, the 3rd went into camp. Fever soon ravaged the regiment, and some white Union soldiers from Kentucky, who were in town, treated the men harshly. However, the local populace soon warmed up to them, and every day after 5:00 p.m. the parade ground was covered with spectators who came to watch the troops. Tilghman resigned on June 9, and he was replaced as commander by Major Bardwell, who was promoted to lieutenant colonel. Sherman Conant filled the commission for major.⁴⁴

From Tallahassee, the regiment travelled to Lake City and other places in Florida. At least one soldier complained during this time of the officers' behavior. Since the war ended, the officers began taking the word of former Confederates as to the conduct of the colored troops around town. As punishment for their supposed infractions, some of the men were tied up by the thumbs on public streets, were compelled to straddle wooden posts, or suffered other similar treatment. Perhaps Tilghman's absence unearthed latent naiveté or racism among the officers, or perhaps the soldier who recorded these incidents misunderstood their true causes. Whatever the case, Bardwell was promoted to colonel on September 9, and four days later John L. Bower was promoted to lieutenant colonel—passing over Major Conant. These commissions prevailed until the regiment finished its tour in Florida. In October 1865, the 3rd returned to Philadelphia, where Jacob Quako,

⁴³ Redkey, 178-9.

⁴⁴ Redkey, 180-1; Bates, 5:926.

Oliver H.P. Quoco, and the rest of the unit was mustered out on the thirty-first of the month.⁴⁵

25th U.S.C.T.



Figure 5. Regimental flag of the 25th U.S.C.T. Obverse: The text, “Strike! For God and liberty,” over the image of the Goddess of Liberty handing a musket to a black man. Gwen Spicer, “Flags of the United States Colored Troops,” Inside the Conservator’s Studio, June 14, 2014, accessed June 15, 2019, <http://insidetheconservatorsstudio.blogspot.com/2014/06/flags-of-united-states-colored-troops.html>; *Advance the Colors*, 52.

John Quako, John A. Quako, William H. Anderson, and Solomon Frister all voluntarily enlisted in the army on January 29, 1864. They were grouped together in Company G of the 25th U.S.C.T. at Camp William Penn in February. Their field officers were Colonel Gustavus A. Scroggs, Lieutenant Colonel Frederick L. Hitchcock, and Major James. W. Reisinger. The commanders of Company G were Captain William A.

⁴⁵ Redkey, 181-2; Dyer, 1723; Bates, 5:937.

Prickett, First Lieutenant William H. Powers, and Second Lieutenant Chas. M. Edgarton. Edgarton died in Philadelphia on March 28, and he was replaced by John E. Norcross. By mid-February, John Quako had become a wagoner, and Solomon was promoted to corporal (See Figure 6).⁴⁶



Figure 6. A photograph of Corporal Solomon Frister taken from Captain William A. Prickett's photo album. Ronald S. Coddington, "An Album of Faces of the 25th USCT," *Military Images* 32, no. 1 (Winter 2014): 18, accessed June 15, 2019, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24864311>.

President Lincoln ordered Scroggs and his regiment to report to General Banks at New Orleans, and then to proceed to Indianola, Texas. Once there, Scroggs was to recruit three new colored regiments among the freedmen. Once the 25th and these three new regiments were organized into a brigade, he was to be promoted to brigadier general and

⁴⁶ *John Quako*, A.A. I; *John A. Quako*, A.A. I; *William H. Anderson*, A.A. I; *Solomon Frister*, A.A. I; Bates, 5:1026, 1039.

placed at their head. He accordingly set out from Camp William Penn on March 15, taking half the regiment with him.⁴⁷

Scroggs and his men were on board the steamer *Suwanee*, which sprung a leak during a storm, and although the ship's pumps were operating, the water rose to within a foot of the fires. The men spent thirty-six hours unloading the water with buckets, and the ship managed to put in at Beaufort, North Carolina where she was abandoned. The landing was fortuitous, because the Confederates were conducting a siege against nearby Washington, N.C., and the men were ordered into the defenses. When the emergency passed, Scroggs resumed the voyage to New Orleans and arrived around May 1.⁴⁸

Since Second Lieutenant Edgerton died in Philadelphia on March 28, after Scroggs had departed, Company G probably remained in that city under Lieutenant Colonel Hitchcock. He led his half of the regiment on an uninterrupted voyage to New Orleans. Reaching land, he encamped at Carrolton, which is now part of the city, but at the time lay a few miles outside of it. He soon reunited with Scroggs and the other half of the regiment.⁴⁹

When the men arrived at New Orleans, Banks was off conducting his Red River Campaign. When he returned in defeat, Banks ordered the 25th to remain in the city as a reserve force, thus delaying Scroggs' recruitment expedition for the foreseeable future. During this time, the regiment was attached to the Defences of New Orleans, LA., Department of the Gulf. William H. Anderson took sick on May 12 with an illness that

⁴⁷ Bates, 5:1026.

⁴⁸ Bates, 5:1026.

⁴⁹ Bates, 5:1026.

proved to be stubborn. Four days later, John Quako was promoted to corporal. After two months in New Orleans, Scroggs resigned on July 6, and the command fell to Lieutenant Colonel Hitchcock.⁵⁰

In July, the regiment was transferred to Pensacola, Florida, where it was attached to the District of Pensacola, Fla., Department of the Gulf. At the time, this was the largest city in the state, and it had some strategic significance. Union troops had held onto nearby Fort Pickens since the outbreak of the war, and they reoccupied Fort Barrancas in May 1862. The city was the closest Union base to Mobile, Alabama, which was one of the Confederacy's last open seaports. A railroad connected the two cities, and the Union district commander, Brigadier General Alexander Asboth, had his eyes on this rail link. He was also interested in the railroad connecting Mobile to Montgomery, Alabama, which served as the latter city's connection to the coast. Other railroads connected Montgomery to Atlanta, Georgia, which was one of the major Union targets at the time. In terms of military strategy, then, a Union force at Pensacola could potentially disrupt the flow of supplies from Mobile to Montgomery and Atlanta.⁵¹

William was left behind during the movement to recover from his illness. Arriving at Pensacola, the rest of the regiment was again divided in two. Hitchcock and six companies garrisoned Fort Barrancas and adjoining forts, where they drilled as infantry and heavy artillery, becoming proficient in both. Major Reisinger and the rest of the command garrisoned Fort Pickens, which was at the mouth of Pensacola Harbor. The troops remained here throughout the summer, and in October they were attached to the 1st

⁵⁰ Bates, 5:1026-8; Dyer, 1727.

⁵¹ Dyer, 1727; Dobak, 139.

Brigade, 3rd Division, U.S. Colored Troops, Department of the Gulf. By the end of the month, they were reorganized into the 1st Brigade, District of West Florida.⁵²

In October, Company G was garrisoning Fort Redoubt, which was close to Fort Barrancas. The troops at Fort Redoubt had comfortable quarters, but many of them had taken sick. The chaplain at the post was a considerate man, having traveled to New Orleans to obtain vegetables for the soldiers. Captain Prickett also travelled to New Orleans where he obtained books for teaching the men how to read and write. The soldiers spent some of their time conversing with local slaves and learning about their experiences. At least one of the soldiers was disturbed when he observed the lash marks on slaves' backs. In November, William finally recovered from his sickness and returned to the regiment from New Orleans. The field officers were reorganized in the same month: on the sixteenth Hitchcock was promoted to colonel, Reisinger was promoted to lieutenant colonel, and Thomas Boudren was promoted to major.⁵³

In January 1865, the 25th U.S.C.T. was chosen to take part in a campaign against Mobile, Alabama, and it was transferred to the 3rd Brigade, 1st Division, U.S. Colored Troops, District of West Florida. However, the enemy soon threatened Pensacola, so the 25th was retained there as a garrison. To prepare for this new attack, the men strengthened the forts' defenses and put them in condition to withstand a siege. The rebels never came, however, and in February the regiment was attached to the 1st Brigade, 1st Division, U.S.

⁵² Bates, 5:1026; Dyer, 1727.

⁵³ Redkey, 150-2, 154; *William H. Anderson*, A.A. I; Bates, 5:1027-8.

Colored Troops, District of West Florida. In April, the 25th was detached from brigades, but still remained part of the District of West Florida.⁵⁴

In the spring and summer of 1865, scurvy ravaged the regiment's camps; the commissary's cornmeal was "wormy and sour." About one hundred and fifty men died, and an equal amount were disabled for life. At one point, the disease was so lethal that four to six soldiers were dying daily. Solomon was reduced in rank to private on June 15. Second Lieutenant Norcross was discharged by special order five days later, but for reasons not stated in Bates' history, his commission was left vacant. In July, the 25th was attached to the Department of Florida.⁵⁵

The regiment remained on garrison duty until December, when it returned to Philadelphia. After parading through the streets of the city, Colonel Hitchcock presented the regimental flag to the poet George H. Boker, who received it on behalf of the Union League of Philadelphia. The regiment was then mustered out on the sixth of the month.⁵⁶

Although the regiment never saw action, Colonel Hitchcock had choice words for it:

I desire to bear testimony to the *esprit du corps*, and general efficiency of the organization as a regiment, to the competency and general good character of its officers, to the soldierly bearing, fidelity to duty, and patriotism of its men. Having seen active service in the Army of the Potomac, prior to my connection with the Twenty-fifth, I can speak with some degree of assurance. After a proper time had been devoted to its drill, I never for a moment doubted what would be its conduct under fire. It would have done its full duty beyond question. An

⁵⁴ Bates, 5:1026-7; Dyer, 1727.

⁵⁵ Bates, 5:1027, 1039; Dobak, 140; *Solomon Frister*, A.A. I; Dyer, 1727.

⁵⁶ Bates, 5:1027; Dyer, 1727.

opportunity to prove this the Government never afforded, and the men always felt this a grievance.⁵⁷

22nd U.S.C.T.



Figure 7. Regimental flag of the 22nd U.S.C.T. Obverse: The Virginia state motto, “Sic Semper Tyrannis” (Thus Always to Tyrants), above the image of a black Union soldier bayonetting a fallen Confederate color-bearer who is trying to defend himself. Reverse: the national arms. Gwen Spicer, “Flags of the United States Colored Troops,” Inside the Conservator’s Studio, June 14, 2014, accessed June 15, 2019, <http://insidetheconservatorsstudio.blogspot.com/2014/06/flags-of-united-states-colored-troops.html>; *Advance the Colors*, 50.

Four colored Monroe County inhabitants volunteered for the army on December 30, 1863, just before New Year’s. Jacob Boyd, Charles Adams, Stephen Henry, and Walter Jackson then proceeded to Camp William Penn, where they joined Company G of the 22th U.S.C.T. in January 1864. Seventeen-year-old Charles initially enrolled as a musician, but he was almost immediately transferred to the line as a private. Commanding Company G were Captain Chas. F. Eichacker, First Lieutenant Luther Osborn, and Second Lieutenant J.C. Krzywoszynski. The field officers of the regiment were Major John B. Cook, Lieutenant Colonel Nathan P. Goff Jr., and Colonel Joseph B.

⁵⁷ As quoted in Bates, 5:1027.

Kiddoo. Kiddoo had fought his way up the ranks, being promoted from sergeant of the 63rd Pennsylvania Volunteers to lieutenant colonel and then colonel of the 137th Pennsylvania Volunteers. He transferred to the 6th U.S.C.T. as a major—one of the few officers to accept lower rank in a colored regiment—and in January he was promoted to colonel of the 22nd.⁵⁸

Kiddoo was acquainted with Colonels S.A. Duncan of the 4th U.S.C.T. and John W. Ames of the 6th U.S.C.T., who were both serving in Yorktown, Virginia, under Benjamin Butler. They asked Butler to request the 22nd U.S.C.T., telling him that Kiddoo was “an officer of great merit and wide experience, and one whom we would be proud to have...with us in the Brigade.” Kiddoo himself was eager to serve under Butler, who had such a prominent role in the history of the United States Colored Troops. He felt “that in no other Dept...will the experiment of colored troops be carried out on so grand a scale.” Duncan’s and Ames’ request was granted, and Kiddoo was ordered with his regiment to Yorktown by the end of January.⁵⁹

Arriving in Virginia, the regiment was attached to the U.S. Forces Yorktown and Vicinity, XVIII Corps. It spent most of its time drilling in cold and rainy weather, but on March 1 it was sent on an expedition with three other regiments in order to divert attention from a cavalry raid.⁶⁰

⁵⁸ *Jacob Boyd*, A.A. II; *Charles Adams*, A.A. II; *Stephen Henry*, A.A. I; *Walter Jackson*, A.A. I; Dyer, 1727; Bates, 5:991.

⁵⁹ As quoted in Dobak, 329.

⁶⁰ Dyer, 1727; Dobak, 329-30; Bates, 5:991; Trudeau, 204-5.

The troops set out towards Richmond around 5:00 pm on March 1 in cold weather. The sky was pitch black that night, and precipitation alternated between snow and rain. The roads were muddy. After resting for an hour at daybreak, the column marched eighteen miles further before encamping for the night. On the morning of March 3, the troops rendezvoused with the cavalry and served as their rearguard back to Yorktown. Over the course of this march, the four regiments fought in several minor skirmishes. The 22nd followed up this venture with a second raid that took place between March 9-12.⁶¹

In April, the regiment was attached to Brigadier General E.A. Wild's 1st Brigade, Hincks' Division, XVIII Corps, just in time for the spring offensive. Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant had recently opened his headquarters in Virginia, and he planned a two-pronged offensive against the Confederates in that state. With the Army of the Potomac, Grant planned to advance south from northern Virginia and attack the Army of Northern Virginia under Confederate General Robert E. Lee. While this was going on, General Butler would advance from the Chesapeake Bay up the James River towards Richmond, the Confederate capital. Eventually, the two forces would meet outside of Richmond and combine their strength against whatever Confederates remained.⁶²

Accordingly, on May 5, the 22nd embarked in a ship up the James River as part of Butler's invasion force against Richmond. One officer present wrote that it was the "grandest sight I ever saw, some thirty steamboats, beside gunboats, monitors, &c, all in

⁶¹ Trudeau, 204-5; Dyer, 1727.

⁶² Dobak, 335-7.

one line steaming up the river.” Another soldier described the sights that may have been visible to the men from Monroe County:

Magnificent scenery is visible up the stream, second to none in this country except the coast of Louisiana, from New Orleans to Baton Rouge. Fine mansions, beautiful fields, and lovely gardens are abundant...

When we were passing Grove’s Landing, where stands a house one hundred and ninety-five years old, built by John Smith’s men, I heard a concourse singing, “Glory, Glory, Hallelujah! Glory, Glory, Hallelujah! as we go marching ‘long.” The farther up the river we go the more they seem to rejoice.⁶³

The 22nd U.S.C.T. and 1st U.S.C.T. were the first troops to come ashore. They occupied Wilson’s Wharf, a commanding bluff on the north side of the James. Some of the men were detailed to picket duty while the rest fortified the site. The 22nd spent several days at the bluff and were then transferred to nearby Fort Powhatan to build fortifications.⁶⁴

On the morning of May 21, about one hundred Confederate cavalry attacked Fort Powhatan and were driven off. When they returned in the afternoon, the 22nd drove them off again. In June, the regiment was transferred to Brigadier General S.A. Duncan’s 2nd Brigade, Hicks’ 3rd Division, XVIII Corps.⁶⁵

After a month of operations, Grant’s advance had been ground to a halt outside of Richmond. He needed a new plan, so he decided to send Butler’s force against Petersburg, Virginia. This city is to the south of Richmond, and at the time it served as a railroad center that linked the Confederate capital, and Lee’s army, to the supplies of the

⁶³ Dyer, 392, 1727; as quoted in Trudeau, 215.

⁶⁴ Trudeau, 215-6; Dyer, 1727.

⁶⁵ Trudeau, 217; Dyer, 398, 1727.

Deep South. Grant hoped that by capturing Petersburg, he would cut Lee off from his supplies, thereby forcing that general to abandon his capital. To accomplish this, Grant ordered Butler to seize the Confederate defenses northeast of Petersburg. Grant himself would then sidestep Lee's army and bring down the Army of the Potomac to strengthen Butler's offensive (See Figure 8).⁶⁶

Accordingly, Hincks' division, which included the 22nd U.S.C.T., advanced towards Petersburg on June 15 at about 5:00 a.m. Around sunrise, they encountered enemy pickets and drove them off. Next came a formidable rebel position near Baylor's Farm. In front of the troops was a dense, marshy woodland about six hundred yards in width. Beyond the woods, the ground rose for three hundred yards. The top of this elevation was lined with rifle pits, which were filled with rebel infantry and four cannon. Hincks was ordered to capture the elevation.⁶⁷

The 2nd Brigade was spread in a single line (left to right: 6th, 4th, 22nd, and 5th U.S.C.T.) and advanced through the woods. When the 22nd emerged on the other side, it found itself alone. The flanking regiments had not come up yet, and the 4th was being driven back from the rebel position. The plan for an assault in unison had failed. Kiddoo decided to attack. The men of the 22nd stormed the elevation, the 5th came up shortly after in support, and the troops captured the position. Men of the 22nd turned an abandoned cannon around and fired a few shots at the retreating Confederates.⁶⁸

⁶⁶ Dobak, 348-9.

⁶⁷ Trudeau, 220-1.

⁶⁸ Trudeau, 221-2; Dobak, 349-50.

This action at Baylor's Farm took two hours, so it was not until 11:00 AM that Hincks' division arrived in front of Petersburg, which was surrounded by large, imposing earthworks. The 22nd was put in line close to the works, but the men found little cover—just small hollows and the occasional small tree. For eight hours they lay here, intermittently shelled by artillery. If they were able to look around at all, the men may have seen thousands of other soldiers around them: General Baldy Smith's corps had been brought up. At 7:00 p.m., the troops received the order to attack.⁶⁹

The Confederate position was weaker than it appeared. The 22nd and 4th U.S.C.T. "swept like a tornado over the works" and captured a battery. Once over the parapet, they discovered a network of trenches. The 22nd charged down these trenches with a yell and fixed bayonets. When they came to the crest of a hill, they wavered under intense enemy fire. But when they saw their regimental flag on the opposite side of a nearby ravine, they pushed through, and they captured rifle pits and another battery. They halted here and repulsed a counterattack.⁷⁰

The 2nd Brigade's casualties for the day were 44 killed, 317 wounded, and 17 missing for a total of 378. The 22nd U.S.C.T. captured six of the seven guns taken by Hincks' division and two of the four forts. Its conduct was warmly commended at corps and army headquarters. Its casualties were 1 officer and 17 men killed, 5 officers and 138 men wounded, and 1 missing for a total of 162, about 43 percent of the casualties in a brigade of five regiments. Lieutenant Colonel Goff was among the severely wounded.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Trudeau, 222-4.

⁷⁰ As quoted in Trudeau, 224-6.

⁷¹ Trudeau, 226; Bates, 5:991.

A chaplain remembered this fifteenth of June as “the day when prejudice died in the entire Army of the U.S. of America...It is the day when it was admitted that colored men were equal to the severest ordeal.” A reporter wrote, “Standing here upon the ground yet strewn with the wreck of battle—broken muskets, cannon balls, unexploded shells...[I] remember that our government and the nation are not ready to be just or generous to the colored race.”⁷²

Although the attack was a success, Butler did not advance any further than the positions he captured, and by midmorning the next day, General Lee was bringing down his army to reinforce Petersburg. When Grant arrived with the Army of the Potomac, he was too late to capture the city. Both sides then dug lines of trenches, thereby grounding operations to another standstill. These trenches extended from southwest of Petersburg all the way to the north of Richmond (See Figure 8). For the following nine months, Grant and Lee squared off in trench warfare, and their troops engaged in numerous battles against each other’s strong defensive positions.⁷³

The 22nd may have engaged in some skirmishes late in the month, but for the most part they were relatively inactive, fighting the trench style of warfare around Petersburg and Richmond. In this type of combat, it was dangerous for soldiers to expose themselves in the open; snipers were on the lookout. Small arms and artillery fire may have been common at first, but over time the Confederates decided to harbor their ammunition.⁷⁴

⁷² As quoted in Trudeau, 227.

⁷³ Dobak, 351-3.

⁷⁴ Trudeau, 229; Dobak, 368-9.

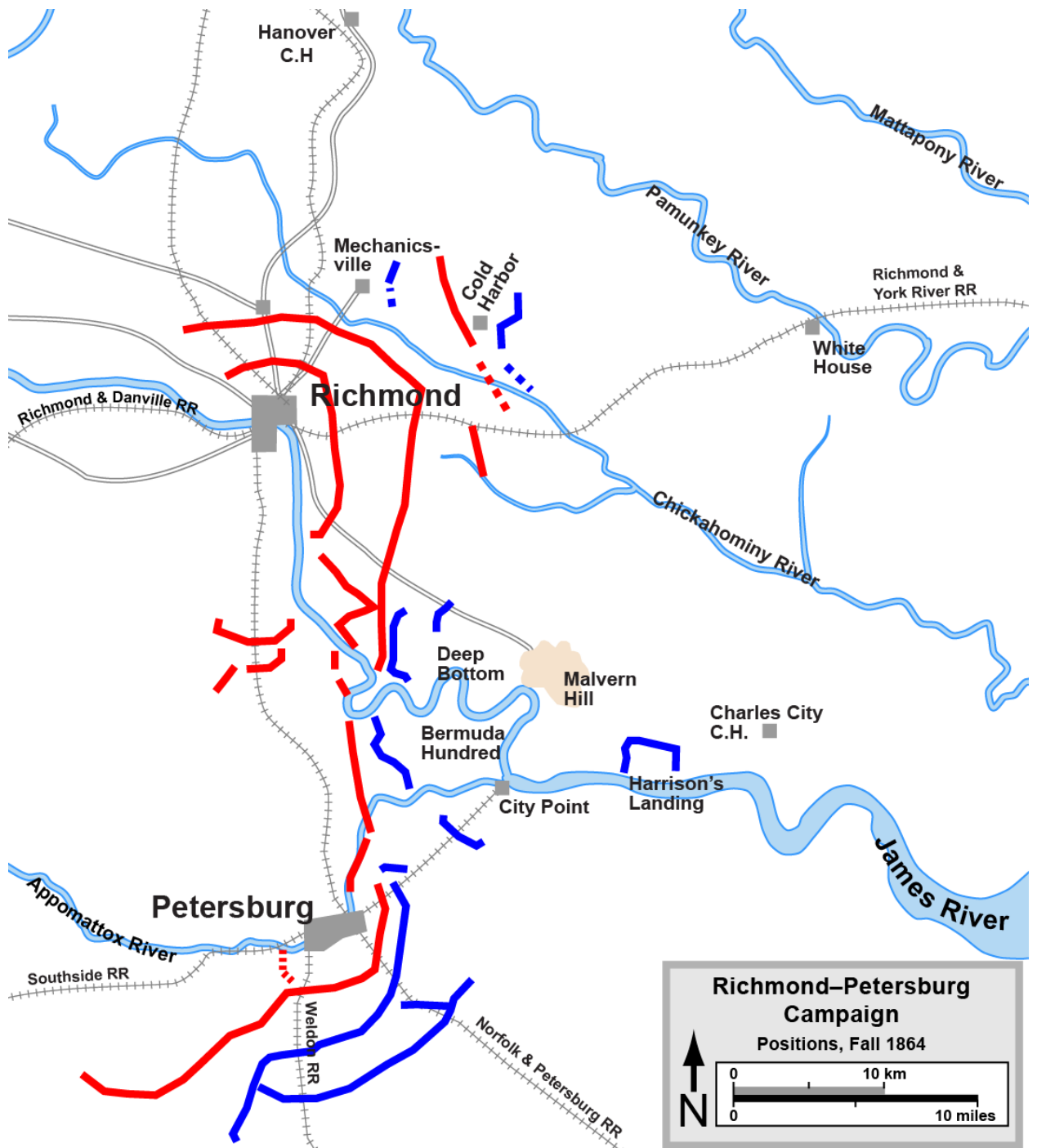


Figure 8. Map of the railroads and trench lines around Richmond and Petersburg, Virginia. "Richmond-Petersburg Theater, fall 1864," Cartography Services by Hal Jespersen: Specializing in American Civil War Maps, accessed October 4, 2019, <http://www.cwmaps.com/freemaps.html>.

This continued throughout August, when the regiment was attached to the 1st Brigade, 3rd Division, XVIII Corps and then to the 1st Brigade, 3rd Division, X Corps. A surgeon in the regiment reflected, “There is nothing stirring here. . . . We have a tacit truce on our front—neither party disturbs the other.” From a hill behind the Union position, he had “a fair view of the rebel lines for a mile or more. . . . and we. . . . can see both sides enjoying themselves during the day time. There is a melon patch between them, it is said, and both parties visit it at night. Water melons are one of the greatest luxuries we have here now.”⁷⁵

Not all was easy going, however. Some of the men from the 22nd signed up to work on the Dutch Gap Canal, which was being constructed to ease transportation up the James River. While working, they dug for seven and a half hours a day in the hot August sun. They were compensated with wages that nearly doubled their monthly pay. Jacob Boyd, Charles Adams, and Walter Jackson took part in this service. On the twenty-fourth, the men at the canal fought a minor engagement. On the same day, Stephen Henry, who was with the rest of the regiment at Deep Bottom on the north bank of James River, fought a small action of his own.⁷⁶

In September, the regiment was reattached to the 1st Brigade, 3rd Division, XVIII Corps. Walter returned to Deep Bottom, and Jacob and Charles seem to have returned as well. Jacob was wounded on the twenty-first in unknown circumstances, and he was

⁷⁵ Dyer, 396, 1727; as quoted in Dobak, 369.

⁷⁶ Dobak, 390-1; *Jacob Boyd*, A.A. II; *Charles Adams*, A.A. II; *Walter Jackson*, A.A.I; Dyer, 1727.

transferred to Lovell hospital in Portsmouth Grove, Rhode Island. Early on the morning of the twenty-ninth, the 22nd U.S.C.T. set out on the march with the rest of the 3rd Division. Butler rode along with the column, and he gave word out that the men were to capture Richmond.⁷⁷

At about 5:30 a.m., the regiment approached a strong enemy position just north of the James known as New Market Heights. The men heard a sharp engagement in their front. “The crash of small arms is terrific,” wrote a soldier present at the attack, “a constant roll with the heavier discharges of artillery breaking in like the bass notes of some mighty organ.” The men of the 22nd were deployed as skirmishers on the left, and after a few hours of waiting, they learned that their comrades had captured the Confederate works. In this Battle of Chaffin’s Farm-New Market Heights, in which the 22nd took no active part, thirty men were awarded the Congressional Medal of Honor including fourteen soldiers in the U.S.C.T. Later in the day, the 22nd delivered a daring and impetuous charge against nearby Fort Harrison, suffering 11 men killed, two officers and two men wounded, and eight missing. Major Cook was among the severely wounded.⁷⁸

For most of October, the regiment remained in the trenches. Jacob was still absent in Rhode Island. On the twenty-first, Major Cook was promoted to lieutenant colonel of the 5th U.S.C.T. On the twenty-fourth, Stephen was absent sick, but he returned to duty

⁷⁷ Dyer, 398, 1727; *Walter Jackson*, A.A. I; *Charles Adams*, A.A. II; *Jacob Boyd*, A.A. II; Trudeau, 285-7.

⁷⁸ As quoted in Trudeau, 289-290, 292; R.J.M. Blackett, ed., *Thomas Morris Chester, Black Civil War Correspondent: His Dispatches from the Virginia Front* (1989; repr., New York: Da Capo Press, n.d.), 150; “Medal of Honor Recipients,” National Park Service, last modified February 26, 2015, accessed June 17, 2019, <https://americancivilwar.com/statepic/va/va075.html>; Dyer, 1727; Bates, 5:991.

by the end of the month. On the twenty-fifth, Lieutenant Colonel Goff was promoted to colonel of the 37th U.S.C.T., and he was replaced by Ira C. Terry, former major of the 5th U.S.C.T. For the men of the 1st Brigade, the night of the twenty-sixth “was a lively one...the early part was spent in singing, with animating effect, the ‘John Brown’ song, ‘Rally Round the Flag,’ the ‘Colored Volunteer,’ and others of similar import. Never was an army in better spirits, or more confident of a victory.”⁷⁹

Early the next morning, the 22nd set out on a march with the corps. Charles remained behind because he fell sick that day. At about 1:00 p.m., the troops were outside Richmond, and the 1st Brigade marched down the Nine Mile Road which led to the city. The 22nd formed line of battle in front, and they had a hand in driving off rebel cavalry. When they were within a mile of the enemy’s earthworks, they were ordered to charge, and the men advanced to within five hundred yards of the works before the enemy opened a galling fire. The men passed through a tangled wood, but when they emerged from the opposite side, their line was deranged. Nevertheless, Kiddoo ordered them to charge. At this point, the troops were about one hundred and fifty yards from the enemy position. The men on the right advanced to within about ten yards of the breastwork. New recruits behaved poorly under the heavy fire, and they began to waver, then gave way in confusion. Kiddoo “fell dangerously wounded” after being struck in the back with a piece of shell. The regiment fell back about three hundred yards before turning to rally. At this point, the enemy line formed an angle across their front, and the

⁷⁹ *Jacob Boyd*, A.A. II; Bates, 5:992; *Stephen Henry*, A.A. I; as quoted in Trudeau, 304.

8th suffered enfilading fire on both flanks. They then retreated out of the field of fire. Their losses were five dead and forty-five wounded.⁸⁰

That night, the regiment marched back to Deep Bottom with the rest of the corps. One soldier in the division described the march: “Rain had fallen during the day and the road was flooded with water; this together with the darkness, rendered it almost impossible to get along. And, as the column wound slowly down the road...one after another, missing their footing would fall full length in the mud, and then call piteously for a comrade to lend a helping hand, but we bore it patiently.”⁸¹

The regiment returned to the trenches. On November 3, Peter Schlick, a captain of the 38th U.S.C.T., was appointed as the regiment’s new major. On the fourth, the regiment fought a small action at Chaffin’s Farm. On the sixth, Charles returned from his sickness. On the fifteenth, Jacob passed away in Lovell hospital. His cause of death is listed as both “died of wounds” and “chronic diarrhea.” As they eased into winter quarters, the men were reorganized into the historic XXV Corps in December, as part of the 1st Brigade, 3rd Division. This corps was composed entirely of colored soldiers, making it the largest colored unit of the war.⁸²

The winter was quite, as rain, snow, and mud ground military operations to a halt. Sickness, particularly pneumonia, was common in the XXV Corps. In January 1865, General Butler was relieved from command. The soldiers were sorry to see him go,

⁸⁰ As quoted in Trudeau, 306-7; *Charles Adams*, A.A. II; Blackett, 177-9.

⁸¹ As quoted in Trudeau, 308.

⁸² Bates, 5:992; Dyer, 1727; *Charles Adams*, A.A. II; *Jacob Boyd*, A.A. II; Dobak, 401.

because he had helped them struggle against racism. He had praised the 22nd on several occasions; correspondent T.M. Chester noted that the regiment was regarded as one of the best in the service. In February, Stephen was absent on furlough, but he returned by the end of the month. By the end of the season, the men had cut down so many trees that they had to venture up to three miles on foot to collect firewood.⁸³

Early in the morning on April 3, the men could hear explosions coming from the direction of Richmond. Columns of fire rose from the city, causing a “steady glare” in the dark sky. The 22nd was ordered forward to capture the Confederate capital, and although they encountered no opposition, they had to navigate their way through mines the Confederates had left behind. The 1st Brigade may have been the first to enter Richmond, although the 22nd was not the first regiment. When they arrived in the Confederate capital, they “marched through the city with banners flying and drums beating.” The white inhabitants kept inside their homes. The blacks were looting and were thrilled to see Union troops. The regiment helped extinguish the flames and was then assigned to garrison the old Confederate positions outside the city.⁸⁴

When President Lincoln was assassinated, Grant ordered Major General Ord, commander of the Army of the James, to send one of the best colored regiments he had to attend the funeral ceremonies. Ord left the decision to Major General Weitzel, commander of the XXV Corps, and he selected the 22nd U.S.C.T.⁸⁵

⁸³ Dobak, 411-3; Redkey, 264-5; Blackett, 261; *Stephen Henry*, A.A. I.

⁸⁴ As quoted in Trudeau, 419-20, 423; Blackett, 303; Bates, 5:992; Dobak, 417.

⁸⁵ Dobak, 421.

The regiment arrived in Washington, D.C. on April 19. Church bells were ringing throughout the city, and cannon were being fired every sixty seconds. The 22nd met the funeral procession at Seventh Street and Pennsylvania Avenue as it was making its way from the White House to the Capitol. The regiment halted, wheeled into column, and became the head of the procession. A reporter wrote that the troops “appeared to be under the very best discipline, and displayed admirable skill in their various exercises.”⁸⁶

Two days later, the 22nd joined the hunt for John Wilkes Booth. From the twenty-third to the twenty-seventh, the regiment scoured parts of southern Maryland often in widely dispersed skirmishing order. After Booth was captured, they headed to Petersburg.⁸⁷

May was an historic month for Company G and the regiment as a whole. On the fifteenth, First Lieutenant Osborn was promoted to captain of Company H, and on the twentieth Second Lieutenant Krzywoszynski was promoted to first lieutenant of Company C. As often happened in the XXV Corps, these officers were not replaced. Captain Eichacker had to lead Company G without any lieutenants for the remainder of its service.⁸⁸

That same month, the 22nd was sent along with the rest of the XXV Corps to Texas. They landed at Brazos Santiago and then marched to Brownsville. It was assigned to duty on the Rio Grande, where the men probably garrisoned frontier forts. Some of the

⁸⁶ As quoted in Dobak, 421.

⁸⁷ Trudeau, 434.

⁸⁸ Bates, 5:1003; Dobak, 411.

troops in the corps were dissatisfied with the poor vegetation and the poisonous insects and reptiles. In July, scurvy spread throughout the corps, and General Weitzel ordered his officers to give their men juice from the prickly pear to cure it. By mid-August, regiments were sending companies of men up to sixty miles from camp to find the fruit, and the disease finally declined in September. In October, the 22nd returned to Philadelphia, where it was mustered out on the sixteenth.⁸⁹

8th U.S.C.T.⁹⁰

Twelve colored men from Monroe County served in the 8th U.S.C.T., and their organization followed standardized procedure. William Smith was drafted and enlisted on July 20, 1863. John Jones, Edward Haines, and Burnese Haines were also drafted and enlisted on September 28. When these four men reported to Camp William Penn, they were organized into Company G under Captain Electus A. Pratt, First Lieutenant Thomas Young, and Second Lieutenant William H. Brooks.⁹¹

Four more colored residents were drafted in November. Moses Washington and Ogden Huff enlisted on the eleventh, and Daniel Washington and Amos Huff enlisted on the sixteenth. Four volunteers also enlisted: George Johnson and Benjamin Ray on November 16, Theodore Carver on the thirtieth, and Robert Smith on December 2. These

⁸⁹ Dobak, 434-7, 441-3; Bates, 5:992.

⁹⁰ Sauer, 48-9. The 8th U.S.C.T.'s regimental flag was probably lost in the Battle of Olustee.

⁹¹ *William Smith*, A.A. II; *John Jones*, A.A. II; *Edward Haines*, A.A. II; *Burnese Haines*, A.A. I; Bates, 5:982.

eight men were organized into Company K under Captain Alex G. Dickey, First Lieutenant Oliver W. Norton, and Second Lieutenant James S. Thompson.⁹²

Colonel Charles W. Fribley, Lieutenant Colonel Nelson B. Bartram, and Major Loren Burritt commanded the regiment, which also had an old white dog named Lion accompanying it as an unofficial mascot. The recruits of the 8th received little training in loading and firing muskets at Camp William Penn. Although Fribley ordered members of the guard going off duty to fire their weapons at targets—with a two-day pass awarded to the best shot—the recruits received no training in firing volleys, which was an essential maneuver in combat.⁹³

On December 3, 1863, Moses Washington was promoted to sergeant, and Daniel Washington and Robert Smith were both promoted to corporal. That same month, Major Burritt took companies A, F, and D to Wilmington and Seaford, Delaware, where they raised more recruits and were handsomely received by the citizens. On December 20, Daniel Washington was reduced back to the rank of private for being absent without leave. On January 11, 1864, Moses Washington was also reduced to the rank of private, and Theodore Carver was promoted to corporal.⁹⁴

The 8th departed Philadelphia on January 16 and made its way to New York City. Arriving there, Lieutenant Colonel Bartram was promoted to command of the 20th

⁹² *Moses Washington*, A.A. II; *Ogden Huff*, A.A. I; *Daniel Washington*, A.A. II; *Amos Huff*, A.A. I; *George Johnson*, A.A. II; *Benjamin Ray*, A.A. I; *Theodore Carver*, A.A. II; *Robert Smith*, A.A. I; Bates, 5:988.

⁹³ Bates, 5:965, 988; Trudeau, 141; Dobak, 66.

⁹⁴ *Moses Washington*, A.A. II; *Daniel Washington*, A.A. II; *Robert Smith*, A.A. I; Bates, 5:965; *Theodore Carver*, A.A. II.

U.S.C.T., which was being organized in the city. The regiment soon embarked on two transports, the *Prometheus* and the *City of Bath*, and headed to join the siege operations against Charleston, South Carolina. Its activities were observed by a contributor to the *Anglo-African*:

The 8th Regiment...marched through Broadway to the foot of Canal Street, where transports lay waiting to convey them to Hilton Head, their place of destination. A full brass band...together with a complete fife and drum corps, created in all the wildest enthusiasm, and occasioned many pious feet to stray from the sanctuary, whilst they kept step to the inspiring Yankee Doodle.

...The men appeared keenly alive to the importance of the hour.

...I availed myself of the invitation extended by Sergeants Chas. Jackson and John C. Chambers, to visit their men Monday morning. This visit afforded an opportunity of observing the material commanding.

Col. Fribley, a small wiry man, is a gentleman of culture and has the undivided attachment of his men...The [white] officers seemed proud of the men, as they justly might be, for a nobler band of patriots never carried a gun.

...The regiment, which numbered about 800, was conveyed in two transports, and as they left the dock they rent the air with cheer after cheer to each other and their numerous friends upon the dock. The drums beat, fifes screamed, and lastly the boys broke out amidst waving of hats and handkerchiefs,

“We’re off for Charleston early in the morning.”⁹⁵

The *City of Bath* reached Hilton Head Island, South Carolina without a major mishap, but the *Prometheus* suffered adverse weather and put in at Fortress Monroe, Virginia, before resuming its cruise. Once reunited in South Carolina, the regiment was attached to Howell’s Brigade, District of Hilton Head, S.C., Department of the South. The soldiers from Monroe County may have sought contact with their neighbors in the 3rd U.S.C.T., who were serving on the same island and who had recently finished their operations on Morris Island. On February 4, General Gillmore, who was in command of the department, reviewed Howell’s and several other brigades. He warmly praised the 8th

⁹⁵ Bates, 5:965, 968; Dyer, 1727; as quoted in Trudeau, 126-7.

U.S.C.T. for its good soldierly appearance. A soldier in the 54th Massachusetts wrote, “Some say that the 54th has a rival... The 8th U.S. regiment is indeed a splendid organization, and I may add that no regiment in the department can boast of a more healthy-looking, martial-bearing body of men...”⁹⁶

The 8th embarked once again on February 5, this time headed to Florida to partake in the same operations as the 3rd U.S.C.T. That is, it was to disrupt the flow of Confederate supplies from Florida to Charleston, and it was to help create a Unionist government in the state.⁹⁷

The regiment arrived at Jacksonville on the seventh, and the next day it took part in the easy capture of Camp Finnegan. On the ninth, three companies conducted a raid and captured some supplies and one prisoner. For a short time thereafter, the 8th was detailed to repairing and guarding railroad bridges and garrisoning several small towns around Jacksonville. On the fifteenth, it was encamped at Baldwin along with the 3rd U.S.C.T. While stationed here, the regiment reported to Colonel Tilghman of the 3rd. On the nineteenth, the regiment marched to Barber’s plantation. Despite their active duties, the men still had little training in loading and firing muskets, although Fribley repeatedly sought to devote more time to this essential drill. On the same day it marched to Barber’s, the regiment was reorganized into Hawley’s Brigade, Seymour’s Division, District of Florida, Department of the South.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Bates, V, 965-6; as quoted in Trudeau, 127; Dyer, 1725.

⁹⁷ Bates, 5:965; Dobak, 61-2.

⁹⁸ Bates, 5:965; Dyer, 1725; Trudeau, 132-3; Dobak, 66; Redkey, 40; Nulty, 142-3.

As part of Brigadier General Truman Seymour's division, the 8th took part in a bold new venture. That general decided to march his force to the Suwanee River, which was two-thirds of the way to the port of St. Mark's on the Gulf Coast. His route of march was along the Florida Atlantic and Gulf Central Railroad, which provided the easiest passage for his troops.⁹⁹

Accordingly, before 7:00 a.m. on February 20, the 8th departed with the rest of the division from Barber's on a westward march. Mounted troops led the vanguard while Hawley's brigade led the three brigades of infantry. The soldiers were able to enjoy a clear sky and cool air, and springs and rivulets ran alongside the road. They marched past pine woods, marsh lands, and every five to ten miles past some small farms with deserted huts.¹⁰⁰

When they reached the town of Sanderson, the infantry was halted for a rest. Shortly after noon, they heard some musket fire to the front. The pace of the firing grew quicker, artillery fire was heard, and the sounds of combat drifted even farther to the west, indicating a Confederate retreat.¹⁰¹

The 8th awaited developments until shortly after 3:00 p.m., when it was ordered towards the sound of firing. As it marched, the firing increased in volume. The boom of a cannon startled the men a little, and soon more artillery could be heard. The men sped up to the double quick. They turned to the right into the woods and ran towards the sound of

⁹⁹ Dobak, 65.

¹⁰⁰ Trudeau, 137-8.

¹⁰¹ Trudeau, 139-40.

fire for about half a mile until they came upon Union artillery in an open field. They were immediately greeted with enemy fire from four regiments, two companies, and a section of artillery. They still had their knapsacks on. About half of them had unloaded muskets. The sergeants still wore their sashes, making them easy targets. Colonel Fribley tried deploying the men in line under a withering fire. The regiment on their right, the 7th New Hampshire, fell back in confusion, leaving the 8th the enemy's sole target.¹⁰²

The men's inexperience in loading and firing muskets was telling. They were decimated as they formed in line and tried to shoot. Fribley could endure the slaughter no longer, so he ordered the men to fall back, but he himself soon fell mortally wounded. "As the men fell back they gathered in groups like frightened sheep," First Lieutenant Norton of Company K later wrote, "and it was almost impossible to keep them from doing so. Into these groups the rebels poured the deadliest fire, almost every bullet hitting some one. Color bearer after color bearer was shot down and the colors seized by another." Regimental Surgeon Alex P. Heichold wrote, "It was fearful to see horses without riders and riders without horses, shells bursting, trees crashing, batteries playing, musketry firing, regiments marching and counter-marching in such a small space."¹⁰³

Some of the officers ordered the men to rally around a battery. As some obeyed, a stray horse careened through the formation, and the enemy fire became so destructive that these men gave way.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰² Trudeau, 140-2; Bates, 5:966; Nulty, 145; Redkey, 41; Dobak, 69-70.

¹⁰³ As quoted in Trudeau, 142-3.

¹⁰⁴ Nulty, 143; Trudeau, 143.

Without Fribley in command, each of the officers did his best to rally the men, but they had no general plan. An artillerist saw

many wounded colored soldiers appearing suddenly in front and on my left, without muskets, and it appeared as if they had been lying down and taken the first opportunity to get to the rear. Some of the infantry, while facing the enemy and firing wildly, did not show fear, nor did I see any of them absolutely run off, but groups of them huddled together and did nothing, and many were in this position shot, while they seemed unconscious that they were hit.¹⁰⁵

Major Burritt received two wounds and left the field, so command devolved to Captain Romanzo C. Bailey. He observed a Confederate force marching against his left flank, and he knew his men were out of ammunition, so he withdrew the 8th from the field about ninety minutes after they arrived.¹⁰⁶

Surgeon Heichold worked to make sure that as many wounded soldiers as possible were loaded onto ambulances and sent to the rear. He suspected what might happen to them if they fell into enemy hands, and he was right. After the battle, the Confederates executed many of the wounded colored soldiers.¹⁰⁷

The 8th was able to regroup in the rear, and it protected the baggage train as the column retreated to Berber's, which they reached a little after midnight. After a few hours' rest, they resumed their march and arrived at the small town of Baldwin after sunrise. The road to this town was "strewn with guns, knapsacks and blankets."¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ As quoted in Trudeau, 143-4.

¹⁰⁶ Bates, 5:968; Trudeau, 144.

¹⁰⁷ Trudeau, 150-1; Redkey, 42.

¹⁰⁸ As quoted in Nulty, 176-8; Bates, 5:966-7.

The 8th helped destroy the military supplies at Baldwin, one soldier writing, “I think the comrades of our regiment will remember what a dense, black smoke-cloud the resin and cotton made, so black, even, that we could not see the sun, although the day was fine and clear.” By the end of the twenty-second, the 8th U.S.C.T. and the rest of Seymour’s division was either in Jacksonville or in its vicinity, and the troops immediately began erecting defensive works.¹⁰⁹

The disastrous action that had been fought was later dubbed the Battle of Olustee, and it must have been long remembered in Monroe County. General Seymour had advanced westward along the railroad until he met enemy resistance at Olustee Station, where the Confederates were already entrenched with about 5,300 men to take on his 5,500. The rebels were anticipating a possible attack, and had dug trenches the previous day.¹¹⁰

Hawley’s brigade of three regiments was the first to engage the greycoats. The 7th Connecticut Infantry was in front deployed as skirmishers, but they ran low on ammunition and had to fall back. The 7th New Hampshire Infantry and the 8th U.S.C.T. then arrived on the field, but they failed to gain any advantage. Colonel Joseph R. Hawley, the brigade commander, tried deploying the 7th New Hampshire in line, but he gave the wrong order. As the troops were forming in the wrong position, he gave another order, and this caused the regiment to lose its organization. It fell back under intense fire, leaving the 8th U.S.C.T. to fight by itself. In this vulnerable position, and with little to no

¹⁰⁹ Bates, 5:967; as quoted in Nulty, 178-9, 181-2.

¹¹⁰ Dobak, 65; Trudeau, 152.

training in firing volleys, the 8th fell easy prey to the enemy. The fighting continued after the 8th retired from the field, but the Union force was eventually compelled to retreat.¹¹¹

With the Battle of Olustee over, nine of the twelve soldiers from Monroe County were counted as casualties. In Company G, Edward Haines was wounded by rifle fire in his right shoulder and in the right side of his back, and he was transferred to a hospital in Beaufort, South Carolina. Burnese Haines was wounded by a shell fragment in his right forearm, by an unknown object in his right shoulder, and he lost sight in his left eye. He was sent to the hospital at Beaufort, where his right forearm was amputated. On June 21 he was discharged from the service. In Company K, Amos Huff was hit in the hip by an unknown object, and he died on the field. Benjamin Ray absented himself without leave, and he was still missing. George Johnson was missing and believed dead, but he had been taken prisoner. Ogden Huff received an unspecified wound and was sent to the hospital at Beaufort. Moses Washington was wounded but returned to duty by the end of the month. Daniel Washington was wounded; a tree limb was blown off its trunk and struck him in the back, and he received a second wound in his right knee. He was sent to the general hospital at Hilton Head, South Carolina. Theodore Carver was shot in the left thigh, close to the groin, and the bullet penetrated four inches. He too was sent to Hilton Head. The only Monroe County soldiers to emerge unscathed from the battle were William Smith and John Jones in Company G and Robert Smith in Company K.¹¹²

¹¹¹ Dobak, 65-8.

¹¹² *Edward Haines*, A.A. II; *Burnese Haines*, A.A. I; *Amos Huff*, A.A. I; *Benjamin Ray*, A.A. I; *George Johnson*, A.A. II; *Ogden Huff*, A.A. I; *Moses Washington*, A.A. II; *Daniel Washington*, A.A. II; *Theodore Carver*, A.A. II; *William Smith*, A.A. II; *John Jones*, A.A. II; *Robert Smith*, A.A. I.

The 8th as a whole lost 310 of the 575 men in its ranks that day, or 54 percent. Lion was slightly wounded in the foreleg. Colonel Fribley was killed, Major Burritt was wounded, and for the time being the regiment was commanded by Captain Bailey. Captain Pratt of Company G was wounded. Nearly all the first sergeants were killed or wounded. The color company opened the battle with 48 enlisted men and lost in killed and wounded all but 6. The entire Union force present in the battle consisted of about 5,500 men, and almost a third of them—1,900—were casualties.¹¹³

In Jacksonville, the 8th performed picket and fatigue duties. The men cherished their regimental band, which already knew twenty pieces of music.¹¹⁴ Lion was as active as ever, despite his wound. Sergeant Major Rufus Jones wrote of him, “Lion’ ...is a soldier, and has no respect for citizens who may visit the camp and does not hesitate to bite. He attends ‘Dress Parade,’ has musical taste, and shows that he has not been brought up a savage.” Benjamin Ray returned to camp on March 31 and showed signs of being sick, which might explain his absence without leave. On April 8, he accidentally shot himself in the arm while on picket duty, and he was sent to the General Hospital in Jacksonville. That same month, the regiment was detached from Hawley’s Brigade and was assigned simply to the District of Florida, Department of the South.¹¹⁵

¹¹³ Trudeau, 152; Bates, 5:966, 968, 982; Redkey, 41.

¹¹⁴ Blackett, 121n49. The band leader was Captain Joseph Anderson, the leader of Frank Johnson’s band, which was considered one of the best in Philadelphia. Johnson performed concerts in London, and a number of his shows in Philadelphia were sponsored by the Philadelphia Museum. When he died one of his band members, Joseph Anderson, took over. Anderson was hired to train brass bands for colored regiments at Camp William Penn.

¹¹⁵ Redkey, 42, 51-52; *Benjamin Ray*, A.A. I; Dyer, 1725.

On April 17, the 8th was ordered to St. John's Bluff, where it built fortifications and guarded the streams in order to prevent the enemy from planting mines. At some point in May, Edward Haines returned to active duty, and on the twenty-sixth of that month, Theodore Carver returned to duty as well. On June 30, Daniel Washington returned to camp. Major Burritt was promoted to lieutenant colonel in June, but since he was still wounded and unable to serve at his post, Major Meyer of the 7th U.S.C.T. was placed in temporary command of the regiment. He led it on numerous raids into the interior, capturing enemy ammunition and tearing up railroad tracks. Benjamin Ray had his right forearm amputated in the hospital, and he was discharged from the service on July 12.¹¹⁶

By early August, in the midst of a Florida summer, the 8th was ordered to embark for Virginia. It received its orders on the fourth and arrived at its new theater of operations on the twelfth. It was attached to the 1st Brigade, 3rd Division, X Corps, Army of the James, which was commanded by Benjamin Butler. Butler was then assisting General Grant in the siege against Petersburg and Richmond. Ogden Huff accompanied the regiment on its journey, but he was sent to the General Hospital at Fortress Monroe, Virginia.¹¹⁷

The 8th was ordered to Deep Bottom, on the north bank of James River, and when it was being brought into position the enemy opened fire, wounding eight or ten men. Five days of skirmishing ensued. On August 13, Theodore Carver was sent to the rear for

¹¹⁶ Bates, 5:967-8; Dyer, 1725; *Benjamin Ray*, A.A. I.

¹¹⁷ Bates, 5:967; Dyer, 1725; *Ogden Huff*, A.A. I.

sickness and agitation of his thigh wound. Three days later, Moses Washington was severely wounded. He took a bullet in his left wrist and was sent to Fortress Monroe. One soldier in the 1st Brigade wrote of the seventeenth, “Every few minutes, a bullet comes whistling over our heads.” Over the course of these five days, the brigade suffered 136 casualties, but according to the unit’s commander, Brigadier General William Birney, the men “behaved handsomely and are in fine spirits.”¹¹⁸

The 8th crossed to the south of James River on the twenty-fifth, and it went into position in front of Petersburg where it was kept on active duty in the trenches. On the twenty-sixth, Daniel Washington fell sick. He was sent to Point of Rocks, Virginia, then he was transferred to the hospital at Portsmouth Grove, Rhode Island.¹¹⁹

September was filled with amusement and sorrow for the soldiers from Monroe County. The amusement came from the regiment’s band, which by the fifth day of the month had learned forty pieces of music and had established a fine reputation outside of the regiment. The sorrow came from the death of Edward Haines, who died on the seventh from remittent fever. On the nineteenth, Robert Smith was reduced to the rank of private for gross neglect of duty. On September 9, Lieutenant Colonel Burritt assumed command, Major Meyer returned to his post with the 7th U.S.C.T, and George E. Wagner was promoted to major. After a few weeks, however, Burritt’s wound reopened and command lapsed to Major Wagner.¹²⁰

¹¹⁸ Dyer, 1725; *Theodore Carver*, A.A. II; *Moses Washington*, A.A. II; as quoted in Dobak, 370.

¹¹⁹ Bates, 5:967; Dyer, 1725; *Daniel Washington*, A.A. II.

¹²⁰ Blackett, 122; *Edward Haines*, A.A. II; Bates, 5:967.

At the end of September, the 1st Brigade embarked on a new operation. It crossed to the north side of James River via the pontoon bridge at Deep Bottom on the night of September 28-29. Around 4:00 A.M., General Butler rode along the line that also included the 22nd U.S.C.T. He let it be known that he was leading them against a Confederate position, and they were to take it at all hazards. He told them that when they were over the parapet they should cry out, "Remember Fort Pillow!"¹²¹

It was not long after Butler's ride that the 8th halted. Around 5:30 a.m., a terrible battle broke out in its front. After a few hours, the fighting died away, and the Union force was victorious. The Battle of Chaffin's Farm-New Market Heights had been fought and won while the 8th waited in reserve.¹²²

After the morning's battle, the 8th and two other regiments marched to the northwest. Tramping for three miles, they emerged from a wood, and a strong Confederate fort was visible about five hundred yards ahead. The five-sided earthwork, guarded by a ten-foot moat, sheltered two cannon and a small rebel force who would be steadily reinforced throughout any action. At about 2:00 p.m., the 9th U.S.C.T. went forward and soon suffered from artillery fire on both flanks. It halted, then advanced again. The grape and canister fire was overwhelming, however, and the 9th retreated.¹²³

It was now the 8th's turn. Major Wagner sent four companies forward to capture a redoubt. After getting to within one hundred yards of the redoubt the men were halted,

¹²¹ Bates, 5:967; as quoted in Trudeau, 284-5.

¹²² Trudeau, 289.

¹²³ Trudeau, 295-7.

and another four companies came up as reinforcements. Wagner estimated that the “enemy had at least ten men behind the works to my one.” The eight companies were ordered to hold their position and to keep firing in order to pin the Confederates down. This they did for several hours. Then a Confederate force emerged on their left, moving to take them in flank. Wagner ordered a counter-attack and drove this force back. The eight companies stayed on the field until night when they were relieved, and the 8th returned to New Market Heights. Its casualties in this attack on Fort Gilmer were twelve killed and sixty-one wounded. These losses were sorely felt, because by this time the regiment was reduced to about 300 men. The next day, the Confederates attacked New Market Heights, and the 8th hurried to the threatened point and helped drive them back while suffering some casualties.¹²⁴

After this expedition, the 8th spent about two weeks in the trenches. In October it was attached to the 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division, X Corps.¹²⁵ Although it was now reduced to about one hundred and fifty men, the 8th embarked on an operation along the Darbytown Road towards Richmond on October 13. The troops were marching in line as skirmishers when they encountered the enemy in similar formation. They drove back the rebels, who managed to rally and continue fighting. Again the 8th attacked and pushed the rebels back further. A third assault drove them back to their main line. Later in the day, the 8th was relieved by fresh troops. It lost seven killed, thirty wounded, and one missing. The

¹²⁴ As quoted in Trudeau, 297-300; Bates, 5:967-8; *O.R.*, ser. 1, vol. 42, part 1, 781. Eight companies of the 8th U.S.C.T. contained less than 250 men between them.

¹²⁵ Dyer, 396, 926. From October 8-29 and from November 6-December 3, 1864, the 2nd Brigade was commanded by Colonel Ulysses Doubleday, who previously served as lieutenant colonel of the 3rd U.S.C.T.

soldiers from Monroe County were particularly affected by the loss of their captains. Captain Pratt of Company G was severely wounded and lost an arm, while Captain Dickey of Company K was mortally wounded. These two long-serving captains had led their companies since Camp William Penn.¹²⁶

Following this operation, the regiment had another short stint in the trenches. On October 21, the Monroe Country troops experienced an exchange of officers. First Lieutenant Young of Company G was promoted to captain of Company K. Second Lieutenant Thompson of Company K was then promoted to first lieutenant of Company G. Andrew Dimick was then promoted to second lieutenant of Company K. Second Lieutenant Brooks of Company G was promoted to first lieutenant of Company C, and he was replaced by J. Francis Jennes. On October 27, the regiment advanced with its new organization towards Richmond as part of a large column. It advanced on the south side of the Darbytown Road along with the rest of the 2ⁿ Brigade, and for two days the Northern force skirmished with the enemy, although the 8th was spared the toughest of the fighting.¹²⁷

In early November, the 8th U.S.C.T. received a much-needed stimulus. Since Burritt was still absent due to his wounds, Lieutenant Colonel Samuel C. Armstrong of the 9th U.S.C.T. was transferred to the 8th, placed in command, and promoted to Colonel. This was the first time the regiment had a colonel at its head since Fribley was killed at Olustee. Burritt, although still wounded, retained his commission as lieutenant colonel.

¹²⁶ Bates, 5:968; Dyer, 1725.

¹²⁷ Bates, 5:982, 988; Trudeau, 304-5; Dyer, 1725.

Major Wagner was promoted to lieutenant colonel of the 9th U.S.C.T., and he was replaced by Abijah S. Pell. Moreover, the regiment received recruits from Camp William Penn who largely increased its strength. In December, the regiment was attached to the 2nd Brigade, 2nd Division, XXV Corps.¹²⁸ This was the first and only corps composed entirely of colored troops, making it the largest colored military unit of the war; the 22nd U.S.C.T. was also a part of it. While these changes were taking place, John Jones was detached for service on the provost guard at division headquarters in November, and he returned to his company in the following month.¹²⁹

The winter was relatively quiet for the troops, because rain, snow, and mud ground military operations to a halt. Sickness, particularly pneumonia, was common in the XXV Corps. In December, Daniel Washington returned to Virginia from Rhode Island, and he was assigned to detached duty with the ammunition trains. On January 19, 1865, Captain Pratt of company G was discharged because of his wounds, and First Lieutenant Thompson was promoted to his place a month later. The commission for first lieutenant in Company G was left vacant, which reflected a tendency in the XXV Corps to leave regiments without sufficient officers. The original members of the 8th U.S.C.T. might have reflected how different February 1865 was compared to the warm, bloody February a year earlier. “The roads are bad,” a soldier wrote in mid-March, “the mud deep, and a great deal of water in the woods and fields, render[s] travel of any kind almost impossible.” As in the 22nd U.S.C.T., soldiers of the 8th had to venture up to three

¹²⁸ Dyer, 404. From December 3, 1864 to May 1865, the 8th U.S.C.T. continued under Brevet Brigadier General Ulysses Doubleday, who commanded the 2nd Brigade.

¹²⁹ Bates, 5:968-9; Dyer, 1725; *John Jones*, A.A. II.

miles on foot to collect firewood. The last month of winter was a relatively busy one for the organization. On March 13, Colonel Armstrong was promoted to brevet brigadier general. Six days later, Second Lieutenant Dimick of Company K resigned, and he was not replaced. In March or April, Ogden Huff returned to duty from Fortress Monroe.¹³⁰

On the night of March 27, the 2nd division left camp and crossed the bridges to the south side of James River. One soldier described the experience, “We marched all night. The next day we marched & broke camp as many as three times in the rain and laid down with no shelter, or fire, through a cold, rainy night.” On the morning of the twenty-ninth, they went into camp near a stream called Hatcher’s Run, southwest of Petersburg. For the next two days, they exchanged rifle and artillery fire with the enemy. On the thirty-first, the firing intensified until almost one hundred and fifty Union cannon were bombarding the Confederate lines. One soldier wrote, “The Earth shook & trembled like a frightened brute. Our batteries were in a semicircular range of hills and were pouring in a continual shower of shell into the rebel works.” On April 1, Second Lieutenant Jennes of company G was promoted to first lieutenant of company B, and he was not replaced; this left Company G without either a first or a second lieutenant under Captain Thompson. The next day, the 8th advanced and occupied abandoned enemy lines south of Petersburg.¹³¹

Around 2:20 a.m. on April 3, a loud explosion could be heard from the city. In the darkness, large fires could be seen. The 8th marched towards the flames, and at about sunrise it and the 7th U.S.C.T. were among the first troops to enter Petersburg. Only a few

¹³⁰ As quoted in Dobak, 411, 411n76, 412-3; *Daniel Washington*, A.A. II; Bates, 5:968, 982, 988; *Ogden Huff*, A.A. I.

¹³¹ Dyer, 1725; as quoted in Dobak, 414-5; United States, *O.R.*, ser. 1, vol. 46., pt. 1, sec. 2, 1236; Bates, 5:982.

Michigan soldiers preceded them. General Armstrong wrote that his men received a “most cheering and hearty welcome from the colored inhabitants...” Before the clock struck noon, the regiment was marching west in pursuit of Lee’s army, which had abandoned the city.¹³²

This march continued for the rest of the day, then the regiment halted to guard a stretch of the South Side Railroad. On the fifth they resumed the march, and two days later they reached Farmville, Virginia. On the eighth, the regiment marched upwards of thirty miles. Brevet Brigadier General Ulysses Doubleday wrote of the operations on the ninth,

Moving before daylight of the 9th, a position was taken on the Lynchburg road, near Appomattox Court-House, up which the command moved at 7 a.m., at which time the artillery and cavalry skirmishers were warmly engaged. These last, with their supports, were speedily driven in and pressed in a panic-stricken mob along my line, through which they vainly tried to break. The rebel infantry followed them so closely that Major-General Sheridan ordered me to stop them. Forming the Eighth and Forty-First U.S. Colored Troops in line, I advanced against the rebel line, which no sooner perceived us than it fell back in disorder, closely followed by my skirmishers, who drove it for half a mile. Soon after I rejoined General Foster’s division, which we found advancing on the enemy’s right, but negotiations for the surrender of the rebel forces having begun, no more fighting occurred.¹³³

General Lee surrendered that day. A Union soldier described the celebration on his part of the line, “The Batteries began to fire blank cartridges, while the Infantry fired their muskets in the air. The men threw their knapsacks and canteens into the air and howled like mad.” A chaplain in the 8th U.S.C.T.’s division wrote, “Our brigade

¹³² Dobak, 415; Bates, 5:968; as quoted in Trudeau, 428; Blackett, 313; United States, *O.R.*, ser. 1., vol. 46, pt. 1, 1236.

¹³³ Trudeau, 428-30; United States, *O.R.*, ser. 1, vol. 46, pt. 1, 1236.

celebrated the event by firing volleys of musketry in the air.” Since two witnesses on separate parts of the line observed the same form of celebration, it is possible the soldiers from Monroe County celebrated in the same manner.¹³⁴

This end to the war in Virginia accompanied a new beginning for African-Americans. During and after the march to Appomattox, William P. Woodlin, a musician in the 8th U.S.C.T., raised \$241 from the men for Wilberforce College in Ohio, the first college to be run by African-Americans.¹³⁵

Leaving Appomattox on the eleventh, the men marched back to Petersburg. On the fourteenth, Captain Young of Company K was promoted to major of the 127th U.S.C.T, and he was succeeded by William H. Brooks, formerly the second lieutenant of Company G and the first lieutenant of Company C, who was formally promoted to captain on May 29. The 8th encamped near Petersburg on the seventeenth and was transferred to the 1st Brigade, 2nd Division, XXV Corps. They spent the rest of the month and most of May in Petersburg.¹³⁶

Moses Washington, long absent at the hospital at Fortress Monroe, was discharged due to his wound on May 16. George Johnson, who was left for dead at Olustee, returned to his company in May or June. He had been captured as a prisoner of war and was confined in Andersonville Prison for almost a year. This prisoner of war camp was built to hold 10,000 captives, but it usually contained two to three times that

¹³⁴ Robert Hunt Rhodes, ed., *All for the Union: The Civil War Diary and Letters of Elisha Hunt Rhodes* (New York: Vintage Civil War Library Vintage Books, 1992), 222; as quoted in Trudeau, 432.

¹³⁵ Redkey, 222-3.

¹³⁶ Bates, 5:968, 982, 988; Dyer, 1725; United States, *O.R.*, ser. 1, vol. 46, pt. 1, sec. 2, 1236.

amount. Prisoners suffered from inadequate housing, food, and medical care, and about 29 percent of them died from disease, poor sanitation, malnutrition, overcrowding, or exposure. On February 2, 1865, George was sent to Columbia, South Carolina and then to N.R. Ferry, North Carolina, where he was paroled on March 4. He reported ten days later at Camp Parole in Annapolis, Maryland, whence he was granted a furlough from March 18 to April 18. He then visited the Rendezvous of Distribution and Auger General Hospital in Alexandria, Virginia on May 3 before returning to his company. On May 24, the 8th embarked at City Point, Virginia, and set sail for Texas. Theodore Carver was left behind in the hospital where he was still being treated for his wound.¹³⁷

Arriving in the Lone Star State, the 8th was deployed on the Rio Grande at Ringgold Barracks. Besides routine camp duty, it undertook several expeditions to break up Indian raids. The men also warmed up to the Mexican troops on the south side of the river, and the soldiers of both armies fraternized with each other. Food supplies were inadequate for the troops, so scurvy abounded and the men took to eating the native prickly pear. An example of the men's experiences may be gathered from First Lieutenant Norton's observation of them eating from "a sort of cactus that grows all over this country. It looks like a set of green dinner plates, the edge of one grown fast to the next...The pears grow round the edge of the plates, about the size and shape of pears, covered with thorns and of a beautiful purple color when ripe, and full of seeds like a fig. Most of the men devoured them greedily, but I did not fancy their insipid taste." The men

¹³⁷ *Moses Washington*, A.A. II; United States, *O.R.*, ser. 1, vol. 46, pt. 1, sec. 2, 1236; Bates, 5:982, 988; *George Johnson*, A.A. II; "History of the Andersonville Prison," National Park Service, last modified April 14, 2015, accessed June 17, 2019, https://www.nps.gov/ande/learn/historyculture/camp_sumter_history.htm; Dyer, 1725; *Theodore Carver*, A.A. II.

also subsisted on agave juice, which was believed to help cure the scurvy. Ogden Huff was detached for service at Post Hospital on Brazos Santiago Island, Texas on June 24, and he returned to his company in July or August. On August 30, First Lieutenant Norton of Company K was promoted to quartermaster, and he was not replaced. The next day, Daniel Washington returned to company K from duty with the ammunition trains.¹³⁸

On October 10, the troops finally began their trek home. Theodore Carver, who was still in a northern hospital, was discharged due to disability on October 12¹³⁹. The rest of the regiment was mustered out in Brownsville, Texas on November 10. It arrived in Philadelphia on December 3, and the men were discharged on the twelfth. According to the official army register, the 8th U.S.C.T. lost in battle more officers and men than any other colored regiment.¹⁴⁰

Conclusion

After the war ended, the records of the soldiers from Monroe County were left to posterity. A close examination reveals that they served loyally and bravely despite the bigotry they faced. Their enlistment rate was at least 72 percent and perhaps 100 percent of the colored men in the county of military age. All the regiments fought in combat except the 25th U.S.C.T., and only one soldier absented himself from battle without leave. Many of the men were wounded, and some gave their lives. A comparison of their

¹³⁸ Bates, 5:968, 988; as quoted in Dobak, 440-3.

¹³⁹ *Theodore Carver*, A.A. II. His discharge date is alternately given as August 12, 1865.

¹⁴⁰ Bates, 5:968; Dyer, 1725. Bates writes that the regiment was mustered out on December 12. However, Dyer and the muster rolls agree that it was mustered out on November 10. Dyer writes the regiment was discharged on December 12.

records with the detailed history of discrimination in the U.S.C.T. shows that these soldiers served loyally and bravely despite the prejudices they faced.

EPILOGUE

LEGACY AND MEMORY

All told, African-Americans made a major military contribution to the war. Shortly after Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomattox, Major Martin Delany told a black crowd, "Do you know that if it was not for the black men this war never would have been brought to a close with success to the Union, and the liberty of your race if it had not been for the Negro?" At the time, Delany may have appeared to be exaggerating, but hindsight permits an analysis that supports his conclusion.¹

Throughout the war, the Confederacy depended heavily on its slave labor force. With its white men serving in the army, the slaves had to undertake more of the labor for sustaining the war machine. Slaves farmed the soil and tended stock, producing foodstuffs for the army and civilians. They cultivated cotton, which was traded with foreign countries for weapons. They maintained railroads, mined essential minerals, manufactured war materials, and performed other tasks for supporting the war. They also

¹ As quoted in Joseph T. Glatthaar, "Black Glory: The African-American Role in Union Victory," in *Why the Confederacy Lost*, ed. Gabor S. Boritt (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992), 162.

labored on military fortifications, which freed Confederate soldiers for service in the field.²

After Butler initiated the contraband policy in the North, thousands of these slaves flocked into Union lines. The estimated number of slaves who thus made their escape is between 500,000 and 700,000, or 15 to 20 percent of the Southern slave population. The Confederacy suffered from this reduction of its labor force, especially when the Union blockade reduced their ability to import war materials. White women partially offset the loss, but they were not enough. As the war progressed, this declining labor supply combined with an increased demand for war materials and the mass production of Confederate script to help drive up inflation. By 1865, prices of goods in the Confederate states were ninety-two times their prewar level. Simply put, the Confederacy could not afford the loss of so many slaves.³

The South's loss was the North's gain. Beginning in 1862, the Union army employed contraband as teamsters, cooks, stevedores, and laborers, freeing up thousands of white soldiers for service in the field.⁴

Once blacks were permitted to enroll in the Union army as soldiers, their numbers became even more telling. About 12 percent of General Grant's army around Petersburg, Virginia were colored soldiers, and they fought in several of the major battles of the campaign. In the Battle of Nashville in 1864, two colored brigades contributed

² Glatthaar, "Black Glory," 140.

³ Glatthaar, "Black Glory," 142-43.

⁴ Glatthaar, "Black Glory," 146.

significantly to the Union victory. In the final year of the war, there were so many colored soldiers that they could have been organized into a separate army of about 120,000 men. This was all the more important, because white enlistment was waning.⁵

Finally, the enlistment of black soldiers cemented the death of slavery and gave blacks the social recognition they needed for U.S. citizenship. As Georgia Governor Joseph E. Brown phrased it, “Whenever we establish the fact that [blacks] are a military race, we destroy our whole theory that they are unfit to be free.” In a similar vein, Frederick Douglass predicted, “Once let the black man get upon his person the brass letters, U.S., let him get an eagle on his button, and a musket on his shoulder and bullets in his pocket, and there is no power on earth which can deny that he has earned the right to citizenship in the United States.” Whites in the army felt the same way. After a battle in front of Petersburg, one U.S.C.T. officer opined, “A few more fights like that, and our [colored] boys will have established their manhood if not their Brotherhood to the satisfaction of even the most prejudiced.”⁶

Thus black soldiers contributed to the Civil War in three ways. They sapped the Confederacy of its labor force, they greatly strengthened the Union army, and they helped uprooted the cause of the war—slavery—by proving themselves worthy of freedom and citizenship in the eyes of a bigoted society. Perhaps Major Delany was right when he said the war could not have been won without them.

⁵ Glatthaar, “Black Glory,” 158-9.

⁶ As quoted in Glatthaar, “Black Glory,” 139-40, 147, 157.

Despite these contributions, the historiography of the U.S.C.T. was lacking until recent years. Cornish's *The Sable Arm* was not published until 1956, and many other books on the subject were not published until the 1990s or later. Likewise, the memory of the U.S.C.T. soldiers from Monroe County has been stifled until recent years.

While the Monroe County Historical Association's website includes an article on the U.S.C.T. soldiers from Monroe County, its audience is limited mainly to those who actively seek out such information. The only public memorial that commemorates these men, and that is accessible to the public at large, is a commemorative plaque that stands outside the Little Bethel A.M.E. Church in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, right across the street from Helen Amhurst Park. The plaque reads, in part, "In 1868 the 'Little Bethel' AME Church was built as a permanent place of worship for free yet segregated Native and Black Americans. Here they worshipped 'Almighty God.' The diverse congregation included Monroe County's Veterans of the United States 'Colored Troops' (USCT) of the Civil War," and it also lists the names and units of some of these men. It is clear from this inscription that these soldiers' public reputation is strongly defined by their religious affiliations.⁷

As will be shown, this commemorative plaque was placed in its location because of the unique relationship between the A.M.E. Church and the U.S.C.T. veterans from Monroe County. The plaque's history reaches back to 1794, when Richard Allen established the A.M.E. Church for African-Americans. The veterans from Monroe County came home after the Civil War, and they built Little Bethel A.M.E. Church in

⁷ Amy Leiser, "Local African-Americans Fought in Deadly Civil War Battle" (cited hereafter *Leiser*), Monroe County Historical Association, created February 2, 2012, accessed June 23, 2019, http://www.monroehistorical.org/articles_files/2012_02_usct.html.

order to base their spiritual lives around Richard Allen’s teachings. At the turn of the twenty-first century, Shari Chambers, a descendent of the U.S.C.T. veterans, led the effort to build a public memorial to these men. Although she could have been content with having their names inscribed on a memorial in Monroe County Courthouse Square along with the names of white Civil War veterans, she pressed the issue to erect a monument with a religious inscription outside of Little Bethel, precisely because that was where her ancestors built their community and practiced their spiritual life.

The story of the plaque begins in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, where in 1760 Richard Allen was born as a slave. Although known as Richard his entire life, he did not take his surname until he received his freedom in 1783. Allen spent the first eight years of his life with his parents and siblings in the possession of Benjamin Chew, a wealthy Philadelphian who owned a house on Front Street and a mansion in nearby Germantown called Cliveden.⁸ Then in 1768, Chew sold Allen and his family to a farmer in Kent County, Delaware, named Stokeley Sturgis. In his new home, Allen helped plant and harvest wheat, corn and flax—typical work for a farm slave. At some point, his mother and three of his siblings were sold to other owners. “Slavery is a bitter pill,” he wrote at the end of his life.⁹

⁸ Students of the Revolutionary War may recognize Cliveden, also known as “The Chew House,” as a pivotal tactical position in The Battle of Germantown.

⁹ As quoted in Richard S. Newman, *Freedom’s Prophet: Bishop Richard Allen, the AME Church, and the Black Founding Fathers* (New York: New York University Press, 2008), 27-30, 33-5, 44-5; Gary B. Nash, “New Light on Richard Allen: The Early Years of Freedom,” *The William and Mary Quarterly* 46, no. 2 (April 1989): 333, accessed March 16, 2020, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1920258>.

In 1777, at the age of sixteen or seventeen, Allen listened to a Methodist preacher's sermon near the Sturgis home. Methodism was a relatively new denomination that was founded in the 1730s, and it emphasized class meetings, camp revivals, and expansive preaching circuits. Congregants believed that God was a healing presence in their lives, and they were second only to the Quakers in their anti-slavery beliefs. Even John Wesley, founder of Methodism, opposed slavery in his famous 1774 tract, "Thoughts upon Slavery." Allen observed how effective Methodist sermons were on enslaved people, and he himself was taken by them. "One night I thought Hell would be my portion," he wrote. "I cried to the Lord both night and day...I cried unto him who delighted to hear the prayers of a poor sinner...all of a sudden my dungeon shook, my chains flew off, and, glory to God, I cried." He then attended regular Methodist class meetings, led exhortation sessions in and around the Sturgis farm, and he became a trusted member of Delaware's revivalist community. Later in life, he looked back on his conversion experience as a second birthday.¹⁰

In 1779, Allen came to believe that since Stokeley Sturgis and his wife had grown old and infirm, they were probably concerned about the afterlife. Accordingly, he wanted to have his class leaders preach in his master's home. So after obtaining Sturgis' permission, Allen invited them over. These meetings occurred over the summer of 1779, and Sturgis gradually came to accept Methodist teachings. "After that," Allen wrote, "he could not be satisfied to hold slaves." By January 25, 1780, Allen had a written agreement with his master that stipulated he would pay two thousand dollars over five

¹⁰ As quoted in Newman, 37, 39-41.

years for his freedom. The slave paid his first installment early and then worked furiously for three and a half years. On his first day he cut so many cords of wood that “it was only with difficulty I could open or close [my] hands.” He cut more wood, took more odd jobs, and stopped for nothing but food, prayer, fellowship, and sleep. He paid off his two thousand dollars a year and a half early, plus he provided Sturgis with bushels of corn, wheat, and salt. Sturgis wrote on Allen’s manumission papers in 1783 that Allen “Behaved himself Soberly and Honostly [sic] when he wrought about this place” and now “intends to travel Some wayes [sic] abroad, from this place to work where it Suets [sic] him.” For reasons not given in the historic record, Richard took the surname “Allen” upon obtaining his freedom.¹¹

Once free to maneuver at will, Allen traveled hundreds of miles on the preaching circuit through Delaware, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey. It was during this time that he happened upon a chest full of silver and gold. When he returned the find to its rightful owner, Allen refused to take any reward except a new suit of coarse cloth—suitable for a plain Methodist preacher. When he later returned to Philadelphia, this transaction earned him the trust of wealthy residents who felt safe entrusting him with charitable donations.¹²

In 1786, Allen returned to Philadelphia, where he built a successful chimney sweeping business, purchased land, became one of the leaders of the black community, and helped establish the Free African Society. He also continued his religious mission by becoming a preacher at St. George’s Church. The black congregants at St. George’s

¹¹ As quoted in Newman, 43-5; As quoted in Nash, 334.

¹² Newman, 47; Nash, 337, 340.

numbered no more than five at the time of Allen's arrival, but within a year he had increased their number to forty-two. He continued to build black membership over the next five years, and overall his efforts brought in so many new members—both black and white—that the church put together plans for adding a second story.¹³

Allen and the black congregants did not fit in with the white community at St. George's, despite their financial contributions. For example, white worshippers required Allen to give services in a quiet, deferential way instead of his usual ecstatic manner. The black congregants were eventually removed from the seats and made to stand around the walls. One Sunday, they were directed to sit in a segregated balcony, but they misunderstood the new rule and took their position on the main floor. Reverend Absalom Jones, a black preacher, was kneeling and praying when white trustees took hold of him and said he had to move. Jones admonished the men to wait until he finished his prayer, but the situation escalated until white officials moved in to banish the black members to the segregated balconies. At this point, Allen led all the black congregants out of the church. As he later wrote, the whites "were no more plagued with us in [their] church."¹⁴

Allen made the most of this opportunity by proposing to Reverend Jones that they form a new, African church. Jones agreed, and the two preachers broke ground, with Allen digging in the first spade. They disagreed, however, as to the church's denomination. Many black parishioners refused to stay with Methodism after their

¹³ Newman, 53-6, 59; Thomas E. Will, "Liberalism, Republicanism, and Philadelphia's Black Elite in the Early Republic: The Social Thought of Absalom Jones and Richard Allen," *Pennsylvania History: A Journal of Mid-Atlantic Studies* 69, no. 4 (Autumn 2002): 561-2, accessed March 16, 2020, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/27774446>.

¹⁴ As quoted in Newman, 59-60, 63-4, 66-7.

experience at St. George's, so Absalom took over the property, which became the site of St. Thomas's African Episcopal Church. Allen, however, believed Methodism was the ideal religion for blacks because of its plain and simple doctrine, and because Methodists often embraced anti-slavery principles. Therefore, he stuck with the religion that first inspired him, and he transported a former blacksmith's shop to a piece of land he had purchased a few years before. He converted the shop into an all-black Methodist church, and he named it Bethel Church. Its official dedication occurred on July 29, 1794, and within a year Allen attracted over a hundred congregants. In 1796, he obtained corporate status for Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church.¹⁵

Allen's success with Bethel Church was nothing less than astounding. In 1798, he led a series of revivals that converted both whites and blacks to Methodism. By 1815, the church was performing four times the number of baptisms as St. George's. By the next year, the congregation had increased to about fourteen hundred members, including both literate leaders of the black community and men who were unable to sign their own names. In 1817, it was the site of the country's first anti-colonization meeting. In 1830 it hosted the first national convention of black leaders, and a year after that it had over three thousand parishioners in Philadelphia. Allen considered Bethel a place where blacks could "build each other up."¹⁶

As Bethel Church became more successful, Allen continued to expand his religious mission. "Our colored friends in Baltimore," he wrote, "were treated in a similar

¹⁵ Newman, 70-2.

¹⁶ As quoted in Newman, 73, 128, 130-1, 170-1.

manner by the white preachers and trustees [of the Baltimore Methodist conference], and many of them driven away who were disposed to seek a place of worship...” He made the most of another opportunity by convening a meeting of sixteen delegates from the states of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Delaware, and New Jersey on April 9, 1816. For three days these men laid out the details of a new religious denomination: The African Methodist Episcopal Church. Allen was named bishop—the first black bishop in Western history—and within five years the new denomination claimed over ten thousand adherents.¹⁷

Allen and his Bethel colleague Jacob Tapsico coauthored the A.M.E. Church’s founding text, *The Doctrines and Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church* in 1817. The *Discipline* adhered to many of the essential Methodist teachings: all God’s children were equal, the conversion experience was the most important manifestation of one’s saintliness, and good works were as important as sanctification itself. It also introduced changes that reflected the new church’s African-American heritage: slaveholders were not allowed to be members, and its brief account of the church’s founding emphasized the segregation and other abuses blacks suffered at the hands of white Methodists.¹⁸

The A.M.E. Church’s expansion gained momentum throughout the 1820s. Congregations formed in Brooklyn, New York, and in New Bedford, Massachusetts. Further west, branches developed in Buffalo, New York; Pittsburg, Pennsylvania; Mt.

¹⁷As quoted in Newman, 173-6.

¹⁸Newman, 177-9.

Pleasant, Ohio; and in Indiana. The congregation in Charleston, South Carolina—right in the heart of slave territory—was at one point the second largest in the country with almost fifteen hundred members. The church crossed national boundaries as well, with at least one branch in Canada and two in Haiti.¹⁹

Bishop Richard Allen’s initiatives ended when he passed away on March 26, 1831, but the A.M.E. Church continued to grow. By the 1830s it contained a quarter of the black Methodists in the United States, and at the turn of the twenty-first century, it had over two and a half million members in about seven thousand congregations across four continents.²⁰

Little Bethel A.M.E. Church in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania was built in the midst of this growth. The land on which Little Bethel was built, known in 1770 as Sleepers Knob, used to be a lookout point for Native Americans who scouted Fort Penn. At some point the founder of Stroudsburg, Jacob Stroud, acquired the property, and he deeded it to his daughter Rachel in June 1806. Rachel married William Rees, and the couple moved to her father’s farm on West Main Street. In January 1847, Rachel deeded the property to Adam Kirk,²¹ an African-American, and his wife Elizabeth for \$30. On February 28, 1855, the Kirks deeded the land in trust to three Stroudsburg trustees of the A.M.E. Church: Suydenham Walton, Richard Staples, and John N. Stokes. The Kirks stipulated

¹⁹ Newman, 240, 261-2, 288.

²⁰ Newman, 175, 288; “African Methodist Episcopal Church,” World Council of Churches, accessed June 22, 2019, <https://www.oikoumene.org/en/member-churches/african-methodist-episcopal-church>.

²¹ Robert M. Brooks, “Historic Churches: The African Methodist Episcopal Church of Stroudsburg,” *Pocono Today* (Stroudsburg, PA), June 15, 1980. His name is alternatively given as Abner.

that the land was “for the use of the colored people of the Borough of Stroudsburg for a meeting place and school house lot.” The congregation purchased the lot from the last surviving trustee, Richard Staples, in 1867 for \$125. As the *Jeffersonian Republican* newspaper reported on April 18 of that year, “the congregation design erecting a new church building thereon.”²²

The first documented connections between Little Bethel and the Civil War veterans are twofold. First, the site was bounded in part by properties owned by Stephen Henry and James Ray. A James Ray served in the 24th U.S.C.T. and died at Point Lookout, Maryland in 1865. This James Ray may have been the property owner at one point, but since he died in 1865, the land must have passed to a new owner by 1867. A Stephen Henry served in the 22nd U.S.C.T, and since he was thirty-four years old at the time of enlistment, he may be the owner here in question, but it is still within the realm of possibility that the soldier had a father or other relative with the same name. Second, the congregation’s new trustees were John Quako, Samuel Huff, and Ira Huff. John Quako served in the 25th U.S.C.T., and at the time of the deeding, he was a “well-known resident.” Samuel and Ira Huff may have been related to Amos and Ogden Huff, who both served in the 8th U.S.C.T.²³

²² *First Little Bethel: Stroudsburg’s Oldest Black Church; A Trail of Christian History; A Trail of Black History* (cited hereafter *First Little Bethel*) (n.p.: n.d.), folder “Little Bethel” (hereafter cited L.B.), Monroe County Historical Association, Stroudsburg, PA; Brooks, “Historic Churches: The African Methodist Episcopal Church of Stroudsburg,” L.B.; “History of the Little Bethel Church,” Little Bethel Historical Association, accessed June 23, 2019, <https://www.little-bethel.org/history.html>.

²³ “History of the Little Bethel Church,” Bates, 5:1019; Shari Renee Chambers, “Descendent Laments Church’s Tangled History,” *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), March 9, 2003, L.B.; Notes from the *Daily Times* (Stroudsburg, PA), February 28, 1898, L.B.

The cornerstone of Little Bethel was laid in the summer of 1867, and more than a year later an observer noted, “The African Methodist brethren are getting along quite rapidly with the brick work of their new church on Analomink Ave²⁴...From a view of the plan we judge that, when completed, the congregation will have a very neat and convenient place of worship.” When the building was complete, it resembled most of the small churches built in the nineteenth century, but it was special to its congregants because it was the site of weddings, baptisms, concerts, and evangelistic services for over a century.²⁵

The congregation members lived up to their heritage by honoring civil rights and remembering the days of slavery. According to the “Random Notes” on file in the Monroe County Historical Association, in April 1875 The Wilmington Jubilee Singers performed at the church, and their program “’embraced song pictures of slave life in all its originality and eccentricity’...’A large audience greeted them both nights, and all were delighted and surprised at what they heard.’ They sing with freedom and ease that is astonishing—yet with pathos.” Forty-one years later, in April 1916, the congregation protested the film *Birth of a Nation*, a Civil War epic that frequently portrayed blacks as brutish persons who were happier as slaves. Well might these church members honor their traditions: according to the 1920 census, the black population of Monroe County

²⁴ “History of the Little Bethel Church.” Analomink Ave is now called 3rd Street.

²⁵ Random notes on the A.M.E. Church, Stroudsburg, 1868-1900 (hereafter cited *Random Notes*), L.B.; *First Little Bethel*; Fred Walter, “First Little Bethel Church Dedication Sunday” (cited hereafter as *Walter*) *The Express*, August 27, 1983, L.B.

was 149, an increase of just 22 since 1860. Many members of the congregation may have been related to the Civil War veterans.²⁶

In the 1970s, however, the church lost its influence in the community. Some congregants died, while others split and went to the Christian Missionary Alliance Church at 45 3rd St. The minister spent less time at the church, and the building fell into disrepair. The 1980 census shows a black population in Monroe County of 822 and a Native American population of 24. It is possible that the large increase of the black population was due to people moving into the area, and that the native community joined new churches and lost touch with Little Bethel.²⁷

In 1971, Little Bethel was nearly abandoned. Christian Memorial Missions, a black religious outreach group based in Glenside, Pennsylvania, purchased the property in 1974 and began renovation efforts. Since the church was eventually deserted, however, it lost its tax-exempt status, and the mission lost the church in a tax sale in 1979. Reverend Justine Hall, reverend for the mission, appealed to the purchaser and explained the type of work the mission performed, and she soon reacquired the deed.²⁸

²⁶ *Random Notes*; Stroudsburg A.M.E. Church Studies: Newspaper Information-East Stroudsburg Morning Press, L.B.; United States, Census Bureau, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920*, vol. 3, *Population: 1920; Composition and Characteristics of the Population by States* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1922), 863.

²⁷ Sherrie Spangler, "Church Could Use a Few Prayers," *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), n.d., L.B.; William Doolittle, "Historic Church Crumbling in Obscurity," *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), February 27, 2000, L.B.; United States, Census Bureau, *1980 Census of Population*, vol. 1, *Characteristics of the Population*, Chapter C, *General Social and Economic Characteristics*, Part 40, *Pennsylvania* (1983), 63.

²⁸ *Walter*; Liz Brensinger, "Little Money, Lot of Work to go into Fixing S-burg Church" (cited hereafter *Brensinger*), *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), February 28, 1983, L.B.

Reverend Hall succeeded in placing the property on the Pennsylvania Register of Historical Places, and she formed ambitious plans for its future: the church was to house a library and museum dedicated to black history, as well as a prayer chapel open twenty-four hours a day that would be dedicated to those who built the church. To this end, she accepted historical photographs, documents, and memorabilia pertaining to the church's history, to the history of other black churches and organizations, and to the general history of the area. A dedication service for Little Bethel's new functions was held on Sunday, August 28, 1983. Guest speakers included Carol Kearn, President of the Monroe County Museum, and Frederick Beaver, President of the Monroe County Historical Association. Although Hall's hopes persisted until 1994, she passed away before Little Bethel was renovated according to her plans.²⁹

Hall deeded the property to the Christian Memorial Mission, which failed to live up to its trust agreement by allowing Little Bethel to deteriorate. Lawsuits ensued, and by April 2013, a Monroe County judge ruled that the property belonged to the Little Bethel Historical Association, which was established for the church's preservation. Since then, with the help of tens of thousands of dollars in donations, this organization has greatly restored the building, but it is still seeking funds to convert Little Bethel into a museum and library.³⁰

²⁹ *Walter, Brensinger*; Pamphlet for the First Little Bethel: Christian Memorial Missions, Inc. dedication service, L.B.; David Pierce, "Saving the Little Bethel, A.M.E. Church," *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), January 15, 2001.

³⁰ William Doolittle, "Ownership of Historic Church Debated in Court," *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), February 25, 2003, L.B.; Melissa Evanko, "Sensible Ruling Paves the Way for Church Restoration," *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), April 18, 2003, L.B.; Keith R. Stevenson, "Little Bethel Church Restoration Moving Fast," *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), June 19, 2007, L.B.; Andrew Scott, "Slowly but Surely: Rebuilding Historic Church Will Require Helping Hands, Dollars," *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), August 5, 2009, L.B.; Andrew Scott, "Donations Sought for Historic Stroudsburg Church," *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), February 11, 2019, L.B.

Shari Chambers of Tobyhanna, Pennsylvania, spearheaded the effort to erect a commemorative plaque outside of Little Bethel for the Monroe County U.S.C.T. veterans. Chambers counts the Huff, Ray, and Haines families among her ancestors. She grew up attending Little Bethel Church, and she founded the organization that later became the Little Bethel Historical Association. She was forced out of the group, however, because she insisted that the church retain its original function rather than be converted into a museum and library. Her original idea for a memorial was a granite structure, 10 feet high by 4 feet wide and 4 feet thick, to be erected in Helen Amhurst Park, right across the street from Little Bethel Church.³¹

Chambers took her idea to the Stroudsburg Borough Council in 2004, but Commissioner Chairwoman Suzanne McCool said the county lacked the funds for the type of monument Chambers envisioned. McCool suggested that the names of the veterans be inscribed on a plaque along with the names of the white Monroe County Civil War veterans, and that this plaque be placed on a rebuilt Civil War cannon in Monroe County Courthouse Square in Stroudsburg. Chambers stuck to her original idea, however, that a separate monument for the colored troops be placed on 3rd Street. “This is where these men and their families,” she said, “my ancestors among them, built their

³¹ David Pierce, “Monumental Effort Pays Off in Stroudsburg” (cited hereafter *Pierce*), *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), June 13, 2013, accessed June 23, 2019, <https://www.poconorecord.com/article/20130613/News/306130319>; Andrew Scott, “Woman Envisions Monument for Monroe County’s Civil War Veterans of Color” (cited hereafter *Woman Envisions*), *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), November 11, 2010, accessed June 23, 2019, <https://www.poconorecord.com/article/20101111/NEWS/11110338>.

community and invested their lives, both because of and despite racial segregation. It's only appropriate that they be honored in this manner."³²

Chambers finally won approval for a monument in Helen Amhurst Park in 2013, but it was to be a plaque attached to the top of a pole rather than a granite structure. She did, however, secure the reference on the plaque to "Almighty God" in spite of concerns about the conflict between church and state. She was pleased with the approval and said, "People see the plaque, they see the verbiage and the history and they see the church over there." The monument's dedication was originally scheduled for the fall of that year, and while it is possible that everything went to plan, a separate dedication ceremony took place on July 23, 2016, when the monument was placed on the sidewalk in front of Little Bethel Church, where it currently stands.³³

³² *Woman Envisions*; Adam McNaughton, "Stroudsburg Cannons Dedicated to Civil War Dead," *Pocono Record* (Stroudsburg, PA), May 26, 2009, accessed June 23, 2019, <https://www.poconorecord.com/article/20090526/NEWS/905260318>. The memorial in Monroe County Courthouse Square was dedicated on Memorial Day, May 25, 2009.

³³ *Pierce*; "Civil War Soldiers Memorial Dedication," Patriot Connections, accessed June 23, 2019, <https://www.patriotconnections.org/events/civil-war-soldiers-memorial-dedication/>. The author of this thesis is an eyewitness to the monument's location on the sidewalk outside Little Bethel Church as of March 2019.

Appendix A: Military Units and Attributes of Colored Soldiers from Monroe County

Name	Regiment	Company	Where Born	Date of Enlistment	Status	Age at Enlistment	Occupation
Jacob Quako	3rd	G		July 15, 1863			
John Lee	3rd	I	Philadelphia, PA	July 22, 1863	Volunteer	23	Laborer
Oliver H.P. Quoco	3rd	G	Sussex County, NJ	December 12, 1864	Substitute	19	Farmer
William Smith	8th	G	Baltimore, MD	July 20th, 1863	Drafted	36	Laborer
John Jones	8th	G	Pennsylvania	September 28, 1863	Drafted	25	Laborer
Edward Haines	8th	G	New Jersey	September 28, 1863	Drafted	34	Laborer
Burnese Haines	8th	G	New Jersey	September 28, 1863	Drafted	33	Laborer
Moses Washington	8th	K	Stroudsburg, PA	November 11, 1863	Drafted	20	Teamster
Daniel Washington	8th	K	Stroudsburg, PA	November 16, 1863	Drafted	21	Laborer
Theodore Carver	8th	K	Stroudsburg, PA	November 30, 1863	Volunteer	19	Farmer
George Johnson	8th	K	Stroudsburg, PA	November 26, 1863	Volunteer	23	Farmer
Benjamin Ray	8th	K	Monroe County, PA	November 26, 1864	Volunteer	27	Tanner
Ogden Huff	8th	K	Warren County, NJ	November 11, 1863	Drafted	20	Farmer/Tanner
Amos Huff	8th	K	Stroudsburg, PA	November 16, 1863	Drafted	18	Farmer/Laborer
Robert Smith	8th	K	Stroudsburg, PA	December 2, 1863	Volunteer	18	Farmer/Tanner
Jacob Boyd	22nd	G	Wilmington, DE	December 30, 1863	Volunteer	21	Farmer/Laborer
Charles Adams	22nd	G	Stroudsburg, PA	December 30, 1863	Volunteer	17	Farmer
Stephen Henry	22nd	G	Easton, PA	December 30, 1863	Volunteer	34	Laborer
Walter Jackson	22nd	G	West-Town, Chester County, PA	December 30, 1863	Volunteer	17	Farmer
John A. Quako	25th	G	Monroe County, PA	January 29, 1864	Volunteer	17	Laborer
John Quako	25th	G	Monroe County, PA	January 29, 1864	Volunteer	42	Laborer
William H. Anderson	25th	G	New Jersey	January 29, 1864	Volunteer	19	Laborer
Solomon Frister	25th	G	Bucks County, PA	January 29, 1864	Volunteer	26	Laborer
Name	Ship						
Charles V. Smith	U.S. S. Saratoga						Waiter

Source: Data from “African-American Civil War Vets I” and “African-American Civil War Vets II” folders, Monroe County Historical Association, Stroudsburg, PA; “The Civil War: Sailor Detail; Smith, Charles V.,” National Park Service, accessed June 17, 2019, <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-sailors-detail.htm?sailorId=SMI0038>.

Appendix B: Complete List of the Known U.S.C.T. Soldiers from Monroe County, Pennsylvania

3rd U.S.C.T.

Jacob Quako
John Lee
Oliver H.P. Quoco¹

8th U.S.C.T.

Theodore Carver
Burnese Haines
Conrad Haines
Edward Haines
Amos Huff
Ogden Huff
George Johnson
John Jones
Benjamin Ray
Robert Smith
William Smith
Daniel Washington
Moses Washington²

22nd U.S.C.T.

Charles Adams
Jacob Boyd
Walter Jackson
Stephen Henry³

24th U.S.C.T.

Sanford Haines
James B. Ray⁴

¹ *Leiser*; Bates, 5:937, 940.

² *Leiser*; Bates, 5:982-3, 988-90; "Search For Soldiers," National Park Service, accessed June 23, 2019, <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-soldiers.htm#sort=score+desc&q=%22haines,+conrad%22>.

³ *Leiser*; Bates, 5:1003-4.

⁴ *Leiser*; Bates, 5:1018-9.

25th U.S.C.T.

William H. Anderson
Solomon Frister
John Quako
John A. Quako⁵

30th U.S.C.T.

William Washington⁶

32nd U.S.C.T.

Lorenzo Haines
John Jones⁷

U.S.S. Saratoga

Charles V. Smith⁸

⁵ *Leiser*; Bates, 5;1039-40. Solomon's surname is given as "Fristee" in Bates and *Leiser*, but as "Frister" on his muster rolls.

⁶ *Leiser*; Dyer, 1728; Bates, 5;983. *Leiser* places William Washington in the 30th U.S.C.T., which was organized at Camp Stanton, Maryland, and is therefore not included in Bates. The National Park Service search engine does not show a William Washington in the 30th U.S.C.T. There was, however, an individual with this name in Company G of the 8th U.S.C.T., where Daniel and Moses Washington served in Company K. Many individuals with this name served in the U.S.C.T., so doubt exists as to the exact identity of the one from Monroe County.

⁷ *Leiser*; Bates, 5:1050, 1061. Lorenzo's surname is given as "Hanes" in Bates.

⁸ "Sailor Detail: Smith, Charles V.," National Park Service, accessed June 15, 2019, <https://www.nps.gov/civilwar/search-sailors-detail.htm?sailorId=SMI0038>.

Appendix C: Brief Military Biographies of Select U.S.C.T. Soldiers from Monroe County, Pennsylvania and the Regimental and Company Officers Who Commanded Them

Many of the soldiers from Monroe County were listed as “Present” with their companies for extended periods of time, so it has been deemed expedient to note only soldier absences. Muster rolls for the officers were not consulted in this study, so their absence or presence on a given day is not assured unless stated in the text.

3rd U.S.C.T

Colonel:

-Benjamin C. Tilghman: promoted from 26th Pennsylvania Volunteers on July 26, 1863; Resigned on June 9, 1865.

-Frederick W. Bardwell: promoted from major to lieutenant colonel on June 29, 1865; promoted to colonel on September 9, 1865; mustered out with regiment on October 31, 1865.

Lieutenant Colonel:

-Ulysses Doubleday: promoted to colonel of the 45th U.S.C.T. on October 5, 1864.

-John L. Brower: promoted from captain of Company D on September 13, 1865; mustered out with regiment on October 31st, 1865.

Major:

-Frederick W. Bardwell: promoted to lieutenant colonel on June 29, 1865; promoted to colonel on September 9, 1865; mustered out with regiment on October 31, 1865.

-Sherman Conant: promoted from captain of Company H on September 13, 1865; mustered out with regiment on October 31, 1865.¹

Company G

Captain:

¹ Bates, 5:926.

-Frank W. Webster: mustered out with company on October 31, 1865.

First Lieutenant:

-John G. Haap: mustered out with company on October 31, 1865.

Second Lieutenant:

-George Heimach: promoted to first lieutenant of Company F on May 6, 1865; mustered out with regiment on October 31, 1865.

-Joseph N. Allen: mustered out with company on October 31, 1865.²

Company I

Captain:

-Charles F. Smith: discharged by special order on April 26, 1865.

-Samuel S. Marseilles: promoted from adjutant on June 5, 1865; mustered out with company on October 31, 1865.

First Lieutenant:

-Robert R. Martin: mustered out with company on October 31, 1865.

Second Lieutenant:

-Frederick W. Scroeder: discharged on surgeon's certificate on November 25, 1863.

-Jacob E. Barr: discharged by special order on October 4, 1864.

-Edward B. Fernow: mustered out with company on October 31, 1865.³

Soldiers from Monroe County

Company G

-Jacob Quako: mustered out with the regiment on October 31, 1865.

-Oliver H.P. Quoco: mustered out with the regiment on October 31, 1865.⁴

Company I

-John Lee: died of dysentery on June 1, 1864.⁵

² Bates, 5:936.

³ Bates, 5:939.

⁴ Bates, 5:937; *Oliver H.P. Quoco*, A.A. I.

⁵ *John Lee*, A.A.I

8th U.S.C.T.

Colonel:

-Charles W. Fribley: promoted from captain of Company F, 84th Pennsylvania Volunteers, on November 23, 1863; killed at Olustee, Florida on February 20, 1864.

-Samuel C. Armstrong: promoted from lieutenant colonel of 9th U.S.C.T. on November 3, 1864; brevetted brigadier general on March 13, 1865; mustered out with regiment on November 10, 1865.

Lieutenant Colonel:

-Nelson B. Bartram: promoted to colonel of 20th U.S.C.T. on January 20, 1864; mustered out on October 7, 1865.

-Loren Burritt: promoted from first lieutenant of Company K, 56th Pennsylvania Volunteers, to major on November 7, 1863; wounded at Olustee, Florida on February 20, 1864; promoted to lieutenant colonel on June 1, 1864.; mustered out with regiment on November 10, 1865.

Major:

-Loren Burritt: promoted from first lieutenant of Company K, 56th Pennsylvania Volunteers, to major on November 7, 1863; wounded at Olustee, Florida on February 20, 1864; promoted to lieutenant colonel on June 1, 1864.

-George E. Wagner: promoted from captain of Company A on September 13, 1864; promoted to lieutenant colonel of 9th U.S.C.T. on November 3, 1864; brevetted colonel on March 13, 1865; discharged on December 12, 1864.

-Abijah S. Pell: mustered out with regiment on November 10, 1865.⁶

Company G

Captain:

-Electus A. Pratt: wounded at Olustee, Florida on February 20, 1864; discharged on January 19, 1865 for wounds, with loss of arm, received at Darbytown Road, Virginia on October 13, 1864.

-James S. Thompson: promoted from first lieutenant on February 28, 1865; mustered out with company on November 10, 1865.

First Lieutenant:

-Thomas Young: promoted to captain of Company K on October 21, 1864.

⁶ Bates, 5:965, 968-9.

-James S. Thompson: promoted from second lieutenant of Company K to first lieutenant of Company G on October 24, 1864; promoted to captain on February 28, 1865; mustered out with company on November 10, 1865.

Second Lieutenant:

-William H. Brooks: promoted to first lieutenant of Company C on October 22, 1864.

-J. Francis Jenness: promoted to first lieutenant of Company B on April 1, 1865.⁷

Company K

Captain:

-Alex G. Dickey: killed at Darbytown Road, Virginia on October 13, 1864.

-Thomas Young: promoted from first lieutenant of Company G on October 21, 1864; promoted to major of 127th U.S.C.T. on April 14, 1865.

-William H. Brooks: promoted from first lieutenant of Company C on May 29, 1865; mustered out with company on November 10, 1865.

First Lieutenant:

-Oliver W. Norton: promoted to quartermaster on August 30, 1865.

Second Lieutenant:

-James S. Thompson: promoted to first lieutenant of Company G on October 24, 1864.

-Andrew Dimick: resigned on March 19, 1865.⁸

Soldiers from Monroe County

Company G

-William Smith: muster rolls missing after August 1865; sick on October 30, 1865; mustered out with regiment on November 10, 1865.

-John Jones: detached service with the Provost Guard, Division Headquarters from November to December 1864; muster rolls missing after August 1865; mustered out with regiment on November 10, 1865.

-Edward Haines: wounded at Olustee, Florida on February 20, 1864; absent due to wounds at Beaufort, South Carolina from February to April, 1864; died of remittent fever at Base Hospital, X Corps, September 7, 1864.

⁷ Bates, 5:982.

⁸ Bates, 5:988.

-Burnese Haines: wounded at Olustee, Florida on February 20, 1864; absent due to wounds at Beaufort, South Carolina from February to June 1864; discharged due to wounds, with amputation of right forearm and loss of sight in left eye on June 21, 1864.⁹

Company K

-Moses Washington: promoted to sergeant on December 3, 1863; reduced to private on January 11, 1864; wounded at Olustee, Florida on February 20, 1864; wounded at Deep Bottom, Virginia on August 16, 1864; absent due to wounds from August 1864 to May 1865; discharged on surgeon's certificate of disability on May 26, 1865.

-Daniel Washington: promoted to corporal on December 3, 1863; reduced to private on December 20, 1863; wounded at Olustee, Florida on February 20, 1864; absent due to wounds at Hilton Head, South Carolina from February 1864 to June 30, 1864; absent due to sickness at hospitals at Point of Rocks, Virginia and Portsmouth Grove, Rhode Island from August 25, 1864 to December 1864; detached service with ammunition trains from December 31, 1864 to August 31, 1865; mustered out with regiment on November 10, 1865.

-Theodore Carver: promoted to corporal on January 11, 1864; wounded at Olustee, Florida on February 20, 1864; absent due to wounds at Hilton Head, South Carolina from February 1864 to May 26, 1864; absent due to sickness at Base Hospital, X Corps from August 13, 1864; absent due to sickness at Lovell U.S.A. General Hospital in Portsmouth Grove, Rhode Island from September 1, 1864 to February 1865; furloughed on February 23, 1865; absent due to sickness at Lovell U.S.A. General Hospital in Portsmouth Grove, Rhode Island from March 1865 to April 1865; furloughed from April 11 to May 11, 1865; absent due to sickness at Lovell U.S.A. General Hospital in Portsmouth Grove, Rhode Island from May 1865 to October 1865; reduced to private due to prolonged sickness on July 3, 1865; discharged due to disability on either August 12 or October 12, 1865.

-George Johnson: captured at Olustee, Florida on February 20, 1864; confined at Andersonville, Georgia; sent to Columbia, South Carolina on February 2, 1865; paroled at N.E. Ferry, North Carolina on March 4, 1865; present at Camp Parole in Annapolis, Maryland on March 14, 1865; furloughed from March 18 to April 18, 1865; present at Rendezvous of Distribution and Auger General Hospital in Alexandria, Virginia on May 3, 1865; returned to Company K in May or June 1865; muster rolls missing after August 1865; mustered out with company on November 10, 1865.

-Benjamin Ray: absent without leave from February 20 to March 31, 1864; wounded on April 8, 1864; absent due to wounds at General Hospital in Jacksonville, Florida from April to July 1864; discharged by reason of wounds on July 12, 1864.

-Ogden Huff: wounded at Olustee, Florida on February 20, 1864; absent due to wounds at General Hospital in Beaufort, South Carolina from February 28, 1864 to August 1864;

⁹ *William Smith, A.A. II; John Jones, A.A. II; Edward Haines, A.A. II; Burnese Haines, A.A. I.*

absent due to wounds at General Hospital in Fortress Monroe, Virginia from August 13, 1864 to March or April 1865; detached service at Post Hospital in Brazos Santiago Island, Texas from June 24, 1865 to July or August 1865; muster rolls missing after August 1865; mustered out with company on November 10, 1865.

-Amos Huff: killed in action at Olustee, Florida on February 20, 1865.

-Robert Smith: promoted to corporal on December 3, 1863; reduced to private on September 19, 1864; muster rolls missing after August 1865; mustered out with company on November 10, 1865.¹⁰

22nd U.S.C.T.

Colonel:

-Joseph B. Kiddoo: promoted from major of 6th U.S.C.T. on January 6, 1864; wounded at Fair Oaks, Virginia on October 27, 1864; brevetted brigadier general on June 15, 1865; discharged on January 28, 1867.

Lieutenant Colonel:

-Nathan P. Goff Jr.: wounded at Petersburg, Virginia on June 15, 1864; promoted to colonel of 37th U.S.C.T. on October 25, 1864; brevetted brigadier general on March 13, 1865; discharged on June 4, 1867.

-Ira C. Terry: promoted from major of 5th U.S.C.T. on October 25, 1864; brevetted colonel on March 13, 1865; mustered out with regiment on October 16, 1865.

Major:

-John B. Cook: wounded at Fort Harrison, Virginia on September 29, 1864; promoted to lieutenant colonel of 5th U.S.C.T. on October 21, 1864; mustered out on September 20, 1865.

-Peter Schlick: promoted from captain of 38th U.S.C.T. on November 3, 1864; mustered out with regiment on October 16, 1865.¹¹

Company G

Captain:

-Chas. F. Eichacker: mustered out with company on October 16, 1865.

¹⁰ *Moses Washington, A.A. II; Daniel Washington, A.A. II; Theodore Carver, A.A. II; George Johnson, A.A. II; Benjamin Ray, A.A. I; Ogden Huff, A.A. I; Amos Huff, A.A. I; Robert Smith, A.A. I.*

¹¹ Bates, 5:991-2.

First Lieutenant:

-Luther Osborn: promoted to captain of Company H on May 15, 1865.

Second Lieutenant:

-J.C. Krzywoszynski: promoted to first lieutenant of Company C on May 20, 1865.¹²

Soldiers from Monroe County

-Jacob Boyd: absent at Dutch Gap in August 1864; wounded on September 21, 1864; absent at Lovell hospital, Portsmouth Grove, R.I. to November 1864; died of wounds and/or chronic diarrhea at Portsmouth Grove, R.I. on November 15, 1864.

-Charles Adams: musician; transferred to the line as a private by February 29, 1864; absent at Dutch Gap in August 1864; absent due to sickness from October 27 to November 6, 1864; mustered out with regiment on October 16, 1865.

-Walter Jackson: absent at Dutch Gap in August 1864; mustered out with regiment on October 16, 1865.

-Stephen Henry: absent due to sickness on October 24, 1864 and returned to duty by the end of the month; furloughed in February 1865 and returned to duty by the end of the month; mustered out with regiment on October 16, 1865.¹³

25th U.S.C.T.

Colonel:

-Gustavus A. Scroggs: resigned on July 6, 1864.

-Frederick L. Hitchcock: promoted from lieutenant colonel on November 16, 1864; mustered out with regiment on December 6, 1865.

Lieutenant Colonel:

-Frederick L. Hitchcock: promoted to colonel on November 16, 1864; mustered out with regiment on December 6, 1865.

-James W.H. Reisinger: promoted from Major on November 16, 1864; mustered out with regiment on December 6, 1865.

Major:

¹² Bates, 5:1003.

¹³ *Jacob Boyd*, A.A. II; *Charles Adams*, A.A. II; *Walter Jackson*, A.A. I; *Stephen Henry*, A.A. I.

-James W.H. Reisinger: promoted from captain of Company H, 150th Pennsylvania Volunteers on March 12, 1864; promoted to lieutenant colonel on November 16, 1864; mustered out with regiment on December 6, 1865.

-Thomas Boudren: promoted from captain of Company A on November 16, 1864; mustered out with regiment on December 6, 1865.¹⁴

Company G

Captain:

-William A. Prickett: promoted from sergeant of 14th New Jersey Volunteers on February 4, 1864; mustered out with company on December 6, 1865.

First Lieutenant:

-William H. Powers: promoted from corporal of Company G, 13th New Hampshire Volunteers on March 3, 1864; mustered out with company on December 6, 1865.

Second Lieutenant:

-Chas. M. Edgerton: died in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on March 28, 1864.

-John E. Norcross: brevetted captain on June 20, 1865; discharged by special order on June 20, 1865.¹⁵

Soldiers from Monroe County

-John Quako: assigned to duty as a wagoner in February 1864; promoted to corporal on May 16, 1864; mustered out with regiment on December 6, 1865.

-John A. Quako: muster-rolls missing from March 1864 to October 1864; mustered out with regiment on December 6, 1865.

-William H. Anderson: absent due to sickness at New Orleans, Louisiana from May 12, 1864 to November 1864; mustered out with regiment on December 6, 1865.

-Solomon Frister: promoted to corporal on January 29, 1864; muster rolls missing after February 1864; reduced to rank of private on June 15, 1865; mustered out with regiment on December 6, 1865.¹⁶

¹⁴ Bates, 5:1026-8.

¹⁵ Bates, 5:1039.

¹⁶ *John Quako, A.A. I; John A. Quako, A.A. I; William H. Anderson, A.A. I; Solomon Frister, A.A. I.*

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