



## Indiana's Recruitment of African-American Soldiers (2)

“To quote a vulgar and much abused saying, Negroes are no better than white men, and to satisfactory reason can show why the lives and limbs and health of our white fellow citizens --- our fathers, brothers and sons --- may be jeopardized in war and the negro held safe and sacred.”

Logansport Journal – February 21, 1863

In reference to recruitment in Indianapolis of African-American soldiers for the 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts the Indianapolis Daily Sentinel commented:

“This arrangement for the superlatively patriotic Andrew (Governor of Massachusetts) -- not the Merry Andrew -- is a pretty cute Yankee trick. Each of these darkies counts as a white man in making up the quota of Massachusetts, while it relieves us of a class of population that we are not at all anxious to retain.”

### **Letter from Capt. Tullis – The Army Abolitionized**

Army of Tennessee, in the Field, Near Memphis, Tennessee – August 10, 1862

“...There is nothing of importance to communicate in regard to military affairs at present, except a general stampede among the contrabands. Over four hundred darkies came within our lines yesterday, up to 10 o'clock, and have gone to work on the fort now building at this place – Ft. Pickering. About 1000 darkies are working on it, and as they come in they are sent there to work. A large force is kept at work at the landing. Each regiment is allowed to have from fifty to seventy-five for their own use. All the drudgery of the camp is performed by the blacks.

It is useless to disguise the fact that our army has become thoroughly abolitionized, and in future it will be a war against slavery. I say, let it come – the sooner the better. I have seen the *elephant* when he was *large*; and if anybody thinks it is not time to go into negrodom in earnest, just tell them to come out and get shot a couple of times, sleep on the ground, and march day after day beneath a scorching sun.

...You may march for miles, and you will see nothing but well tilled fields of corn; and in all this you will not see a single white man at work. Ask the darkies where their master is and they will reply, “Gone to de war, sar’...I think if we take those darkies from them, they are a helpless, God forsaken people, and I am satisfied that this policy and a few more such likings as they always receive from the army of the southwest will bring them to their senses.”

Lafayette Daily Courier – August 26, 1862

## Negro Troops

“The organizing of negro troops appears to have begun in earnest. The President judges it, not only as a military necessity, but an act of humanity to the whites, who can ill bear the Southern climate in the hot season; besides, every black volunteer deducts one from the number of conscripts needed. This, as much as any thing else, is mollifying the prejudices of the North once entertained respecting negro soldiers; and if they behave gallantly in the field, and prove a success, we shall have no more objections raised against them. The greatest advantage to derive from their employment, is the fact that we are weakening the enemy by so doing. The whites of the South are already all in the army, and they depend on the negroes to raise grain and furnish them supplies; and if the black population were detached from the interests of the rebels, the feasibility of starving them into submission would be undoubted.”

Lafayette Daily Courier – May 23, 1863

“Indiana is just beginning to wake up on the subject of colored recruits. If it had not been for the existence of an insane prejudice on the subject, we might have had credit for large numbers who now swell the ranks of regiments formed in some of the more wide awake sister States. But now the work goes rapidly on, and not even the Copperheads can withdraw their rapidly glazing eyes from the dreadful draft along enough to look an objection to this method of disposing of *free Americans of African descent*.”

New Castle Courier reprinted in Indianapolis Daily Journal – January 22, 1864

“There was much complaint by Democrats about the arming of Negroes; yet when a draft was ordered, these same men became so anxious to get negroes to take their places, that they scoured the whole country with bounty money in hand and even tolled the negroes from Kentucky.”

New Castle Courier reprinted in Indianapolis Daily Journal – June 13, 1864

- 1. Why did Hoosiers approve of accepting African-Americans into the Union Army?**
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
- 2. How would you explain the change in attitude toward accepting African-Americans into the Union Army by 1863?**

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### To the Colored Men of Indiana

“The State of Indiana calls upon you to bear a part in the glorious work of putting down the slaveholder’s rebellion and saving the Union. Hitherto you have been compelled to remain at home or enlist under the banners of other States. Many of your brethren, unable to repress their patriotic ardor, have enlisted in the regiments of various States, while some were of the rank and file of the gallant 54<sup>th</sup> Massachusetts, which immortalized itself at Fort Wagner. Whenever the colored men of Indiana have fought in this war, they have shown that they partake of the same spirit of heroic valor that has animated Indiana’s sons wherever they have met the foe in arms. The President of the United States, in his late message, has reaffirmed his proclamation of emancipation of your oppressed brothers; and he guarantees that you and the officer who commands you in the field shall, when in the enemy’s hands be recognized and treated as prisoners of war. Will you not march to the rescue of your suffering brethren and give to them in fact the freedom which is now declared to be theirs of right? ... It has been said of you that you do not possess the manly qualities that fit a people to enjoy and preserve their liberty. You can now show to your detractors and the world the falsehood of the assertion, and place yourself in such a position that you may ask and obtain from a grateful people a full recognition of your worth and rights as men....Show yourselves worthy soldiers, and the petty prejudices that weak and wicked men have endeavored to excite against you will be forever swallowed up in the gratitude of a nation that will own and applaud your heroic deeds.”

Indianapolis Daily Journal – December 12, 1863

- 1. What were patriotic free black men of Indiana before 1863 forced to do if they wanted to serve in the Union Army?**
- 2. What guarantee did President Lincoln offer to African-American soldiers who might fall into the hands of the enemy?**
- 3. For what reasons should African-American men join the Union Army?**
- 4. What hint of gratitude did the author extend to possible African-American recruits?**