

National Archives Microfilm Publications

Pamphlet Describing M1894

Descriptive Recruitment Lists
of Volunteers for the United
States Colored Troops for the
State of Missouri, 1863–1865

Records of the Adjutant General's Office,
1780's–1917

Record Group 94

JULIUS K. HUNTER AND FRIENDS
AFRICAN AMERICAN RESEARCH COLLECTION
ST. LOUIS COUNTY LIBRARY
AND
NATIONAL ARCHIVES AND RECORDS ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, DC

M1894

DESCRIPTIVE RECRUITMENT LISTS OF VOLUNTEERS FOR THE
UNITED STATES COLORED TROOPS FOR THE STATE OF
MISSOURI, 1863-1865



Julius K. Hunter & Friends
African American
Research Collection

©2000
St. Louis County Library District

Julius K. Hunter and Friends African American Research Collection
St. Louis County Library
and
National Archives and Records Administration
Washington, DC
2002

United States. National Archives and Records Administration.

Descriptive recruitment lists of volunteers for the United States Colored Troops for the state of Missouri, 1863-1865.— Washington, DC : Julius K. Hunter and Friends African American Research Collection, St. Louis County Library and National Archives and Records Administration, 2002.

8 p. ; 23 cm.— (National Archives microfilm publications. Pamphlet describing ; M 1894)

Cover title.

“Prepared ... by Michael F. Knight ... and edited by Benjamin Guterman.”—P. 6

Includes bibliographical references.

1. African Americans — Missouri — Registers — Microform catalogs. 2. United States — History — Civil War, 1861-1865 — Participation, African American — Sources — Bibliography — Microform catalogs. 3. Missouri — History — Civil War, 1861-1865 — Participation, African American — Sources — Bibliography — Microform catalogs. I. Knight, Michael F. II. Guterman, Benjamin. III. Julius K. Hunter and Friends African American Research Collection. IV. Saint Louis County (Mo.). County Library. V. Title.

INTRODUCTION

On the six rolls of this microfilm publication, M1894, are reproduced descriptive lists of black volunteers recruited for the army from the State of Missouri, 1863–1865. These records consist of 55 descriptive recruitment books and 3 bound indexes. These volumes are part of the records of the Colored Troops Division, 1863–1889, in the Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's–1917, Record Group (RG) 94, at the National Archives Building in Washington, DC.

Background

Concerted effort to recruit large numbers of African American volunteers in Missouri during the Civil War for service in the United States Colored Troops (USCT) began with the November 14, 1863, issuance of General Orders No. 135 by Maj. Gen. J. M. Schofield, commander of the Department of Missouri. General Orders No. 135 authorized assistant provost marshals throughout Missouri to recruit slaves, contrabands, or free blacks and to compensate loyal slaveowners who lost their slaves up to \$300 per slave.¹ Prior to this order, recruitment efforts were limited and inconsistent and based on the efforts of a few energetic provost marshals who sought recruits or lured slaves for enlistment in Kansas, Iowa, or Arkansas.

From the outset, recruitment of African Americans in Missouri faced many obstacles. General Orders No. 135 was issued against the backdrop of intense political infighting and violence over the question of slavery in this Civil War border state. The question of the enlistment and arming of blacks was an extremely sensitive issue among Missouri radicals, who sought the immediate emancipation of slaves statewide; Missouri moderates, favoring gradual emancipation; and slaveowners. Maj. Gen. Schofield's letters clarifying General Orders No. 135 reflected this sensitivity. Even though the orders called for widespread enlistment of blacks into the army, Schofield restricted those recruiting techniques particularly objectionable to slaveowners. For example, some energetic provost marshals had employed roving recruitment squads that moved through plantations and towns aggressively seeking to recruit blacks.² Beginning in November 1863, all recruiting had to be done through recruitment stations based in county or military district seats. General Schofield hoped this would alleviate the growing complaints by slaveowners who bitterly claimed that the roving parties were plying slaves of Union loyalists with whiskey and false promises. From November 1863 to March 1865, more than seventy provost marshal officers recruited African Americans at 45 recruitment stations.³ Upon passing a physical examination, prospective recruits were sent to

¹ General Orders No. 135, November 14, 1863, Vol. 3, Ch. V, Pt. 1, p. 1739, *The Negro in the Military Service of the United States, 1639–1886*, (National Archives Microfilm Publication M858, roll 2), Records of the Adjutant General's Office, 1780's–1917, Record Group (RG) 94, National Archives Building (NAB).

² Maj. Gen. Schofield to Col. E. D. Townsend, September 29, 1863, Vol. 3, Ch. V, Pt. 1, pp. 1631–1635, M858, roll 2.

³ See County/Station/Recruiter Index [vol. 1] on roll 1 of this microfilm publication.

