

“THE FIRST FRUITS OF A RE-UNITED PEOPLE”

**THE LOYALTY, MOTIVATION, AND ALLEGIANCE OF THE MEN OF THE
SECOND UNITED STATES VOLUNTEER INFANTRY REGIMENT**

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Preface

I can still remember the day I first heard about the men of the United States Volunteer Infantry. It was the fall term of my sophomore year of college and I was sitting in Dr. Holt Merchant's class, History 245 – The American Civil War. We were discussing the issues facing President Abraham Lincoln's Administration during the war when he mentioned that in 1864 it had to deal with the uprising of the Plains Indians in Minnesota. To address this threat, the Union enlisted Confederate prisoners of war and sent them to fight the Indians. They were called the 'Galvanized Yankees'. The story struck me and I thought to myself, 'Hmm, it'd be interesting to learn more about those guys.'

But I did not learn anything more about them; indeed, I did not give them any more thought until the winter term of my junior year when I was searching for a topic for this thesis. As I sat there scratching my head, thinking about a topic that would be novel, fun, and researchable, a bulb went off somewhere in the back of my mind and I remembered Dr. Merchant's story about the 'Galvanized Yankees'. After consulting with Dr. Merchant and Dr. Barton Myers, my thesis advisor, about using the 'Galvanized Yankees' as a thesis topic, I settled on them and asked, who were these men and why did they decide to join the Union after serving in the Confederacy?

To answer the question, I embarked on a research trip to the National Archives and Records Administration Building in Washington, D.C. in the summer of 2014 and spent days combing through Civil War prison, enlistment, and service records. I supplemented this work with research in the databases maintained by Ancestry.com and Fold3.com and pursued secondary sources on the topic, many of which Dr. Myers recommended to me. I quickly discovered that some research had been done on the first group of 'Galvanized Yankees', the 1st

United States Volunteer Infantry Regiment (U.S.V.I.), but that almost nothing had yet been published on the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry Regiment, the first U.S.V.I. regiment raised specifically to combat Plains Indians. I found this to be an important distinction and settled on the 2nd U.S.V.I. as the subject of my thesis.

The remainder of the summer of 2014 and the first half of the fall of my senior year in college was spent mining data from the enlistment and service records of the 2nd U.S.V.I. and compiling huge spreadsheets that catalogued the men's information. The fruits of this statistical research served as the basis for my statistical analysis and comparison of the regiment with the Union and Confederate armies and are included in appendices of this thesis. To make sense of the statistical narrative, Dr. Myers advised me to look into the records of the Union and Confederate militaries included in the seventy volumes and 128 parts of the U.S. War Department's *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official records of the Union and Confederate Armies*—the 'O.R.'. Relying heavily on the O.R. and other primary source documents, my statistical research, and the secondary literature regarding the loyalty and motivation of Civil War soldiers, I cobbled together a narrative of the men, the policy, and the unit, and placed it in the broader context of the Civil War.

This thesis would not have been possible without the help of countless men and women in the National Archives, the staff of both Ancestry.com and Fold3.com, and the brilliant scholars across the nation whose work I consulted. Special thanks must, however, go to Dr. Barton Myers, my indefatigable thesis advisor who sat patiently through my presentations of the week's findings, guided my research and writing, recommended resources to me when I needed help, and cracked the whip when I needed that too. Dr. Holt Merchant also deserves especial praise for giving me the idea for this project, encouraging and nurturing my research and writing,

and providing comments, corrections, and suggestions on the later drafts, thankfully with only a pencil and not his trademark red pen. I must thank Dr. Theodore DeLaney too for his constant encouragement, mentorship, and advice, always reminding me that no matter how bad it looked I would get it done eventually. Additionally, I wish to thank the staff of the Washington and Lee University Library and Special Collections who advised me on resources, databases, and citations, and found everything I needed through interlibrary loan. Finally, I thank my family and friends, especially Zach Howard, for always supporting me and giving me the help I needed to succeed.

Prologue

“Repentant Rebels,” ‘Galvanized Yankees,’ and United States Volunteers

“It was a palatial mansion in the South where our story commences.” This was the romantic first line of the main column in the 12 October 1865 issue of *The Frontier Scout*, the regimental newspaper of the 1st United States Volunteer Infantry (U.S.V.I.). The column, entitled, “The Southern Mother’s Pride; OR The Loyalized Rebel. A TALE OF THE 1ST U. S. V. Inf.,” told the fictitious story of Reginald Ravensworth, a former Confederate conscript turned Union soldier of the 1st United States Volunteer Infantry.¹ Born to “a bitter secessionist” father and a Unionist mother, Ravensworth was himself an avowed Unionist who described secession as “worse than sacrilege, it appeared blasphemy.” When war broke out, he refused to serve the Confederacy until he was conscripted—a move that cost him the love of the beautiful Southern belle Mollie Edwards who spurned Ravensworth’s advances because “he was not more enthusiastic about the Rebellion.”² He served honorably as a conscript though “his heart was not in the fight,” until 1863 when Union forces captured him near Virginia’s Rappahannock River and imprisoned him at Point Lookout, Maryland, where he wallowed until he was able to swear an oath of allegiance to the Union and enlist in the U.S.V.I. in 1864. He served with distinction as a Union soldier, received a lieutenant’s commission, and mustered out of service in 1865, a

¹ Enoch G. Adams, *The Frontier Scout*, Vol. 1, no. 15, 12 October 1865. Being a brief, fictitious story, Adams devoted minimal time to character development and failed to include specific details about the lives of his characters such as when they were born, where they lived, the regiments with which they served, where they were captured, and how some of them went from being avowed Secessionists to successfully reconstructed Confederates.

² Stephen W. Berry, *All That Makes a Man: Love and Ambition in the Civil War South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 86-88, 183, 191; Adams, *Frontier Scout*, Vol. 1, no. 15, 12 October 1865. Stephen Berry maintains that during the Civil War, women, especially young Southern women, frequently wielded this sort of sexual power over men, compelling men to volunteer rather than wait to be drafted, to fight bravely, and to fight for these women as a means of winning their affection.

decorated Union officer. Returning home, he saved his family plantation from confiscation and married an already reconstructed Mollie Edwards.³ It was the perfect end to a perfect story.

The delightful column was the work of Captain Enoch G. Adams, the editor of *The Frontier Scout*, a medium through which this creative officer projected his interpretation of the men of the United States Volunteer Infantry. Drawing on his educated, Victorian New England background, Adams, like so many other Northerners who wrote about former Confederates during the Reconstruction period, romanticized these men, and portrayed them in a very sympathetic, fraternal manner.⁴ In his mind, all U.S.V.I. soldiers had been lifelong Unionists who were unwillingly pressed into Confederate service.⁵ They viewed their Confederate service, according to Adams, as “sin” and eagerly seized the opportunity to enlist and serve the Union by which they “repented [their] sin like Magdalen [sic],” “redeemed [themselves] from disunion,” and “returned to the faith of [their] fathers, the Union, / Like a lost saint repentant restored to communion.” Cleansed of their sins by 1865, they would return home as “repentant rebels” for whom, Adams prophesized, “The Southern maid and Southern matron [would] twine the fairest

³ Adams, *Frontier Scout*, Vol. 1, no. 15, 12 October 1865.

⁴ David A. Cecere, “Carrying the Home Front to War: Soldiers, Race, and New England Culture during the Civil War,” in *Union Soldiers and the Northern Home Front: Wartime Experiences, Postwar Adjustments*, ed. Paul A. Cimballa and Randall M. Miller (New York: Fordham University Press, 2002), 299-323. Adams’ flowery language may also have been influenced by his upbringing, ancestry, and occupation. Adams was the son of an evangelical minister from New Hampshire, a member of the New Hampshire branch of the Adams family of Massachusetts. He grew up in the shadow of well-spoken presidents, diplomats, cabinet members, and industrialists. As a boy, he attended Yale University after which he found work as a schoolteacher in Durham, New Hampshire. While employed as a teacher, he often wrote poems for friends, family, local newspapers, and anyone else who cared to read them.

⁵ Nina Silber, *The Romance of Reunion: Northerners and the South, 1865-1900* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 48, 51-52, 54-56. Nina Silber argues that during the Reconstruction era, Northerners “learned to be sentimental about those whom they had once despised and that they often did so in order to assure themselves of their own capacity for sympathy and goodwill.” This sympathy extended even to the men of once powerful plantation families. Although these men were often conflated with the most rabid supporters of secession, Northerners now pitied them for their massive loss of property, wealth, and power. Other romantic Northerners wrote sympathetically of the average Confederate soldier, citing his “honest, although tragic, willingness to accept his loss.”

wreaths...for their own native-born soldier[s], who [had] fought for the Stars and Stripes,” “not [as] paroled rebels, but honorably [as] soldiers of Uncle Sam.”⁶

Adams saw these men as “repentant rebels” who, after atoning for their sins by serving in the Union army, deserved to be forgiven, yet most others—Union officers, administrators, and journalists—remained fixated on the men’s Confederate service alone, something they saw as utterly damning. Thus, in official correspondence they labeled the men not as “repentant rebels,” but as ‘rebel prisoners’, ‘traitors’, ‘deserters’, ‘whitewashed rebs’, or “*transfugees*”, a singularly unique term coined by Union General Benjamin F. Butler.⁷ One can only imagine the far more colorful language they would have used to describe them in their private, unofficial correspondence. However, a new sobriquet eventually emerged and clung to the men like glue: ‘Galvanized Yankees’.

The term ‘Galvanized Yankees’ can be misleading because it had different meanings to different people at different times. ‘Galvanized Yankees’ most likely first came into usage in the Confederacy as a derogatory term used to designate captured Union soldiers who became Confederates while they were in prison.⁸ Alluding to galvanization, the process in which iron is coated with a thin layer of zinc, the term hinted at the belief that the former-Union soldiers’ Confederate allegiance was merely a show, a Confederate coating over a true-Unionist core. Confederate newspapers such as the *Charleston Mercury* even used the term and gave evidence for this skepticism when they described a battalion of:

⁶ Adams, *Frontier Scout*, Vol. 1, no. 15, 12 October 1865; Vol. 1, no. 4, 6 July 1865; Vol. 1, no. 12, 31 August 1865.

⁷ Benjamin F. Butler, *Private and Official Correspondence of Gen. Benjamin F. Butler During the Period of the Civil War*, ed. Jesse Ames Marshall (Norwood: Plimpton Press, 1917), 557.

⁸ Dee Brown, *The Galvanized Yankees* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1963), 9; Warren Lee Goss, *The Soldier’s Story* (Boston: Lee and Shepard, 1871), 225; Melvin Grigsby, *The Smoked Yank* (Chicago: Regan Printing Company, 1891), 182.

galvanized Yankees, commanded by officers from the 1st and 2d South Carolina Regulars, ...exhibiting qualifications as ditchers, and consequently as scoundrels and traitors.... [S]ome fifteen of them, under the lead of a sergeant, passed over to the enemy.... Next day a plot was discovered...that the officers in the immediate vicinity—including our brigade commander and General Mercer commanding the wing—was to be backed and carried into Shermancamp [*sic*], the guns spiked in the batteries close at hand, the pickets forced and they were to secure powder at the hands of the great vandal Sherman.⁹

As Southern newspapers broadcast the term to the public and the exchange cartel brought Union prisoners up from the Confederacy where the term was coming into use, ‘Galvanized Yankees’ slowly crossed the Confederate lines and crept into the Northern vernacular.

As late as 5 March 1865, the term ‘Galvanized Yankees’ still designated Union prisoners who became Confederate soldiers, and not the other way around. General Grenville M. Dodge referred to “‘galvanized Yankees,’ *i.e.*, men who were taken prisoners by the enemy during last year [1864], and who...enlisted in Burke’s battalion, of the Confederate Army....”¹⁰ When the Union implemented its own program of enlisting enemy prisoners of war into the army, the term began to be used to describe these new Union recruits as well. Just like its Confederate counterpart, the term was meant to be a jab at the men’s lack of true loyalty to the nation for which they now fought. But by mid-1865, these new recruits had co-opted the term and traveling newspapermen like Albert D. Richardson and Samuel Bowles, the editor of the *Springfield (Mass.) Republican*, recorded their encounters with this proud group of soldiers

⁹ “Letter from Hardeeville (From the *Augusta Constitutionalist*),” *Charleston Mercury*, December 30, 1864, Accessible Archives (<http://www.accessible.com/accessible/print?AADocList=1&AADocStyle=STYLED&AAStyleFile=&AABeanName=to1&AANextPage=/printFullDocFromXML.jsp&AACheck=1.54.1.0.0>); U.S. War Department, *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official records of the Union and Confederate Armies*, 70 vols. in 128 parts (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1880-1901), Ser. II, vol. VII, 1268, (hereafter cited as *OR*). On 24 December 1864, Confederate Lieutenant General W. J. Hardee wrote Confederate General S. Cooper, Adjutant and Inspector General, that, “Colonel Brooks’ battalion, composed of Federal prisoners of war enlisted from prison into Confederate service, was found at Savannah to be utterly untrustworthy. The men deserted in large numbers, and finally mutinied, and were narrowly prevented from going over in a body to the enemy. The ringleaders were shot and the remained sent back to prison. These men were selected with great care, and were principally foreigners, and this is, therefore, a fair test of such troops,. I recommend that all authority to organize similar commands be revoked.”

¹⁰ *OR*, Ser. II, vol. VIII, 358.

“known in the army as ‘whitewashed rebs,’ or as they call themselves, ‘galvanized Yankees,’” who “styled themselves ‘galvanized’ Yankees....”¹¹ Thanks in large part to the publicity Richardson and Bowles lent to the ‘Galvanized Yankees’ in their newspaper reports, the name stuck.

Unfortunately, since the publication of a few 1860s articles describing the men of the 1st through 6th United States Volunteer Infantry, the ‘Galvanized Yankees’, little more has been written dealing with this interesting group of men. In modern times, the sobriquet ‘Galvanized Yankees’ survives thanks in large part to the work of scholars like Dee Brown, Richard Nelson Current, and Michèle Tucker Butts. All three scholars employ similar language and refer to the men of the U.S.V.I. as ‘Galvanized Yankees’, yet each focuses on a different aspect of their history.

In 1963 Dee Brown was the first scholar to write at length about the experience of the men of the United States Volunteer Infantry. His book, appropriately entitled *The Galvanized Yankees*, remains the seminal work on the subject.¹² His work is in line with other publications of the time dealing with Civil War regiments in that it is essentially an anecdotal history of the six U.S.V.I. regiments and focuses primarily on the men’s experiences while posted in the Western frontier from Minnesota south to New Mexico. He succinctly describes the process by which the men were enlisted and how the policy of enlisting Confederate prisoners of war into Federal service came to be, but he only briefly discusses the men’s Confederate service and questions of their loyalty, motivation for joining, and the broader purpose they served.¹³

¹¹ Samuel Bowles, *Across the Continent: A Stage Ride Over the Plains, to the Rocky Mountains, the Mormons, and the Pacific States, in the Summer of 1865, with Speaker Colfax* (New York: Hurd and Houghton, 1869), 11; Albert D. Richardson, *Beyond the Mississippi: From the Great Rivers to the Great Ocean. Life and Adventure on the Prairies, Mountains, and Pacific Coast* (Hartford: American Publishing Company, 1867), 331-332.

¹² Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*.

¹³ *Ibid.*

For twenty-nine years, Brown's work remained the sole scholarly literature on the United States Volunteer Infantry, until 1992 when Richard Nelson Current published *Lincoln's Loyalists: Union Soldiers from the Confederacy*.¹⁴ Although not exclusively about the U.S.V.I., Current's research builds on Brown's earlier writing and deals in greater detail with the subjects of loyalty, motivation, and allegiance than Brown does in his work. Current argues that the majority of those who joined the ranks of the U.S.V.I. either had always been loyal to the Lincoln Administration or that they were Confederate deserters who had no intention of ever serving the Confederacy again and were willing to enlist in the Union army in exchange for early release and better treatment. Apart from that, Current deals sparingly with the problems of loyalty, motivation, and allegiance. Instead, he makes significant contributions to the understanding of the evolution of the prisoner enlistment policies in both the Union and the Confederacy and the ways both sides dealt with enlisted prisoners when they were recaptured, sometimes treating them as desperate but innocent soldiers, and at other times viewing them as the damnedest of traitors.¹⁵

The most recent scholar to contribute significantly to the history of the men of the United States Volunteer Infantry is Michèle Tucker Butts in her 2003 work, *Galvanized Yankees on the Upper Missouri: The Face of Loyalty*.¹⁶ Butts' work is an in-depth study of the 1st U.S.V.I. and deals primarily with the regiment's service in Dakota Territory along the Upper Missouri River and the significance of that service in influencing post-war United States Indian policy. Her greatest contribution to the history of the men is her groundbreaking analysis of their motivations for joining the Union. In her study, Butts looks closely at the men in the regiment and points to

¹⁴ Richard Nelson Current, *Lincoln's Loyalists: Union Soldiers from the Confederacy* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 1992).

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Michèle Tucker Butts, *Galvanized Yankees on the Upper Missouri: The Face of Loyalty* (Boulder: University of Colorado Press, 2003).

latent Unionism and a reluctance to volunteer for Confederate service and, in some cases, even a history of efforts to evade Confederate service, as the prime reasons why the men of the 1st U.S.V.I. chose to join the Union army.¹⁷

What these works largely do not engage, however, are the Confederate histories of these men before they enlisted in Federal service. Brown, in focusing on the regiments' service history largely ignores the lives of the men before they became prisoners of war and joined the U.S.V.I., and generally avoids questions of loyalty and motivation. Current successfully broaches the subjects of loyalty and motivation, but he too introduces little information about these men before they enlisted in the Union army and instead surmises that they were generally Lincoln loyalists who deserted the Confederacy to fight for the Union. Only Butts writes extensively about the antebellum and Confederate lives of the men in the regiment she investigated, but her work falls just short of being comprehensive and indicates only that either strong Unionism or a reluctance to fight for the Confederacy influenced these men's decision to enlist in the Union army in 1864.¹⁸

It is important, however, that scholars now consider the loyalty and motivation of these men who comprised the United States Volunteer Infantry. Recent scholarship has picked up on the theme of loyalty and motivation as an interesting and by no means simple facet of Civil War history. James M. McPherson was one of the first to write about loyalty and motivation in the Civil War. His book, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War*, has quickly become one of the chief resources used in subsequent studies of Civil War soldier loyalty and motivation.¹⁹ McPherson ably demonstrates that Civil War soldiers fighting for either the Union

¹⁷ Butts, *Galvanized Yankees on the Upper Missouri*.

¹⁸ Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*; Current, *Lincoln's Loyalists*; Ibid.

¹⁹ James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades: Why Men Fought in the Civil War* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997).

or the Confederacy took loyalty very seriously and often wrote about it and their personal motivations—both ideological and practical—for choosing and maintaining allegiances. Following McPherson’s work, Jason Phillips published *Diehard Rebels: The Confederate Culture of Invincibility*, which looks more closely into the sustaining motivations, oftentimes ideological, of Confederate soldiers who remained steadfastly dedicated to the Confederate cause throughout the war.²⁰ Three years later, Kenneth W. Noe published *Reluctant Rebels: The Confederates Who Joined the Army after 1861*, the counterpoint to Phillips’ study of Confederates who retained their support of the Confederacy for the duration of the war.²¹ Noe’s study of Confederates who did not immediately volunteer to fight introduces new conceptions of Confederate loyalty and motivation, and helps to dispel the illusion that loyalty and motivation during the Civil War were simple, black-and-white notions and that people on one side of the conflict were equally as loyal or enjoyed the same motivations for fighting. Importantly, he also lends credence to Butt’s argument that latent Unionism and a reluctance to fight for the Confederacy may have influenced U.S.V.I. soldiers’ decision to switch sides and fight in the Union army.²²

Noe’s research supports Butts’ conclusions that the men of the 1st United States Volunteer Infantry were generally Unionists who had been reluctant to fight in the war for the Confederacy and happily took the opportunity to join the Union army when it was offered to them in 1864, but such conclusions cannot be extended to all six of the U.S.V.I. regiments because the 1st U.S.V.I. was unlike any other regiment. The 1st U.S.V.I. differed from all other U.S.V.I. regiments because it was raised to deploy against Confederate forces, and every

²⁰ Jason Phillips, *Diehard Rebels: The Confederate Culture of Invincibility* (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 2007).

²¹ Kenneth W. Noe, *Reluctant Rebels: The Confederates Who Joined the Army after 1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

²² Butts, *Galvanized Yankees on the Upper Missouri*; *Ibid.*

Confederate prisoner of war who joined the regiment did so knowing that they would be fighting their former comrades. But shortly after the 1st U.S.V.I.'s first encounter with Confederate guerrillas in North Carolina, Union officials realized that, if captured, these men would undoubtedly be hanged for desertion or treason.²³ They knew it was wrong to submit the men to this extreme danger and decided to deploy all subsequent U.S.V.I. regiments against Indians and never again against Confederate forces, a policy that Union recruitment officers explained to all future enlistees.²⁴ This policy shift may have influenced the type of Confederate prisoner who volunteered to serve in the U.S.V.I.—it may no longer have been only Unionists and reluctant rebels who agreed to serve in the Union army. Thus, to understand the loyalties and motivations of all U.S.V.I. soldiers, the scholar must look at one or more of these regiments as well. Perhaps the loyalties and motivations of the U.S.V.I. were not as uniform as scholars have made them out to be.

The 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry, raised at Rock Island Prison in Rock Island, Illinois in October 1864, was the first U.S.V.I. regiment in which all of the soldiers in its ranks had joined knowing that they would serve against Indians and not their former Confederate comrades.²⁵ It is the best example of a regiment formed under this new deployment policy and allows one to interpret the loyalties and motivations of this second wave of recruits.

This study focuses on the men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry. It begins in Chapter One by investigating the questions of policy surrounding the recruitment of the unit. Drawing heavily on primary source material in *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* and the memoirs and papers of Abraham

²³ *OR*, Ser. I, vol. XL, 820-821.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, Ser. I, vol. XLI, Pt. II, 619; John Y. Simon, ed., *The Papers of Ulysses S. Grant*, vol. 11 (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1984), 385-386.

²⁵ Frederick H. Dyer, *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion*, vol. 3 (Des Moines: The Dyer Publishing Company, 1908), 1717.

Lincoln, Ulysses S. Grant, and Benjamin F. Butler, it argues that the policy of enlisting Confederate prisoners of war developed similarly to the Lincoln Administration's policy of confiscation and emancipation. Both began with a series of *ad hoc* field orders cobbled together into an official policy of the Administration. So too, it maintains that the Lincoln Administration developed the initial recruitment policy in 1864 as an outgrowth of Lincoln's 1863 Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction.

After demonstrating the way the general policy of enlisting Confederate prisoners of war into the Union army came to be, Chapter One highlights the reasons and means by which the Lincoln Administration revised the policy after the creation of the 1st United States Volunteer Infantry. Specifically, it investigates how and why the Lincoln Administration changed the purpose of the U.S.V.I. regiments and prevented subsequent regiments from serving against the Confederacy. It then describes how resistance to draft quotas, burgeoning support for Union General George B. McClellan's 1864 bid for the Presidency, the ever expanding glut of Confederate prisoners in Union prison camps, and the threat posed by the recent bloody uprisings of Plains Indian tribes against the Federal government coalesced to make the formation of a second regiment of U.S.V.I. soldiers attractive and in October 1864 led to the enlistment of the 2nd U.S.V.I. Again relying heavily on primary source material, Chapter One closes with a summary of the process by which the 2nd U.S.V.I. formed, the disagreement among Lincoln, Edwin M. Stanton, and Ulysses S. Grant regarding this process, and finally, describes the direct immediate effect of the enlistment of prisoners at Rock Island.

The second chapter of the study focuses on the men in the regiment and delves into their possible loyalties and motivations. Employing data mined from Union and Confederate enlistment records, the 1860 Federal Census records, and regimental service records, it begins

with a statistical analysis of the regiment, emphasizing the men's Confederate service, and contrasting the 2nd U.S.V.I. with the statistics from James M. McPherson and Joseph T. Glatthaar's studies of the Union and Confederate armies as a whole.²⁶ Following the statistical analysis, Chapter Two discusses the men's possible motivations for enlisting in the U.S.V.I., including war-weariness, lack of initial or continued support for the Confederate cause, a pragmatic desire for improved rations or early release, a desire to minimize or end physical and emotional suffering, and hope for a better future on the Plains. The chapter also includes a comparison of those who decided to enlist in the U.S.V.I. and those who remained steadfastly attached to their Confederate allegiances, relying on the published memoir and diary of two Rock Island prisoners who did not join the U.S.V.I.: John Wesley Minnich and Lafayette Rogan.²⁷

The Epilogue rounds out this study with a conclusion about the loyalty and motivation of the men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry and an analysis of the regiment's broader significance. It asserts that the men of the 2nd U.S.V.I. were probably most motivated by war-weariness, a sense of the Confederacy's impending demise, and a very real and pragmatic desire to end their suffering, privation, and hardship. The final portion of the Epilogue offers an interpretation of the U.S.V.I. program's significance as a rehearsal for the Lincoln Administration's plans for reconstruction and as the vanguard for the next chapter in American history.

²⁶ The Union and Confederate service records, 1860 Federal Census records, and the regimental service records were all accessed on Ancestry.com and Fold3.com. The copies of the records stored in these two online databases are scans of the original records housed in the National Archives and Records Administration building in Washington, D.C.. McPherson's data is included in his book, *For Cause and Comrades*, while Glatthaar's data comes from his book, *Soldering in the Army of Northern Virginia: A Statistical Portrait of the Troops Who Served Under Robert E. Lee* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011).

²⁷ John Wesley Minnich, *Inside of Rock Island Prison from December, 1863, to June, 1865* (Nashville: Publishing House of The M. E. Church, South, 1908); Lafayette Rogan, *The Diary of Lafayette Rogan, 1863-1865*, Prepared for Rogan family (1938), Entry of 11 September 1864, <http://www.arsenalhistoricalsociety.org/museum/docs/diary1.pdf>.

In writing this work, it was difficult to decide what to call these men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry. Should they be termed “repentant rebels,” as Enoch G. Adams deemed them?²⁸ Perhaps they should be called by their adopted name, ‘Galvanized Yankees’. Maybe they should simply be referred to as United States Volunteers or the men of the U.S.V.I. By the end of the study, however, the choice was clear. It would be inappropriate to call them “repentant rebels” because that term suggests too strongly either that they were once hardcore Confederates who wished to be forgiven for their earlier allegiances, or that they were always sympathetic to the Union, but, after having served against it, now repented their sins and desired to be pure Unionists once more. Neither, however, did the term ‘Galvanized Yankees’ fit because, despite the men’s seeming desire to own and internalize it, it unduly belittled the men’s Federal service and insinuated that their oath of allegiance to the Union and their service to it was false. The clear choice was to refer to them as United States Volunteers. No other term so succinctly captures who these men were and what they were fighting for. They were United States Volunteers because they were fighting for a slowly reunifying United States of America, one no longer focused on the differences between North and South or Yankee and Rebel, but instead bent on projecting its power westward against a semi-foreign ‘other’—Plains Indians—in a distinctly American mission: westward expansion.

²⁸ Adams, *Frontier Scout*, Vol. 1, no. 15, 12 October 1865.

Chapter One

“I Reckon You’ll Have to Execute the Order” The Creation of the Second United States Volunteer Infantry Regiment

It was an early fall morning when, on 21 September 1864, President Abraham Lincoln made the short walk from the White House to the War Department to pay a visit to Secretary of War Edwin Stanton. Lincoln must have been frustrated and annoyed as he made his way to the old building at the corner of 17th Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. Lincoln was a frequent visitor to the War Department—often arriving late in the evening to read the telegrams that arrived from field officers describing the day’s bloodshed and carnage. Yet in this instance he was on a different mission, one which he had been forced to execute before, but one which was nonetheless bothersome.

Just twenty days earlier, on 1 September 1864, Lincoln ordered Colonel Henry S. Huidekoper of the 150th Pennsylvania Volunteers accompanied by Judge Solomon Newton Pettis of Pennsylvania to go to the Union prison camp at Rock Island, Illinois.¹ Huidekoper and Pettis were to execute a plan that they and Lincoln had developed to address four problems plaguing the Lincoln Administration: resistance to draft quotas, burgeoning support for Union General George B. McClellan’s 1864 bid for the Presidency, the ever expanding glut of Confederate prisoners in Union prison camps, and the recent bloody uprisings of Plains Indian tribes against the Federal government. Their plan provided that the two Pennsylvanians would first travel to Rock Island and ascertain the names of Confederate prisoners of war held there who might be willing to sign oaths of allegiance and enlist in the United States Army. Once they obtained a list of names, Huidekoper would telegraph them to Brigadier General James B. Fry, Provost

¹ Roy P. Basler, ed., *The Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, vol. 7 (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1953), 530; *OR*, Ser. III, vol. IV, 680.

Marshal General, who would, once he was certain that these Confederate volunteers had taken the oath, enlist them in the Union Army and form them into another regiment of United States Volunteer Infantry (U.S.V.I.), much like the 1st Regiment, U.S.V.I. recently formed by General Benjamin F. Butler using Confederate prisoners of war held at Point Lookout Prison in Maryland.² Fry would also make certain that the number of prisoners enlisted at Rock Island would count toward Pennsylvania's enlistment quota.³

Perhaps Lincoln did not fully understand the scope of this order or the effect it would have, but when Stanton caught wind of the plan and eventually became fully aware of it, he flatly refused to execute the order. Lincoln, still holding to the plan he had devised with Huidekoper and Pettis, reiterated his order to Stanton on 20 September, asking him to "please take the proper steps" and have the volunteers "examined, mustered in and discharged from prison, so as to be properly credited."⁴ Stanton again refused.

After the second refusal, Lincoln decided to speak with Stanton directly. As he made his way to the War Department on 21 September, it was this conflict that weighed on his mind. Stanton, aware of Lincoln's impending visit, requested that Fry join the two men and "state the facts in the case... as [he] had previously done to the Secretary alone."⁵ Fry once again presented the facts and articulated the strong case against Lincoln's order. He argued that, "being prisoners of war; [the men] could not be used against the Confederates." If the prison recruits could not be used against the Confederates, they could only be used against the Plains Indians, but "all that was necessary towards enlisting them in our army for Indian service was the

² Dyer, *Compendium of the War*, 1717.

³ Basler, *Collected Works*, vol. 7, 530; *OR*, Ser. III, vol. IV, 680.

⁴ Basler, *Collected Works*, vol. 8, 14.

⁵ John G. Nicolay and John Hay, *Abraham Lincoln, A History*, vol. 5 (New York: Century Company, 1890), vol. 5, 146-147; "Abraham Lincoln. Lord of Himself, Leader of Others. General James B. Fry Relates Some Characteristic Anecdotes of the War President," *New-York Daily Tribune*, 28 June 1885, 3.

Government's release of them as prisoners of war; [and] that to give them bounty and credit them to a county which owed some of its own men for service against the Confederates would waste money and deprive the army operating against a powerful enemy of that number of men." Besides, Fry asserted, because "they had no relation whatever to the county to which it was proposed they should be credited," they could not be used to reduce Pennsylvania's draft quota as Lincoln had hoped.⁶ It was a hard argument to refute.

After Fry presented his case against executing the order, Stanton confronted Lincoln directly: "Now, Mr. President, those are the facts, and you must see that your order cannot be executed." Lincoln was unmoved. Once Stanton had finished, Lincoln replied simply: "Mr. Secretary, I reckon you'll have to execute the order."⁷ Despite Stanton's continued pleading, Lincoln remained resolute in his decision to carry out the order. Later, however, he intimated that he had some misgivings in a letter to General Ulysses S. Grant in which he advised that "the thing went so far before it came to the knowledge of the Secretary of War that in my judgment it could not be abandoned without greater evil than would follow its going through."⁸ Finally, after much resistance, the Secretary gave in to the President, and allowed Huidekoper and Pettis to raise their regiment of Confederate-turned-Union soldiers.

The prisoners Huidekoper and Pettis gathered at Rock Island would become the men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry. Mired in controversy and hampered by bureaucratic inefficiency, this policy of pardoning Confederate prisoners and enlisting them into the Union army to serve against the Plains Indians was slow to evolve. The formation of this regiment represented the final stage of a wartime policy that took nearly three years to evolve from a field

⁶ Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln, A History*, vol. 5, 146-147; "Abraham Lincoln," *New-York Daily Tribune*, 28 June 1885.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ Basler, *Collected Works*, vol. 8, 17-18; *OR*, Ser. III, vol. IV, 740.

commander's proposal in February 1862 into a viable solution to a series of problems that plagued the Lincoln Administration and the Union. Colonel James A. Mulligan, a New York-born Irishman living in Chicago, Illinois, was the innovative field commander who initiated the evolution of this peculiar policy.

On 27 February 1862, Colonel James A. Mulligan of the 23rd Illinois Volunteer Infantry, Irish Brigade, sent a letter to General Henry W. Halleck, Commander of the Department of Missouri, in which he proposed a novel idea. Stationed at Camp Douglas, a Union prison camp outside of Chicago, Illinois, overflowing with recently captured Confederate soldiers from Tennessee, Mulligan discovered that "there are many who became soldiers in the army of the rebels by compulsion or overwhelming necessity." He "felt certain that many of them are loyal and abhor this nefarious war." He also noted that many of the prisoners were Irish by birth, not native-born Southerners. He asked Halleck: were they to "be released, take the oath of allegiance, then enlist and be sworn into some of my companies would it be objectionable in any point of view?"⁹

Halleck's answer came on 10 March 1862. Having waited and heard nothing from his superiors at the Headquarters of the Army that would prevent him from embracing Mulligan's suggestion, he authorized Mulligan to "fill up his regiment by the enlistment of paroled prisoners and gave instructions in relation thereto." Unfortunately, on 15 March, five days after approving Mulligan's request, Halleck received the decision of the War Department he had been waiting for that prohibited the enlistment of prisoners of war.¹⁰ The Union was not, at that time, struggling to fill its ranks as it would by late 1863, but was instead buoyed by a steady stream of patriotic volunteers; unorthodox means of increasing manpower were simply unnecessary. By

⁹ *OR*, Ser. II, vol. III, 335.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Ser. II, vol. IV, 616.

the time Halleck received the conflicting orders, however, Mulligan had already enlisted 228 Confederate prisoners from Camp Douglas, assigned them to the 23rd and 65th Illinois Volunteer Infantry, and sent them into the field.¹¹ In the ensuing inquiry, Army investigators castigated Mulligan for acting “without authority and in violation of [his] special duty” and admonished Halleck for his role in the blunder.¹² Looking beyond the fact that the Confederate prisoners were enlisted without the permission or blessing of either the Headquarters of the Army or the Lincoln Administration, its implication is clear: Confederate prisoners of war, at least those born outside of the United States, were willing to enlist in the Union army and fight against their erstwhile Confederate comrades.

Mulligan was not the only Union officer who saw the untapped potential of Confederate prisoners of war. Between Mulligan’s enlistment campaign and the Army inquiry, Colonel William Hoffman, the Commissary General of Prisoners, also proposed converting Confederate prisoners into Union soldiers. On 15 July 1863, he wrote General Lorenzo Thomas, Adjunct General of the U.S. Army, concerning the “Frequent inquiries...made by prisoners of war and their friends whether in the case of a general exchange all will be compelled to...go South whether they wish to do so or not.” Many of these people claimed that they or their friends “wished to remain at the North and enter our service.”¹³ Could they stay, Hoffman queried, provided they could be singled out and made to take the oath of allegiance? He received no answer.

Not until General Ambrose E. Burnside, Commander of the Department of the Ohio, pressed the War Department to allow him to enlist captured Confederate soldiers was Hoffman’s question answered. On 20 July 1863, Burnside received notice that “when it can be reliably

¹¹ *OR*, Ser. II, vol. IV, 615

¹² *Ibid.*, 615-616.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 223.

shown that the applicant was impressed into rebel service and that he now wishes in good faith to join our army, he may be permitted to do so on his taking the oath of allegiance.” It was “left for the examining officer to satisfy himself [that] prisoners’ statements” regarding the manner in which they entered the Confederate military were reliable.¹⁴ The order pleased Burnside, satisfied Hoffman, vindicated Mulligan, and set in motion a wave of new enlistments, but it was short-lived.

In less than a month, Lincoln’s wavering Secretary of War, Edwin M. Stanton, reversed the War Department’s decision to enlist Confederate prisoners of war. In General Order No. 286, issued on 17 August 1863, Stanton made it clear:

1. No prisoner of war, after having been reported to the Commissary-General of Prisoners, will be discharged except upon an order from the commissioner for the exchange of prisoners, who will act under instructions from this Department....

3. In general, the mere desire to be discharged upon taking the oath of allegiance will furnish no sufficient ground for such discharge....¹⁵

From then on, captured Confederate soldiers would remain prisoners indefinitely.¹⁶ In an order to all Union prison commandants issued shortly after General Order No. 286, Colonel Hoffman made the War Department’s intent even more transparent: “The Secretary of War directs that hereafter no prisoners of war be enlisted in our Army without his special sanction in each

¹⁴ *OR*, Ser. II, vol. VI, 31. This evaluation standard was actually very similar to the standard that the Union employed after the war to evaluate the legitimacy of those who made claims that they had been Unionists during the war. Such individuals had to be able to demonstrate or prove that they had worked actively to overcome the issue of forced impressment or conscription.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 212.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Ser. II, vol. VII, 62-63. Stanton issued General Order No. 286 the same day that General Ulysses S. Grant wrote General Benjamin F. Butler that the exchange cartel would cease until the Confederate government agreed to treat captured black Union soldiers the same as captured white Union soldiers and to parole an equivalent number of captured Union soldiers as the Confederacy had declared no longer paroled and now active-duty after they had been paroled following the Union victories at Vicksburg and Port Hudson. The Confederate government’s decision refusal to accede to Grant’s demands, combined with Stanton’s order, effectively ended the cartel in August 1863 and with it, any chance Confederate prisoners had of early release.

case.”¹⁷ Because such special approvals were highly unlikely, the order effectively eliminated all possibility of enlisting Confederate prisoners into the Union army.

The order did not, however, end the debate over the enlistment of Confederate prisoners. In 1863 General Benjamin F. Butler, Commander of Fort Monroe, a major entrepôt for captured Confederates, pressed the Lincoln Administration to grant him the authority to enlist Confederate prisoners from Point Lookout Prison into the Union army. Ignoring previous orders to the contrary, on 27 December 1863 Butler wired Stanton in an attempt to persuade him to reverse his earlier decree: “Is there any objection to my enlisting as many prisoners as may desire to do so—after they know they can be exchanged—either in the regular or volunteer force of the United States or that of any State?”¹⁸ Before answering Butler, Stanton consulted with Lincoln.

Lincoln was amenable to revising the ban on enlisting Confederate prisoners of war into Union service. On 8 December 1863, he issued his “Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction”. In it he revealed his intention to use his executive authority to grant pardons and pardon persons who “heretofore engaged in said rebellion [now wish] to resume their allegiance to the United States, and to reinaugurate [sic] loyal state governments within and for their respective states,” provided that said persons “take and subscribe an oath, and thenceforward keep and maintain said oath inviolate; and which oath shall be registered for permanent preservation...”¹⁹ With this proclamation in mind, Lincoln answered Butler’s inquiry on 2 January 1864, initiating what would become in many ways a rehearsal for his lenient plan for Southern Reconstruction after the war, forgiving the past and moving rapidly toward a reunified future.

¹⁷ *OR*, Ser. III, vol. III, 722.

¹⁸ Benjamin F. Butler, *Butler’s Book: Autobiography and Personal Reminiscences of Major-General Benjamin Butler* (Boston: A. M. Thayer & Co., 1892), 584.

¹⁹ “Abraham Lincoln, Tuesday, December 8, 1863 (Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction),” *The Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress*, Ser. 1, General Correspondence, 1833-1916.

Lincoln's order to Butler of 2 January 1864, however, approved the discharge of only two classes of prisoners from Point Lookout, "Those who will take the oath prescribed in the proclamation of December 8 and, by the consent of General Marston, will enlist in our service" and "Those who will take the oath and be discharged and whose homes lie safely within our military lines."²⁰ Those seeking amnesty and release had once had to prove that they had originally been Unionists, or that they had been forced into Confederate service against their will, or that they had deserted Confederate service at the first opportunity; now they had to answer just four simple questions:

First. Do you desire to be sent South as a prisoner of war for exchange?

Second. Do you desire to take the oath of allegiance and parole, and enlist in the Army or Navy of the United States, and if so in which?

Third. Do you desire to take the oath and parole and be sent North to work on public works, under penalty of death if found in the South before the end of the war?

Fourth. Do you desire to take the oath of allegiance and go to your home within the lines of the U.S. Army, under like penalty if found South beyond those lines before the end of the war?²¹

Each volunteer had to read these questions aloud and to himself. Once each man had made his decision, he had to sign his name under the question to which he was giving an affirmative answer.²² Men who answered to the second question affirmatively were the men Butler was interested in.

After receiving his orders, Butler set to work implementing the new program. Within only three months, Butler's program had become so successful that he wrote Hoffman requesting more prisoners to fill the ranks of his new regiments. "I wish you would send to me at Point Lookout what privates, prisoners of war, there are at Fort Delaware, and from other points," he wrote in March; "I have nearly a regiment recruited. I can get more when I get more

²⁰ *OR*, Ser. II, vol. VI, 808.

²¹ Current, *Lincoln's Loyalists*, 115; *Ibid.*, 823.

²² *OR*, Ser. II, vol. VI, 823.

prisoners.”²³ Once Butler received instructions from General James B. Fry, Provost Marshal General, to recruit, muster, and organize his newly made Union soldiers, they became the 1st United States Volunteer Infantry (U.S.V.I.)²⁴

The 1st United States Volunteer Infantry was unique among U.S.V.I. regiments because the men who formed its ranks joined the Union army “upon the same terms as other soldiers in the U.S. Army.”²⁵ This meant that they could be used in any way and be deployed anywhere, even in the Confederacy.²⁶ Seizing this opportunity, on 27 July 1864 Brigadier General Israel Vogdes, Commander of the District of Eastern Virginia, ordered the 1st U.S.V.I. to deploy from Norfolk, Virginia, to Elizabeth City, North Carolina, and to take part in an expedition “for the purpose of capturing horses, cotton, and other contraband property” in the state’s eastern counties.²⁷ The expedition was part of a much larger campaign of raiding in eastern North Carolina intended to exploit the weak Confederate flank, harass and disrupt Confederate trade, foment discontent among the Confederate people, support and encourage Unionists along the Carolina coast, and allow Southern Unionists to govern themselves and begin reconstructing their lives.²⁸

This routine foray was, however, an extremely dangerous mission for the newly minted Union soldiers. These men, who had donned Confederate grey and now wore Union blue, would not be treated as prisoners of war if they were captured, but would instead be treated as traitors or deserters. Nearly forty percent of the men in the 1st U.S.V.I. were North Carolinians who had

²³ *OR*, Ser. II, vol. VI, 1033-1034.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 1090.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 826.

²⁶ Current, *Lincoln’s Loyalists*, 115.

²⁷ *OR*, Ser. I, vol. XL, 820-821.

²⁸ Barton A. Myers, *Executing Daniel Bright: Race, Loyalty, and Guerilla Violence in a Coastal Carolina Community, 1861-1865* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009), 37, 64, 75; Judkin Browning, *Shifting Loyalties: The Union Occupation of Eastern North Carolina* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011), 55-56, 76-78.

fought for the Confederacy and now faced almost certain death if the Confederates captured them.²⁹ Indeed, an early indication that this was the fate that awaited captured U.S.V.I. soldiers had occurred only a few months earlier. In what would become known in the North as the Kinston Massacre, in February 1864, Confederate General George Pickett had ordered the execution of twenty-two former Confederates turned Union soldiers after they had been, in Pickett's words, "tried and convicted by court-martial for desertion from the Confederate service."³⁰ Pickett's actions made it abundantly clear how the Confederacy would deal with the soldiers of the U.S.V.I. Fortunately for the men, they all returned home safely, bringing with them captured cotton, tobacco, and horses.³¹ Yet the danger posed to the men of the U.S.V.I. was very real, and as soon as General Ulysses S. Grant heard of the U.S.V.I.'s operation in North Carolina, he immediately moved to limit their liability.

When he heard about the 1st United States Volunteer Infantry's actions in North Carolina on 9 August 1864, Grant realized that there was real danger involved in sending former Confederate troops against their erstwhile brothers in arms. He felt certain that the 1st U.S.V.I. was "a first-class regiment," and that by sending them against their former comrades, he was putting them at risk of deadly retaliation.³² The Confederacy had initially been fairly lenient when dealing with captured deserters, generally sentencing them to confinement, reduced rations, whipping, bucking and gagging, and other *non-lethal* punishments; by April 1863, the Confederate government had made it clear that any deserters captured after that time would be

²⁹ Current, *Lincoln's Loyalists*, 124; Butts, *Galvanized Yankees on the Upper Missouri*, 243; Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*, 72.

³⁰ Lesley J. Gordon, *General George E. Pickett in Life and Legend* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1998), 130-132.

³¹ *OR*, Ser. I, vol. XL, 821.

³² *Ibid.*, Ser. I, vol. XLI, Pt. II, 619; Simon, *Ulysses S. Grant*, vol. 11, 385-386.

found guilty of desertion and summarily executed.³³ In his report to General Henry Halleck, Grant concluded, “it is not right to expose them where, to be taken prisoners, they must surely suffer as deserters [and be executed].”³⁴

It was not right, and Grant would not allow it to happen again. But because he was unwilling to deploy the men of the U.S.V.I. against Confederate soldiers, he had to find a place to employ them. Just as Grant was searching for a safer place to send these seemingly ‘useless’ soldiers, the Western frontier ignited in a blaze of Indian rebellions from Minnesota south to New Mexico Territory, a response to increasing migration into the Plains and retaliation for the Sand Creek Massacre.³⁵ Realizing that the uprising gave him a way out, Grant ordered the 1st U.S.V.I. to General John Pope’s Department of the Northwest to help suppress the rebellious Indians.³⁶ In doing so, Grant set official Army policy for the next five U.S.V.I. regiments that were organized, including the regiments from Rock Island. No more Confederate prisoners who volunteered for service would be enlisted in regiments sent South against their former Confederate companions; they would serve exclusively against Indians on the Great Plains.

As this policy of enlisting Confederate prisoners of war evolved, distinct similarities emerged between it and the development of the Lincoln Administration’s confiscation and emancipation policy. The development of the Administration’s policy concerning the confiscation and emancipation of slaves followed much the same path as the development of the prisoner enlistment policy. Both began as a series of individual orders from field commanders and junior officers that were consistently revoked by the Administration, but eventually were

³³ Current, *Lincoln’s Loyalists*, 118; Malcolm C. McMillan and W. Buck Years in *The Confederate Governors*, ed. W. Buck Years (Athens: The University of Georgia Press, 1985), 34, 68.

³⁴ *OR*, Ser. I, vol. XLI, Pt. II, 619; Simon, *Ulysses S. Grant*, vol. 11, 385-386.

³⁵ Ari Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre: Struggling over the Memory of Sand Creek* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013), 170-173.

³⁶ Current, *Lincoln’s Loyalists*, 124; Simon, *Ulysses S. Grant*, vol. 11, 385-386; *OR*, Ser. I, vol. XLI, Pt. II, 619.

cobbled together and accepted as policy. For the confiscation and emancipation policy, these field orders began with General Benjamin F. Butler's contraband confiscation policy—which heavily influenced the passage of the First and Second Confiscation Acts in Congress—followed by General John C. Frémont's confiscation policy in Missouri, and General David Hunter's martial law and emancipation in the Department of South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida.³⁷ The Lincoln Administration consistently refused to support the orders and the laws that grew out of them, the First and Second Confiscation Acts, until finally, in 1863, Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation, distilling the virtues of the field orders into one concrete, explicit policy.

Much like the confiscation and emancipation policy, the prisoner enlistment policy began with field orders, first from men like Colonel James B. Mulligan and later from men like Commissary General of Prisoners Colonel William Hoffman and General Benjamin F. Butler. Both Lincoln and Secretary of War Edwin Stanton initially overturned their actions, until, out of military necessity and an increasing acceptance of innovative, albeit unorthodox solutions to the maelstrom of military woes, they accepted the prisoner enlistment policy and in 1863 made it a facet of Lincoln's policy of amnesty and reconstruction. Both policies, in which General Butler was a key innovator, were novel but necessary. The confiscation and emancipation policy became necessary when the Lincoln Administration determined to find a means of delivering a deathblow to the Confederate economy and morale. The enlistment policy, however, developed out a far more complex web of military and political necessities.

On 9 August 1864, General Ulysses S. Grant wrote to General Henry Halleck explaining his reservations about the use of United States Volunteer Infantry regiments against the

³⁷ Howard P. Nash, Jr., *Stormy Petrel: The Life and Times of General Benjamin F. Butler, 1818-1893* (Rutherford, NJ: Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, 1969), 108-109; Robert S. Holzman, *Stormy Ben Butler* (New York: Macmillan Company, 1954), 41-43.

Confederacy and ordered that they henceforth be used exclusively against Indian tribes. His announcement finalized a policy that had been over two years in the making. From then on, all U.S.V.I. soldiers would follow the same mode of enlistment, be sent to the same theatre of war, and serve in the same capacity. It seems odd that it took the Union so long to adopt, refine, and employ this policy of enlisting enemy prisoners, especially because the Confederacy had officially adopted a similar policy as early as March 1863 and had begun enlisting captured Union soldiers even earlier.³⁸ Yet the timing of the completion of the Union's prisoner enlistment policy was purely coincidental—the result of a perfect storm of political, military, and administrative problems.

As 1864 and the third year of civil war began, the Lincoln Administration faced widespread public resistance to the draft, a burgeoning of support for Union General George B. McClellan's 1864 Presidential bid, a massive flood of Confederate prisoners into an already over-taxed system for managing prisoners, and the rise of Indian resistance on the Great Plains. Alone, each of these problems posed only a minor threat to the Lincoln Administration and the Union war effort, but taken together, they were truly intimidating. The result was a serious problem for the Lincoln Administration, one that made even an unorthodox solution like enlisting Confederate prisoners into the Union army an attractive one.

Just as the Lincoln Administration was preparing for another year of bloody war against the Southern Confederacy, it faced one of the largest obstacles to the war effort: draft riots. The recent Union victories at Gettysburg and Vicksburg on 4 July 1863 had helped to turn the tide of the war in the Union's favor, but the battles were extremely costly. Indeed, the Gettysburg

³⁸ *OR*, Ser. II, vol. V, 845. On 7 March 1863, Confederate Secretary of War James A. Seddon wrote to General J. C. Pemberton, authorizing him to "Use your discretion with regard to men taken as prisoners of war. Enlist if any are willing. Let any willing take the oath of allegiance. Put any willing to work. Parole and dismiss toward their own country such as you may deem safe."

Campaign alone cost the Union more than 31,000 men killed, wounded, captured, or missing.³⁹ Union recruitment officers, acting in accordance with the terms of the Enrollment Act of 1863, drafted increasing numbers of young men.⁴⁰ Some of the men who could not afford to hire a replacement or avoid their call to serve by another means turned to violent resistance. The New York City Draft Riots of July 1863 were a telling example of the degree to which segments of public opinion had turned against the draft. Beginning on 13 July, for four days enraged city residents took to the streets, lynched a dozen black people, torched black and abolitionist homes, businesses, and an orphanage, and caused general mayhem until police and Federal troops violently suppressed the mob, killing between 120 and 1,200 rioters.⁴¹ This raucous resistance was by no means restricted to New York—Pennsylvania was also a hotbed of opposition. Struggling under the intense demands for Union recruits and still reeling from the destruction wrecked at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania's support for the Lincoln Administration was teetering. Unfortunately for Lincoln, this crisis occurred on the eve of a highly contested Presidential election.

Lincoln needed Pennsylvania in order to win reelection in 1864. Pennsylvania was the second most populous state in the Union, rich in electoral votes, and in the beginning of 1864, it seemed to be up for grabs. The draft was a particularly thorny issue for many Pennsylvanians, and resistance, although not as outwardly violent as in New York City, made General George B. McClellan's conciliatory policy towards the South and desire to end the war rapidly all the more popular, especially in the countryside where many residents voted Democratic, resisted the draft,

³⁹ Stephen W. Sears, *Gettysburg* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2003), 496.

⁴⁰ "An Act for enrolling and calling out the national Forces, and for other Purposes," Congressional Record. 37th Cong. 3d. Sess. Ch. 74, 75. 1863. March 3, 1863.

⁴¹ James M. McPherson, *Ordeal By Fire: The Civil War and Reconstruction*, 2nd ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1992), 357-358.

and harbored Confederate sympathies.⁴² It did not help matters that McClellan was a native Pennsylvanian. Lincoln was keenly aware of this situation and needed a means to secure the Commonwealth and its electoral votes. The opportunity presented itself in September 1864 when two Pennsylvanian Republicans, Colonel Henry S. Huidekoper and Judge Solomon Newton Pettis, proposed an ingenious way to relieve Pennsylvania's burdensome draft quota and mollify its voters.⁴³ They knew about the recruitment of U.S.V.I. soldiers out of Point Lookout in early 1864 and proposed to Lincoln that they recruit Confederate prisoners from the prison barracks at Rock Island, Illinois, to enlist in the Union, but count them toward Pennsylvania's draft quota. They were certain that "[Pennsylvanian voters'] gratitude will be manifested at the Polls."⁴⁴ Indeed, Huidekoper and Pettis may have been right; just before the election, Lincoln approved their plan and shortly thereafter, Pettis reported that "Our people are alive—Nothing ever helped our cause here as your order, and the manner which you have so justly sustained it when assailed has quickened their efforts and renewed their energies."⁴⁵ Pennsylvania voters sided with Lincoln in the 1864 election, but he won only narrowly, beating McClellan by just over 20,000 votes, or 3.4 percent.⁴⁶

While the Lincoln Administration was running into manpower shortages on the battlefield and relying heavily on conscription in 1863 and 1864, Union prison camps were overflowing with men. The Union military victories of 1863 had been costly not only for the North but also for the Confederacy. The Confederacy lost almost 30,000 men captured at Vicksburg, another 5,000 at Gettysburg, and another 6,000 at Chattanooga, all within in the span

⁴² Robert M. Sandow, "'Grudges and Loyalties Die So Slowly': Contested Memories of the Civil War in Pennsylvania's Appalachia" in *Reconstructing Appalachia: The Civil War's Aftermath*, ed. Andrew L. Slap (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 2010), 274-276.

⁴³ Current, *Lincoln's Loyalists*, 124.

⁴⁴ "Solomon Newton Pettis to Abraham Lincoln, Monday, September 26, 1864", *The Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress*, Ser. 1. General Correspondence, 1833-1916.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*

⁴⁶ *Presidential Elections: 1789-2008*, 10th ed. (Washington: CQ Press, 2009), 135.

of a few months. Previously, influxes of prisoners had been relatively simple to deal with thanks to the success of the Dix-Hill prisoner exchange cartel between the Union and the Confederacy, established in July 1862, which helped both the Union and the Confederacy ease the burden on its prison system. Indeed, in July 1862, just before the cartel began, Union prisons held 20,500 prisoners; after only one month of exchanges, that number had fallen by over thirty-five percent to 13,241 inmates. By the end of 1862, that number had been further reduced to only 1,286 Confederate prisoners in Union hands in only six camps.⁴⁷

In 1863, however, two incidents brought the exchange cartel to a halt: the first was the Union's response to the Confederate pronouncement that it would not treat all captives as legitimate prisoners of war; the second, that it would kill or re-enslave any captured black soldiers and execute their white officers for facilitating slave rebellion.⁴⁸ The Union's response to these decrees was swift and decisive. On 27 October 1863, Colonel William Hoffman, Commissary General of Prisoners, wrote to all Union prison camp commandants, "You will please inform all prisoners of war under your charge that for the present no more discharges will be granted."⁴⁹ Some informal exchanges continued until General Ulysses S. Grant confirmed the Union's hardline policy: "no distinction whatever will be made in the exchange between white and colored prisoners" and there must be "released to us a sufficient number of officers and men as were captured and paroled at Vicksburg and Port Hudson." "Non-acquiescence by the Confederate authorities," Grant warned, "in both or either of these propositions will be regarded as a refusal on their part to agree to the further exchange of prisoners.... [and] not another

⁴⁷ Charles W. Sanders, Jr., *While in the Hands of the Enemy: Military Prisons of the Civil War* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2005), 116, 122-123.

⁴⁸ James M. McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1988), 791-792; *OR*, Ser. II, vol. VII, 62-63.

⁴⁹ Roger Pickenpaugh, *Captives in Gray: The Civil War Prisons of the Union* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2009), 199; *OR*, Ser. III, vol. III, 722.

Confederate prisoner of war will be paroled or exchanged.”⁵⁰ The first demand was meant to ameliorate the concern over the Confederate treatment of black prisoners; the second was a direct response to the sudden recapture of Confederate soldiers paroled at Vicksburg. Citing “technical irregularities” in the manner in which Grant had paroled 30,000 Confederate prisoners at Vicksburg, the Confederacy declared their paroles invalid, considered them exchanged, and brought them back into service without releasing an equivalent number of Union prisoners.⁵¹ When the Confederates refused to accede to the Union demands, the exchange of prisoner ceased.

With the exchange cartel gone, the glut of Confederate prisoners from the Union’s 1863 victories quickly overwhelmed the Union prison system. On 30 June 1863, just before the joint Union victories at Vicksburg and Gettysburg, the Union prison system had 6,062 inmates. A month later, that number had risen to 17,457.⁵² Hoffman, suddenly facing another prison crisis, made Herculean efforts to expand the capacity of the system and to construct new installations. Rock Island Prison Barracks, built in July 1863, was one of the prisons hastily erected to absorb this flood of prisoners, but it was an utter failure from the very beginning.⁵³

The location Hoffman chose for the prison, a large island in the middle of the Mississippi River outside of Rock Island, Illinois, was suitable for a prison camp, but its potential was significantly undermined by the actions of Quartermaster General Montgomery C. Meigs, Sr. Meigs ordered that “The barracks for prisoners at Rock Island should be put up in the roughest and cheapest manner—mere shanties, with no fine work about them, and the work should, if

⁵⁰ *OR*, Ser. II, vol. VII, 62-63.

⁵¹ Benjamin G. Cloyd, *Haunted by Atrocity: Civil War Prisons in American Memory* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2010), 7-10; McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom*, 792.

⁵² *OR*, Ser. II, vol. VIII, 991.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, 994, 998. There were 35,549 inmates in Union prison camps by the time the Commissary General of Prisoners’ Office opened Rock Island in December 1863. When the first U.S. Army recruiters arrived less than a year later in October 1864, that number had climbed to 57,098 inmates.

possible, be done by contract and in the shortest possible time.”⁵⁴ When it opened, Rock Island lacked a hospital, an adequate supply of clothing, blankets, and water, the means to remove sewage, and sufficient numbers of guards and administrators.⁵⁵ The barracks, in accordance with Meigs’ order, had been constructed using cheap green, uncured wood that, by the time winter arrived, had dried, leaving large gaps between the siding and floorboards through which the winter winds, some of the coldest on record, howled. Rock Island was a miserable place.⁵⁶ Worse still, it was one of the more successful prison camps the Union ran, demonstrating the degree to which the Union’s management of prisoners of war failed and the severity of the problem the Lincoln Administration faced in addressing it.⁵⁷

Just as the Lincoln Administration struggled to balance the demands of war on both the battlefield and the home front, it had to deal with the Great Plains in 1864 when Indian violence erupted from Minnesota to New Mexico. Infuriated by the increasing numbers of white settlers encroaching on their ancestral lands, slaughtering their game, plundering their streams and mountains in search of gold, murdering their men, women, and children, the Plains Indians—the Sioux, Cheyenne, Kiowa, Comanche, and Arapaho—began to fight back. The raids that began in 1862 were sporadic and relatively harmless, though perhaps not for settlers who encountered the raiding parties, but they were a challenge the few Federal and state volunteer garrisons could handle on their own. By the summer of 1864, however, the previously small-scale raids had

⁵⁴ Sanders, *While in the Hands of the Enemy*, 171-172; Pickenpough, *Captives in Gray*, 74; *OR*, Ser. II, vol. VI, 196.

⁵⁵ Pickenpough, *Captives in Gray*, 75.

⁵⁶ Benton McAdams, *Rebels at Rock Island, The Story of a Civil War Prison* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 2000), 34-36, 45-46.

⁵⁷ James M. Gillispie, *Andersonvilles of the North: The Myths and Realities of Northern Treatment of Civil War Confederate Prisoners* (Denton, TX: University of North Texas Press, 2008), 145-146.

blossomed into an all-out Indian war that swept across the Great Plains, engulfing Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa, Colorado, Minnesota, and the Dakota and New Mexico Territories.⁵⁸

Attacked on all sides—by the Sioux and Arapaho from the north, the Cheyenne from the west, and the Comanche and Kiowa from the south—the scattered, disorganized, and ill-equipped Union garrisons quickly crumbled.⁵⁹ Then, in a bold effort to reassert Federal dominance on the frontier, Colorado cavalry under Colonel J. M. Chivington staged a devastating attack on the Cheyenne at their winter camp at Sand Creek, Colorado on 29 November 1864. The ensuing slaughter, the Sand Creek Massacre, inspired the Indians to fight back with a vengeance, murdering frontier families, slashing telegraph lines, attacking mail and stage coaches, and besieging frontier forts to avenge their slain relatives.⁶⁰ The Indians were so successful that for more than a month in 1864, all communication between California and the East ceased except for messages sent around South America or over the Isthmus of Panama. The Coloradans too were deeply affected; they could receive their supplies, mail, and news from the East only if it went first by boat to San Francisco and then overland from California.⁶¹ With commerce and communication at a standstill, the Lincoln Administration had to act, but at first there was little it could do; it could not spare enough troops from the Southern theatre to defeat the Indians. Faced with the reality of a two-front war, Lincoln and the Union's leading generals struggled to find a solution. Fortunately, it was not long before the two Pennsylvanians walked into the White House and dropped the solution into Lincoln's lap.

The solution was to raise another regiment of Confederate prisoners—the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry—like the 1st United States Volunteer Infantry that would fight in

⁵⁸ Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*, 4.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

⁶⁰ Kelman, *A Misplaced Massacre*, 170-173.

⁶¹ Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*, 4.

exchange for freedom. But unlike the 1st U.S.V.I. that was the final development of a long evolution in policy, the 2nd U.S.V.I. was born out of a storm of politics, political intrigue, and debates among some of the most powerful men in the nation. It began with the demand for troops to feed the Union war machine. The gory battles of 1863 and 1864 were bleeding the army dry. Without fresh recruits, the Union war effort would founder. Sensing the urgency of the situation, the Lincoln Administration issued a proclamation on 17 October 1863 calling on the States and territories to raise an additional 300,000 recruits. These men would be volunteers, but if any state failed to fulfill its enlistment quota, the proclamation provided that “a draft for the deficiency in said quota shall be made...for their [the state or district’s] due proportion of the quota.”⁶² Pennsylvania was required to contribute 38,268 men. The state was already struggling under the weight of earlier enrollment quotas—it already faced an enlistment deficit of 52,825 men at the time of the 1863 proclamation—and was still reeling from the effects of the Confederate invasion of 1863 and the carnage at Gettysburg.⁶³ Colonel Henry S. Huidekoper and Judge Solomon Newton Pettis, two enterprising men intent on easing Pennsylvania’s burden while lining their pockets with the spoils of a wartime economy, had a solution for the crisis.

Huidekoper and Pettis saw in Pennsylvania’s plight a chance to get rich while masquerading as patriots. Pettis knew that in his hometown of Oil City, Pennsylvania, substitutes for men called up by the draft were being paid about \$1,000 each.⁶⁴ Pettis also knew—thanks to a friend who had recently returned from a visit to Illinois—that there were hundreds of Confederate prisoners of war at Rock Island Prison who would fight for the Union if

⁶² *OR*, Ser. III, vol. III, 892.

⁶³ *Ibid.*

⁶⁴ James W. Geary, *We Need Men: The Union Draft in the Civil War* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1991), 145; McAdams, *Rebels at Rock Island*, 138.

they received the \$100 Federal bounty that was paid to volunteers.⁶⁵ He saw a chance to make a massive profit if he could use Confederate prisoners as draft substitutes. Huidekoper and Pettis would enlist the prisoners and pay them the \$100 bounty, make the prisoners available as substitutes for Pennsylvanian draftees, charge the draftee the \$1,000 substitute fee, and pocket the \$900 difference, all the while easing Pennsylvania's draft burden and winning the hearts of their fellow citizens.⁶⁶ But how could prisoners from Illinois fulfill Pennsylvania's draft quota? Such a move required power and influence. Huidekoper and Pettis decided to travel to Washington and consult with the President.

Lincoln was receptive to a deal that would win him support in Pennsylvania. The presidential election of 1864 seemed to be close, and Lincoln needed to win the support of Pennsylvania's voters. Huidekoper and Pettis provided a means to obtain that support. If Lincoln would allow Confederate prisoners at Rock Island to enlist and to count toward Pennsylvania's draft quota, it might ease Pennsylvania's resistance to the draft and Lincoln's wartime policies. That shift in opinion could be the advantage that he needed to secure the votes that would push the state his way. Lincoln further understood that the enlistment of additional Confederate prisoners could alleviate the burden on the Union prison system by draining men out of the prison population, just as the exchange cartel had done previously. It was the panacea he had been waiting for.

On 1 September 1864, Lincoln outlined the plan in an order to Huidekoper:

⁶⁵ McAdams, *Rebels at Rock Island*, 138.

⁶⁶ "Solomon Newton Pettis to Abraham Lincoln, Saturday, September 10, 1864", *The Abraham Lincoln Papers at the Library of Congress*, Ser. 1. General Correspondence, 1833-1916. Pettis flatly denied such unethical motivations in a letter to Lincoln from Rock Island on 10 September 1864. While Pettis had "no doubt good will come out of your [Lincoln's] order beyond relieving the Government of the expense of keeping them [about 2,000 Confederate prisoner volunteers] here, and swelling the number of the Union army," he absolutely maintained that "I shall receive no advantage from the arrangement." How was he sure that he would not receive such any such advantage: "because *I will* not."

It is represented to me that there are at Rock Island, Ills. as rebel prisoners of war, many persons of Northern and foreign birth, who are willing to be exchanged and sent South, but who wish to take the oath of allegiance and enter the military service of the Union. Col. Huidekoper on behalf of the people of some parts of Pennsylvania wishes to pay the bounties the government would have to pay to proper persons of this class, have them enter the service of the United States, and be credited to the localities furnishing the bounty money. He will, therefore proceed to Rock Island, ascertain the names of such persons (not including any who have attractions Southward) and telegraph them to the Provost Marshal General here, whereupon directions will be given to discharge the persons named upon their taking the oath of allegiance; and then upon the official evidence being furnished that they shall have been duly received and mustered into the service of the United States, their numbers will be credited as may be directed by Col. Huidekoper.⁶⁷

He ordered Huidekoper and Pettis to go to Rock Island, collect the names of prisoners willing to enlist in the Union army—they had to have been born in either the North or a foreign country—and once the list was approved, muster the new troops, pay their bounties, and credit the Pennsylvania communities that provided the money to pay the bounties.⁶⁸

On 20 September, after ordering Huidekoper and Pettis to Rock Island to execute the plan, Lincoln ordered Stanton to comply and follow through with the Administration's end of the deal.⁶⁹ Stanton refused. Nothing Lincoln or Stanton may have written about the altercation that followed has survived, but General James B. Fry, the Provost Marshal General, was present during the tense meeting between the two men and wrote about the confrontation:

Then Lincoln went in person to Stanton's office, and I was called there by the latter to state the facts in the case. I reported to the two high officials, as I had previously done to the Secretary alone, that these men already belonged to the United States, being prisoners of war; that they could not be used against the Confederates; that they had no relation whatever to the county to which it was proposed they should be credited; that all that was necessary towards enlisting them in our army for Indian service was the Government's release of them as prisoners of war; that to give them bounty and credit them to a county which owed some of its own men for service against the Confederates would waste money and deprive the army operating against a powerful enemy of that number

⁶⁷ Basler, *Collected Works*, vol. 7, 530.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*; *OR*, Ser. III, vol. IV, 680.

⁶⁹ Basler, *Collected Works*, vol. 8, 14.

of men, etc. Stanton said: “Now, Mr. President, those are the facts, and you must see that your order cannot be executed.” Lincoln sat upon a sofa with his legs crossed, and did not say a word until the Secretary’s last remark. Then he said, in a somewhat positive tone: “Mr. Secretary, I reckon you’ll have to execute the order.” Stanton replied with asperity: “Mr. President, I cannot do it.” Lincoln fixed his eye upon Stanton, and in a firm voice, and with an accent that clearly showed determination, he said: “Mr. Secretary, it will have to be done.” Stanton then realized that he was overmatched. He had made a square issue with the President and been defeated, notwithstanding the fact that he was in the right. Upon an intimation from him I withdrew and did not witness the surrender. A few minutes after I reached my office I received instructions from the Secretary to carry out the President’s order.⁷⁰

Lincoln demanded that the plan be carried out. Few men could have stood up to Lincoln, but Stanton was one who could. Stanton’s argument against executing the order was superb, but Lincoln knew what needed to be done and forced Stanton to comply. What Lincoln did not realize at the time was that Stanton was not the only powerful opponent of the plan.

Shortly after stifling Stanton’s opposition, Lincoln discovered that General Ulysses S. Grant, his General-in Chief, was also unhappy with the plan. He wrote Grant on 22 September explaining his reasons for ordering a plan that was opposed by both his Secretary of War and his commanding general. “I was induced, upon pressing application, to authorize agents of one of the Districts of Pennsylvania to recruit in one of the prisoner depots in Illinois,” he explained, “and the thing went so far before it came to the knowledge of the Secretary of War that in my judgment it could not be abandoned without greater evil than would follow its going through.”⁷¹ He claimed that he “did not know, at the time, that you [Grant] had protested against that class of thing being done.” In a gesture of good will, he admitted his “blunder” and promised that “while

⁷⁰ Nicolay and Hay, *Abraham Lincoln, A History*, vol. 5, 146-147; “Abraham Lincoln,” *New-York Daily Tribune*, 28 June 1885.

⁷¹ *OR*, Ser. III, vol. IV, 740.

this particular job must be completed, no other of the sort, will be authorized, without an understanding with you, if at all.”⁷² Grant fell into line.

After reconciling Stanton and Grant to the plan, all that remained to do was decide the manner in which the recruits would be organized and what their assignment would be. Stanton wrote Grant on 25 September, “The President some time ago authorized a regiment of prisoners of war at Rock Island to be enlisted into our service.... The question now arises, how shall they be organized, officered, and assigned to duty?”⁷³ Grant, by this point focusing on more important questions, replied on the same day: “Your dispatch in relation to the organization of troops from prisoners of war is just received. I would advise that they be placed all in one regiment, and be put on duty either with Pope, or sent to New Mexico.”⁷⁴

With minimal direction from Grant, the work fell on General James B. Fry. On 8 October 1864, Fry issued orders that were slightly different from Lincoln’s initial order to Huidekoper but remained true to his intentions. The only major changes removed “the restriction in the President’s order limiting the recruits to persons of foreign and Northern birth,” and left “the question of good faith on the part of those offering to enlist...to the judgment and discretion of Colonel Johnson and Colonel Caraher. The limit of the whole not to exceed 1,750 men.”⁷⁵ Other questions remained: would the Union extend amnesty to men who volunteered but could not enlist for medical reasons? What would happen to the men who enlisted while they waited to be mustered in? Who would lead them? Grant and Fry answered these questions piecemeal over several months. By Fry’s order of 8 October, the 2nd U.S.V.I., although designed

⁷² Basler, *Collected Works*, vol. 8, 17; *OR*, Ser. III, vol. IV, 740.

⁷³ *OR*, Ser. III, vol. IV, 744.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 756-757.

by greedy men, opposed by the Secretary of War and the General-in-Chief, and comprised of a ragtag bunch of former enemies and traitors, was put into operation.

The recruits Fry produced were a diverse assortment of men from almost every state in the South and a handful of Northern states and foreign countries. Their motivations for abandoning the Confederate cause and joining the Union army were varied, but if they thought that life would be better for them after they joined the Union army and escaped the prison at Rock Island, most were in for an unpleasant surprise. After volunteering for service, each man had to sign enlistment papers and swear to “bear true faith and allegiance to the United States of America, and [to] serve them honestly and faithfully against all their enemies or opposers [sic] whomsoever; and [to] observe and obey the orders of the President of the United States, and the orders of the officers appointed over me, according to the Rules and Articles of War.”⁷⁶ He then left the general prison population in the “bull pen” and moved into the barracks set aside for him in what would become known as the “calf pen”.

Life in the calf pen was little better than life in the bull pen. The men had been promised better rations, new uniforms, and pay, but they received little or nothing. This was not, however, because their new military superiors harbored a deep-seated hatred for the new recruits or reaped some perverse pleasure from seeing former Confederate soldiers suffer; rather, it was the result of a major bureaucratic failure.⁷⁷ Just as the men of the 2nd U.S.V.I. were being recruited, General John Pope, the commanding officer to whom Grant intended to send the new recruits, forwarded the commanding general a letter from General Henry Hastings Sibley which

⁷⁶ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com).

⁷⁷ *OR*, Ser. III, vol. IV, 940.

condemned the U.S.V.I. soldiers as “desperate characters,” capable of any crime and ready to desert at the first opportunity.⁷⁸ Sibley requested that no more U.S.V.I. regiments be sent to the western frontier.⁷⁹ Unable to send the new recruits into battle against the Confederacy and requested not to send them to the western frontier; the War Department left the Rock Island recruits to waste away in the calf pen. This put the men in a quandary that Colonel Adolphus J. Johnson pointed out to General James B. Fry: “Since they [the new recruits] are no longer prisoners of war they are entitled to the rights of U.S. soldiers” and no longer entitled to rations of food and clothing from the prisoners’ portion, but “as they are not organized,” neither could they be issued rations by the quartermaster.⁸⁰ Trapped in this legal limbo, the men were forced to live in a “pen [that] is close and tiresome” and reduced to “shivering around the barracks stoves, which are kept red-hot in order that they do not freeze” all without adequate food and clothing.⁸¹ “These men are to be pitied,” Johnson wrote; “As there are camps of organization all through the West, could they not be ordered to one of them?”⁸²

Fortunately for the men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry, military necessity soon answered Johnson’s question. The increasing military woes on the Great Plains in 1864 prompted field commanders there to reconsider rejection of the U.S.V.I. regiments. When they needed more manpower, the new Confederate prisoner recruits did not seem so useless after all. Indeed, the situation became so dire that General Pope asked the War Department for “two regiments of rebel deserters from Rock Island to post on the Overland route,” but only “if experienced and suitable officers can be appointed.”⁸³ Finally, in February 1865, a response

⁷⁸ Current, *Lincoln’s Loyalists*, 126.

⁷⁹ *OR*, Ser. I, vol. XLI, pt. III, 677.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, Ser. III, vol. IV, 940.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*

⁸² *Ibid.*

⁸³ Current, *Lincoln’s Loyalists*, 127; *Ibid.*, Ser. I, vol. XLVIII, pt. I, 760.

came from Secretary of War Edwin Stanton; he authorized Pope to organize the regiment and appoint officers, but only if the men were “in service now, or have been honorably discharged. So far as can be done, they should be familiar with frontier life.”⁸⁴ Pope wasted no time appointing officers and organizing the regiment. At last, between 20 and 24 February 1865, the men of the 2nd U.S.V.I. left the calf pen, boarded trains, and went into the wild expanses of the Great Plains.⁸⁵

⁸⁴ *OR*, Ser. I, vol. XLVIII, pt. I, 761.

⁸⁵ Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*, 15.

Chapter Two

“Oh How Depraved the Men of the Present Generation are Become” A Study of the Men who Switched Sides

On Sunday, 11 September 1864, Private Lafayette Rogan of the 34th Mississippi Infantry, a Confederate prisoner of war held in the Union prison camp in Rock Island, Illinois, cursorily described in his diary a novel development in camp life. “[The] Yanks,” he wrote, “[made] a call for volunteers offering \$100 for year as bounty and promise not to oppose them to the rebel army.”¹ Perhaps he thought nothing would come of the new policy; perhaps he had faith that his comrades would not abandon the Confederate cause so easily and so wrote little of the new policy. He was wrong. Only a day later, on 12 September, Rogan wrote: “The heart grows sick and the soul sinks within me when I see so many deserting our cause. From 1500 to 2000 of the prisoners here will enlist for frontier service.”² Over the next few days, Rogan watched as scores of his former brothers-in-arms “deserted” the Confederacy and joined their former enemy, exchanging their tattered grey and butternut rags for fresh blue uniforms. After enduring a little more than two weeks of this demoralizing experience, Rogan broke down, writing on 30 September, “This is the saddest day of all the days of my prison life. 15 men deserted us and take up arms against our cause. Oh how depraved the men of the present generation are become. Self, home, parents, dearwife [*sic*], and children are abandoned for the sake of a few oz of meat and bread – God forgive.”³ Rogan never again wrote so passionately about the desertions; his only other entries concerning the Union prison recruitment program—the only two entries—simply catalogued the number of soldiers who chose to enlist. Despite his wretched condition and utter hopelessness, Rogan never revealed any temptation to follow in the footsteps of so

¹ Rogan, *The Diary of Lafayette Rogan*, Entry of 11 September 1864.

² *Ibid.*, Entry of 12 September 1864.

³ *Ibid.*, Entry of 30 September 1864.

many of his former comrades. He remained true to the Confederate cause, believing firmly in the Confederate cult of invincibility—the Confederacy, he believed, *would not* and *could not* fail.⁴

It is difficult to understand why men like Lafayette Rogan would choose not to abandon the Confederacy when they were in many ways similar to the hundreds of men who, in the same situation and under the same pressures, opted to take the Union offer. Rogan was born on 21 January 1830 in Ashville, Alabama.⁵ When he volunteered for military service in the Confederate army on 26 February 1862, he was more than thirty-two years old, older than the average Confederate enlisted man.⁶ He was seemingly well-connected; Charles A. Brougher, the Secretary of State for Mississippi, recommended Rogan for an officer's commission in a letter he addressed to Judah P. Benjamin, the Confederate Secretary of War.⁷ Brougher's recommendation proved effective, and Rogan entered Confederate service as a second lieutenant in the 37th Mississippi Infantry. Rogan's service as an officer was brief; shortly after the Confederacy renamed his unit the 34th Mississippi Infantry, Rogan began appearing on enlistment records as a private.⁸ Rogan's service as a newly minted private began in the Army of Tennessee under Confederate General Braxton Bragg at Chattanooga.⁹ It was there, on top of Lookout Mountain, that Rogan's Confederate service quickly ended; he was captured by Union

⁴ Phillips, *Diehard Rebels*, 24-25, 36.

⁵ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Schedule of the Eighth Census of the United States*, 1860, Ripley, Tippah County, Mississippi, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M653, roll 592 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Ancestry.com).

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms, 1861-65, Citizen, Lafayette Rogan, Mississippi, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M346, roll 880, Confederate Papers Relating to Citizens or Business Firms, Compiled 1874-1899, Documenting the Period 1861-1865, Record Group 109 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com).

⁸ Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Mississippi, Thirty-fourth Infantry Regiment, Company B, Lafayette Rogan, Mississippi, 1862, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M269, roll 359, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Confederate Organizations, Compiled 1903-1927, Documenting the Period 1861-1865, Record Group 109 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com).

⁹ Joseph H. Crute, Jr., *Units of the Confederate States Army* (Midlothian: Derwent Books, 1987), 184.

forces on 24 November 1863. Six days later he was transferred from the field to the Union military prison at Louisville, Kentucky. From Louisville, Rogan was sent to Rock Island Barracks, Illinois, on 3 December 1863, where he remained for the duration of the war.¹⁰ During his time at Rock Island, despite the miserable living conditions, the grim news coming from the front lines, and the memory of loved ones far away and in danger, Rogan never waived in his support of the Confederate cause, writing ceaselessly of his belief that the ‘Yankee invader’ might still be defeated.

In a striking example of the Civil War as a brother’s war—a war in which families were torn apart by brothers, fathers, and sons who took opposing sides in the conflict—Confederate brothers-in-arms, if not actually brothers by blood, often split during the course of the war. This was certainly the case of the men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry. Some men like Lafayette Rogan remained confident of an eventual Confederate victory; others were apparently less optimistic and willingly cast off their Confederate allegiances in exchange for Federal promises of food and freedom. Joseph B. Dickey, a young soldier from Virginia’s Shenandoah Valley, was one such man who began the war on the side of the Confederacy, but during his imprisonment at Rock Island, abandoned the Confederate cause and donned the blue uniform of a Union soldier.

Sometime in 1843, on a small farm not far from the sleepy little town of Lexington, Virginia, nestled in the foothills of the Shenandoah Valley, Joseph B. Dickey was born. His parents, William F. and Elizabeth Dickey were farmers of meager means—they owned no land

¹⁰ Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Mississippi, Thirty-fourth Infantry Regiment, Company B, Lafayette Rogan, Mississippi, 1862, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M269, roll 359, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Confederate Organizations, Compiled 1903-1927, Documenting the Period 1861-1865, Record Group 109 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com).

and possessed an estate valued at only \$425.¹¹ For eighteen years, Joseph Dickey lived and worked on his family's small farm near Kerr's Creek. When the Civil War broke out in 1861, his quiet life took a dramatic turn. Like so many other boys his age—including his older brother, William Telford Dickey—Joseph Dickey joined the Confederate army.

William Telford Dickey, Joseph Dickey's older brother, was the first of the Dickey brothers to enlist. He volunteered during the first summer of the war, enlisting as a private in the 25th Virginia Infantry at Monterey, Virginia, on 5 August 1861. True to his Lexington roots, he served in Captain David P. Curry's Company, the "Rockbridge Guards". His soldiering days did not last long. The 25th Virginia Infantry took part in General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson's campaign through the Shenandoah Valley in 1862. While advancing through Highland County, Virginia, on 8 May, Jackson's army encountered enemy forces under the command of Brigadier General Robert H. Milroy near the town of McDowell.¹² In the ensuing battle, William was badly wounded in the thigh and transferred to a hospital in Staunton, Virginia. He died of his wounds six days later, on 14 May 1862.¹³

Perhaps it was the loss of his brother that spurred Joseph B. Dickey to join the Confederate army more than a year after his brother had made the same commitment; or perhaps the nineteen year-old had been ambivalent about fighting, but was determined to avoid being drafted and suffering the social costs of failing to volunteer.¹⁴ Whatever the reason, in October 1862, four months after his brother's death, Joseph volunteered for military service. He enlisted

¹¹ U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Population Schedule of the Eighth Census of the United States*, 1860, District Five, Rockbridge County, Virginia, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M653, roll 1378 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com).

¹² Crute, *Units of the Confederate States Army*, 374.

¹³ Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Virginia, Twenty-fifth Infantry (Heck's Regiment), Company H, William T. Dickey, Virginia, 1863, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M324, roll 692, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Confederate Organizations, Compiled 1903-1927, Documenting the Period 1861-1865, Record Group 109 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com).

¹⁴ McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 23-25, 80; Noe, *Reluctant Rebels*, 108-112.

as a private in Company D, 36th Virginia Cavalry Battalion, in Union, Virginia, now part of Monroe County, West Virginia.¹⁵ His unit was active in the field, even participating in the battle of Gettysburg, but Joseph somehow evaded his brother's fate. After Gettysburg, the 36th Virginia Cavalry regrouped in western Virginia and marched west to join Lieutenant General James Longstreet's campaign around Knoxville, Tennessee in the fall of 1863.¹⁶ It was there that Joseph's luck ran out. On 18 December, following an engagement with Union troops at Bean's Station, Union forces made Joseph a prisoner of war.¹⁷

After his capture, Dickey was a prisoner of war at Rock Island Barracks until 6 October 1864. He was not, however, released on 6 October. Rather, he took the Federal oath of allegiance and accepted the \$100 bounty offered by Colonel Henry S. Huidekoper of the 150th Pennsylvania Volunteers in exchange for enlisting in the Union army.¹⁸ For a year, Joseph fought for the Union as a member of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry. He was not alone in this startling transformation. Almost two thousand prisoners from Rock Island swapped their

¹⁵ Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Virginia, Thirty-sixth Battalion Virginia Cavalry, Company D, J. B. Dicky [sic], Virginia, 1864, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M324, roll 193, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Confederate Organizations, Compiled 1903-1927, Documenting the Period 1861-1865, Record Group 109 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com).

¹⁶ Crute, *Units of the Confederate States Army*, 380.

¹⁷ Compiled Service Records of Confederate Soldiers Who Served in Organizations from the State of Virginia, Thirty-sixth Battalion Virginia Cavalry, Company D, J. B. Dicky [sic], Virginia, 1864, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M324, roll 193, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Confederate Organizations, Compiled 1903-1927, Documenting the Period 1861-1865, Record Group 109 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com). It should be noted that not every soldier identified in this paper was indeed captured and made a prisoner unwillingly. In fact, both Federal and Confederate records list the men variably as having deserted, gone missing, died, surrendered, or been captured. Then as now, it is impossible to know exactly how these men wound up in Union hands. Confederate officers reported losses as anything *but* desertion so as not to harm morale or their reputation in the eyes of their superiors. On the other hand, there was an equally powerful incentive for Federal officers either to list men untruthfully as having deserted, demonstrating the demoralization of Confederate soldiers, or to list them as captured, demonstrating, at least on paper, the effectiveness of their forces at weakening the enemy. Regardless of the manner in which these men became prisoners, they were now in Union hands and were, prisoners of war.

¹⁸ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, Company E, Joseph B. Dickey, United States, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com).

tattered grey and butternut Confederate homespun for new blue Union uniforms. Joseph was typical of many members of the 2nd U.S.V.I. in other ways as well. He joined the Confederate army in 1862 as a boy from an impoverished household, a resident of a county not known for its strong support for the Confederacy, a soldier who wanted desperately to get out of prison and leave the Civil War behind him.

Dickey was one of roughly six thousand men from six Union prison camps in four states who chose to accept the Union offer of amnesty and become a member of the United States Volunteer Infantry, a ‘Galvanized Yankee’.¹⁹ The term ‘Galvanized Yankee’ can be misleading because it meant different things to different people at different times. In most contemporary papers, ‘Galvanized Yankees’ refers to the six regiments of United States Volunteer Infantry raised from Union prison camps and sent to the Great Plains to pacify rebellious Indians. The term is admittedly ambiguous, but it is the term that the men of the 2nd U.S.V.I. used to describe themselves.²⁰ But if Dickey was just one of thousands of these ‘Galvanized Yankees’, what were the rest of the men like?

The history of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry cannot be fully understood without looking carefully into the lives of the men who formed the regiment. They were, in many ways, an odd bunch of soldiers—traitors, by some accounts, to both the Union and the Confederacy, but also brothers-in-arms to both. Drawn from across the Southern and Northern United States as well as several foreign nations, they were a diverse group of men and boys. They came from almost every walk of life, many generations, and an assortment of Confederate

¹⁹ Dyer, *Compendium of the War*, 1717. In his *A Compendium of the War of the Rebellion*, Dyer lists the sites where the U.S.V.I. regiments were raised. The 1st U.S.V.I. was raised at Point Lookout Prison, Maryland; the 2nd and 3rd U.S.V.I. raised at Rock Island Barracks, Illinois; the 4th U.S.V.I. at Point Lookout Prison, Maryland; the 5th U.S.V.I. was comprised of men from Alton Military Prison, Illinois and Camp Douglas, Illinois; the 6th U.S.V.I. contained men from Camp Douglas, Illinois; Camp Chase, Ohio; and from Camp Morton, Indiana.

²⁰ Bowles, *Across the Continent*, 11; Richardson, *Beyond the Mississippi*, 331-332.

infantry, cavalry, and artillery units. In their motivation for joining the Confederate military and subsequently the Union army, they were equally diverse, joining for a host of different, often personal reasons.

Some motivations may have been more common than others to the men in the regiment for in many significant ways these men shared common characteristics and experiences. They were soldiers who fought for a cause, experienced the horrors of internment in a Union prison camp, and then fought for the other side for the remainder of the war. They chose to abandon their erstwhile comrades, take up arms against an entirely new enemy in the service of a new army, and abandon the relative safety of the prison camp for the unknown dangers of the Plains. They were a diverse band of men, and no history of the regiment is complete that does not study the men's lives before, during, and after enlistment in the Confederate and later the Union armies. By investigating the lives of these men, by focusing on their shared characteristics and the points at which they diverged from the prototypical Confederate soldier, scholars may be able to discern yet another characteristic the men shared with one another: their motivations for abandoning the Confederate cause and joining the Union army.

The age of the men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry varied widely. The average age of a 2nd U.S.V.I. soldier was 25.7 years, slightly younger than both his former Confederate companions (26.5 years) and his new Union brothers-in-arms (25.8 years).²¹ The war was, however, clearly a young man's fight. And indeed the average man of the 2nd U.S.V.I. was particularly young in comparison to the men of the Confederate army. The bulk of the men

²¹ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com). The average for the 2nd U.S.V.I. excludes those whose age could not be determined, reducing the sample size from 1058 to 941 soldiers. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, viii.

(44.42 percent) in the 2nd U.S.V.I. were born after 1840, but only 28.9 percent of the men in the Confederate army were born after that date.²² Similarly, 13.28 percent of the soldiers in the 2nd U.S.V.I. were born in or before 1830, making them at least thirty-four years old. Fully 22.5 percent of the soldiers in the Confederate army were at least thirty-four years old. The oldest enlisted man in the regiment, Private David Overton, was forty-six years old. Despite the young average age, few men in the 2nd U.S.V.I. were teenagers (12.1 percent) and only one out of the 941 soldiers whose ages can be identified was under the age of eighteen and would have had to get parental consent to join the army.²³ It was a young regiment, but it was a regiment composed of men, not boys.

The men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry came from a multitude of states, both Northern and Southern, as well as foreign nations. Indeed, soldiers in the 2nd U.S.V.I. hailed from all eleven Confederate states, eleven Northern states, the District of Columbia, and seven foreign nations.²⁴ Comparisons of the 2nd U.S.V.I. soldiers and Confederate soldiers in general are possible using information drawn from the samples compiled by Joseph T. Glatthaar and James M. McPherson. In the 2nd U.S.V.I., a slight majority of soldiers (51.49 percent) were from Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia. In the Army of Northern Virginia, however, Virginia and North Carolina were by far the most commonly represented states (46.7 percent).²⁵ In the Confederate army as a whole, Virginia and North Carolina were again disproportionately

²² Glatthaar, *Soldering in the Army*, 3-4.

²³ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com); See Appendix II, III, & IV.

²⁴ *Ibid.* The records for 152 out of 1058 soldiers, or 14.46 percent of the 2nd U.S.V.I. sample, either do not indicate where the soldier was from or the location could not be verified.

²⁵ Glatthaar, *Soldiering in the Army*, 4.

represented (twenty-nine percent).²⁶ By contrast, Virginians and North Carolinians made up only 9.61 percent of the 2nd U.S.V.I. The number of Northern and foreign-born troops in the 2nd U.S.V.I. was, however, considerably higher than in average Confederate units. Northerners made up 13.35 percent of the 2nd U.S.V.I. and foreigners another 12.27 percent. By comparison, the Army of Northern Virginia was comprised of only 7.8 percent Northern- and foreign-born soldiers *combined*, a full 17.82 percent fewer soldiers, proportionally, than the combined Northern and foreign percentage in the 2nd U.S.V.I.²⁷ Clearly, there was a major discontinuity between the averages for the 2nd U.S.V.I. and for the Confederate army, perhaps suggesting that Northerners, foreigners, and men from regions of states with large Unionist factions (like eastern Tennessee, northern Alabama, and northwestern Georgia) were more likely to join the Union army and become United States Volunteers.²⁸

There were also marked differences between the soldiers of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry and the Confederate army in regards to the men's civilian occupations. A lack of uniformity in the sampling and categorization methods slightly limits the comparison of civilian occupations of the 2nd U.S.V.I. and the Confederate army, but the comparison is still revealing. Both Glatthaar and McPherson discuss the occupations of the Confederate soldiers in their samples. Both men divide the wide range of occupations into six broad categories: professional, white-collar, skilled labor, unskilled labor, farmer, and students (in Glatthaar's sample) or planters (in McPherson's sample). Glatthaar and McPherson's neglect to describe

²⁶ McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 179.

²⁷ Glatthaar, *Soldering in the Army*, 4.

²⁸ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com); See Appendix V.

what occupations they place in each category, making a direct comparison difficult.²⁹ Only the student, farmer, and planter categories leave no room for misinterpretation. In this study of the 2nd U.S.V.I., the forty-five occupations identified in the soldiers' service records are divided into the six categories Glatthaar uses: professional, white-collar, skilled labor, unskilled labor, farmer, and student. The comparison that follows is limited by Glatthaar and McPherson's sampling and categorization, but provides a revealing look into the civilian lives of the men of the 2nd U.S.V.I.³⁰

The soldiers of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry led diverse lives before joining the Confederate, and eventually the Union, armies. As might be expected in units comprised chiefly of men from the agrarian South, farmers and planters made up the largest number of enlisted men; fully 72.74 percent of the regiment worked the land.³¹ McPherson's data support this proportion; nearly seventy-nine percent of the enlisted soldiers in his sample identified themselves as either farmers or planters. Glatthaar suggests, however, that a much lower proportion (53.7 percent) of the soldiers in the Army of Northern Virginia—19.04 percent less than the 2nd U.S.V.I.—were either farmers or planters.³² The similarities and differences between the three samples reverse for skilled laborers. Less than one out of ten 2nd U.S.V.I. soldiers (9.16 percent) identified themselves as skilled laborers. Glatthaar echoes this number, indicating that roughly 9.2 percent of the men in his sample were skilled laborers. McPherson reveals, however, that skilled laborers made up a mere 3.3 percent of Confederate soldiers in his

²⁹ Glatthaar, *Soldering in the Army*, 4. It should also be noted that Glatthaar fails to clarify whether he discriminates between officers and enlisted men in his sample as both McPherson and I do.

³⁰ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com); See Appendix VI & VII.

³¹ *Ibid.* As noted earlier, the occupational data given here for the 2nd U.S.V.I. excludes both officers and those whose occupation could not be determined or confirmed, reducing the sample from 1058 to 906 soldiers.

³² Glatthaar, *Soldering in the Army*, 5-6. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 181.

sample. The similarities break down entirely in the four remaining categories. In the 2nd U.S.V.I., 5.3 percent of the men were professionals, but Glatthaar cites 6.1 percent and McPherson only 3.8 percent. Unskilled laborers made up 7.95 percent of the 2nd U.S.V.I. regiment, but Glatthaar indicates that 13.2 percent of men of the Army of Northern Virginia fell into that category and McPherson claims that *none* of the soldiers in his sample were unskilled. The 2nd U.S.V.I. sample also suggests that less than one percent of the soldiers were students (0.55 percent), but Glatthaar identifies considerably more—13.8 percent of the soldiers in his sample were students. Finally, 4.3 percent of the men in the 2nd U.S.V.I. held white-collar jobs. Glatthaar supports this proportion in his sample (4.1 percent), but McPherson asserts that fully 13.9 percent of his sample was comprised of white-collar workers.³³ In summary, a comparison to Glatthaar's data suggests that the 2nd U.S.V.I. had a disproportionately large number of farmers and planters; a small number of professionals, unskilled laborers, and students; and an average number of skilled laborers and white-collar workers. On the other hand, a comparison to McPherson's data suggests that the 2nd U.S.V.I. had a disproportionately large number of professionals, skilled laborers, and unskilled laborers; a small number of white-collar workers; and an average number of farmers and planters. Regardless of whether the number of men in one occupational category is disproportionately high or low, both Glatthaar and McPherson suggest that the 2nd U.S.V.I. was not typical of the Confederate army.³⁴

A comparison between the men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry and those of the Confederate army can, however, only go so far in determining who these men were and why

³³ Glatthaar, *Soldering in the Army*, 5-6. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 181.

³⁴ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com); See Appendix VI & VII.

they chose to accept the Union's offer of amnesty in exchange for service. It is important to understand how these men, men like James B. Dickey, compare to the men at Rock Island Barracks, men like Lafayette Rogan, who opted *not* to accept the Union's offer. By comparing men who remained true to the Confederate cause with those who abandoned it—or at the very least, switched sides for pragmatic, if not ideological reasons—it becomes easier to understand why, when exposed to the same hardships, this difference in loyalties emerged.

Men who chose to accept the Union's offer of food, freedom, and amnesty were not entirely unlike their more dedicated Confederate comrades. They may not have been quite so well-connected as Lafayette Rogan appears to have been—few of them were officers in the Confederate military—but the majority of these men (eighty-seven percent) joined about the same time Rogan did, signing on in either 1861 or 1862 (forty-seven percent and forty percent, respectively).³⁵ Unlike the “reluctant rebels” Kenneth W. Noe identifies who were slow to join the fight for the Confederacy and perhaps did not support the Confederate cause, these men were part of the initial flush of volunteers who, motivated by patriotism, war fever, honor, a false expectation of a short war, or a desire to protect their families and homes, joined the fight at the beginning of the war. Few of these men—only thirteen percent—joined the Confederate military after 1862, making it far less likely that they entered Confederate service to avoid being drafted under the Confederate Conscription Act of 1862.³⁶

³⁵ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com). This data and the remainder of the data used here dealing with the comparison between the men who joined the Union and those who did not is gathered from a small, yet significant, random sample of soldiers in the 2nd U.S.V.I.; See Appendix VII for a brief description of the sample from which this data was gathered and how the sample was designed.

³⁶ *Ibid.*; See Appendix XII.

For many of the men who chose to join the Union after serving in the Confederacy, ties to friends, family, and home were important. Just as Rogan joined a Mississippi infantry regiment raised near his home, more than half of the men (fifty-nine percent) who went on to join the Union in 1864 began their service in Confederate units raised in their home states, often in their hometowns or counties. They often also joined the same regiments. Indeed, over forty-two percent of the men in the sample who had served in Alabama regiments came from just two regiments—the 24th and the 28th Alabama Infantry. By including the Alabamans from a third regiment, the 7th Alabama Cavalry, that number rises to fifty-seven percent of the men in the sample. The same is true, although not quite as dramatically, for the men from Florida, Mississippi, and Missouri. Many of these men, it appears, lived together, joined the Confederate army together, and then abandoned that cause together in the fall of 1864.³⁷

A number of the men who served in the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry were also captured together. Of the men in the sample of soldiers in the 2nd U.S.V.I., just over half (fifty-one percent) were captured by Union forces in Tennessee, most of them in the 1863 Chattanooga campaign at the battles of Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge. The next largest group of soldiers (twenty-six percent) was captured in Georgia. The rest (twenty-three percent) were captured in Alabama, Arkansas, Kentucky, Missouri, and Virginia. Most of the soldiers also ended their Confederate careers at the same time. Eighty-seven percent of the soldiers who switched sides and joined the Union in 1864 initially joined the Confederate military in the first two years of the war, but every soldier who switched sides was captured in the second two years of the war, 1863 and 1864; 1863 was the most common year in which the soldiers were captured

³⁷ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com).; See Appendix X & XI.

(sixty-four percent). The Civil War lasted until 1865, but for these weary soldiers, their Confederate war was over.³⁸

These men were present at Rock Island Barracks when, in the fall of 1864, Union army officers appointed by President Abraham Lincoln arrived at the prison to enlist Confederate prisoners into Union army service in exchange for amnesty, better food and clothing, freedom, and a guarantee that they would not fight the Confederacy.³⁹ The 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry was one of the two regiments formed at Rock Island Barracks in October 1864 as a result of this effort. The majority of the men (904) who enlisted in the 2nd U.S.V.I. joined the unit between 3 October and 17 October. Of those, 810, by far the majority, enlisted on either 6 October or 13 October. All but two of the enlisted men joined before 31 October 1864. Perhaps they were anxious about switching sides and the reception they would receive from their erstwhile comrades, but enlistment jumped 607 percent on second day and an additional 42.7 percent on the third day. Whatever inhibitions the Confederate prisoners might have had before the first day of enlistment were almost entirely gone by the third day. By mid-February 1865, most of the officers had joined the regiment, and on 22 May 1865, the last officer joined the regiment, well into its term of service, and only six months before the regiment mustered out after the close of the war. In short, the men who joined the 2nd U.S.V.I. were a diverse group, drawn from many generations, professions, and areas of the South, the North, and Europe.⁴⁰

³⁸ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com); See Appendix XII & XIII.

³⁹ Rogan, *The Diary of Lafayette Rogan*, Entry of 11 September 1864; Entry of 30 September 1864.

⁴⁰ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com); See Appendix I.

Equally as diverse were the men's motivations for leaving the Confederate army and joining the Union army. Their motivations stemmed from their early careers as Confederate soldiers and continued throughout their internment at Rock Island Barracks. They encountered a progression of opportunities for abandoning the Confederate cause. The soldiers who joined the United States Volunteer Infantry may have been less inclined to support the Confederate cause from the beginning of the conflict because many of them were drawn from regions of the South known for their strong Unionism.⁴¹ One might assume that these men were part of the group of soldiers Kenneth W. Noe describes as "reluctant rebels"—men who joined the Confederate war effort after the initial wave of recruits had ended. On the contrary, most of the men who eventually switched sides in 1864 were part of that initial surge of volunteers in 1861 and 1862. This initial willingness to volunteer, rather than strengthening their Confederate resolve, may have contributed to its weakness; the longer the men fought for the Confederacy, the more their war-weariness grew. When they were captured and interned at Rock Island, their wavering morale was assaulted by further hardships, a result of the terrible living conditions in the prison. The conditions were only made worse by their slow realization that the war was not going in the Confederacy's favor, that the conflict would one day be over and they would be utterly defeated. The prospect of life in a world ruled by their vengeful conqueror only heightened their concern for the future of their defenseless loved ones back home. Confederates who decided to renounce their Confederate service, proclaim their allegiance to the United States, and join the Union army may have drawn on any of these motivations when making their decisions. By looking more closely at each possible motivation, the scholar can begin to understand why these men did what

⁴¹ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com); See Appendix V.

they did, the strength of their loyalty to the Confederacy before they were captured, and what they hoped to achieve by enlisting in the 2nd U.S.V.I.

It is possible that the men who eventually decided to surrender their Confederate allegiances and enlist in the Union army were not true believers in the Confederate cause. The possibility that the former Confederates who comprised the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry were closeted Unionists during their service in the Confederate army is one of the most common theories used to explain why the men were willing to switch sides in 1864.⁴² The strength of this theory is its logic. If one were not a true Confederate, it would not be difficult to join the Union. Much of the data concerning the men's home states, counties, and towns lends credence to this idea. Indeed, the three states most heavily represented in the regiment—Tennessee, Alabama, and Georgia, made up fifty-three percent of the regiment—were home to large Unionist factions.⁴³ In Tennessee, Unionists were concentrated in mountainous East Tennessee; in Alabama they were chiefly concentrated in the Cooperationist-leaning counties along the Tennessee and Georgia border in the state's northern tier; and in Georgia they were most heavily represented in the Upcountry counties of North Georgia and along the Alabama border.⁴⁴ A majority of the men in the 2nd U.S.V.I. were from these areas.⁴⁵

⁴² Current, *Lincoln's Loyalists*; Butts, *Galvanized Yankees on the Upper Missouri*.

⁴³ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com); See Appendix V.

⁴⁴ Margaret M. Storey, *Loyalty and Loss: Alabama's Unionists in the Civil War and Reconstruction* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2004), 30-34; Steven Hahn, *The Roots of Southern Populism: Yeoman Farmers and the Transformation of the Georgia Upcountry, 1850-1890* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1983), 114-116.

⁴⁵ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com).

Tennessee and Alabama had strong Unionist factions that contributed to the Federal cause, but Georgia's contributions to the Union were far less impressive. In his seminal work on Southern Unionists, *Lincoln's Loyalists*, Richard Nelson Current emphasizes Tennessee and Alabama's contributions of roughly 42,000 and 3,000 men to the Union, but lists Georgia's contribution as only 400 men.⁴⁶ This number does not, however, take into account the 115 men identified as Georgians serving in the 2nd U.S.V.I.⁴⁷ The number of Georgians in the 2nd U.S.V.I. hints that the number of Georgia's Unionists was greater than Current suggests. Indeed, this is the argument Steven Hahn makes in *The Roots of Southern Populism*. Hahn notes that the Georgia Upcountry was a hotbed of Unionist and Cooperationist support—men who may not have been ideologically committed to the Union, but who chose to cooperate rather than resist. He argues that this lack of loyalty was chiefly a product of class conflict between poor yeomen farmers fighting a rich planter's war and the rich planters themselves; by concern for their defenseless families the largely slave-less yeomen left behind to manage their farms; and by disaffection when the Confederacy began conscripting men, confiscating property, levying the tax-in-kind, taking what little the farms produced, depriving their families of food, clothing, and safety.⁴⁸ Evidence suggests that some of the men in the 2nd U.S.V.I. may have been Unionists, Cooperationists, or estranged and disillusioned Confederates. At the very least, for some of the men, it was easy to switch from the Confederacy to the Union because of their political or ideological beliefs, and their realistic concern for the welfare of their families.

⁴⁶ Current, *Lincoln's Loyalists*, 218.

⁴⁷ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com); See Appendix V.

⁴⁸ Hahn, *Roots of Southern Populism*, 116-133.

If, however, many of the men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry did not support the Confederate cause, whether because of latent Unionism or cooperationism, one might reasonably suspect that many of those men would not have joined the Confederate army until late in the war. This is the thesis that Kenneth W. Noe proposes in his exhaustive *Reluctant Rebels*. Noe argues that the presence of many of the men in the Confederate military was the result not of a genuine desire to fight for the Confederacy, but instead the result of coercion exerted by the Confederate government, their communities, or necessity. Many of these men, especially Unionists, did not enter the war until 1863 or 1864 when the Confederacy made it increasingly difficult to evade conscription.⁴⁹ It follows, then, that if the men of the 2nd U.S.V.I. were reluctant rebels who joined the Confederate army after the first rush of volunteers in 1861 and early 1862, they may have been more inclined to abandon the Confederacy when the opportunity presented itself in 1864. But this was in fact not the case. Indeed, eighty-seven percent of the men in the 2nd U.S.V.I. joined the Confederacy in either 1861 or early 1862. Only thirteen percent joined after 1863 and none joined in 1864.⁵⁰ It seems far less likely that reluctance to join the Confederate cause contributed to their decision to renounce the Confederacy in 1864, but their early enlistment in the Confederate army may have contributed to their willingness to switch sides.

Paradoxically, joining the Confederate army before 1863 and 1864 may have done more to increase the probability that a Confederate prisoner would accept the Union's offer of amnesty and service rather than to diminish it. By enlisting early in the conflict, the Confederate soldiers

⁴⁹ Noe, *Reluctant Rebels*.

⁵⁰ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com); See Appendix XII.

who joined the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry had far more battle experience than soldiers who joined in late 1863 or early 1864. Additional weeks and months spent enduring the privations of a soldier's life—inadequate food, clothing, and supplies, as well as the rigors of campaigning and battle, constant marching, death, disease, combat, pain, and suffering—took a heavy physical, mental, and emotional toll on the soldiers.⁵¹ This additional battle experience may have contributed more to their war-weariness, fatigue, and demoralization.

This is particularly true for the men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry. Many of the eighty-seven percent of 2nd U.S.V.I. soldiers who joined the Confederate army in 1861 and early 1862 served in regiments that fought in the disastrous battles of the Western Theatre—Vicksburg, Missionary Ridge, and Lookout Mountain where the Confederacy suffered dizzyingly high casualty rates. Three regiments, the 4th Florida Infantry, the 28th Alabama Infantry, and the 27th Mississippi Infantry, were telling examples of the violence many of the men saw before their capture.⁵² The 4th Florida Infantry reported 983 officers and men when it organized in 1861 near Jacksonville, Florida. It served primarily in the Army of Tennessee and fought at Murfreesboro, Chickamauga, and Missionary Ridge where it lost forty-two, forty, and eighty-nine percent of the men engaged. By December 1863, the unit could muster only 198 men; by the time it surrendered in 1865, that number had been further reduced to just twenty-three men.⁵³ The 28th Alabama Infantry fared only slightly better. It formed at Shelby Springs, Alabama, with 1,100 men, and from the very beginning, suffered heavy casualties from disease and combat. After joining the Army of Tennessee, it fought at Murfreesboro and then at

⁵¹ Hahn, *Roots of Southern Populism*, 123.

⁵² Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com); See Appendix X.

⁵³ Crute, *Units of the Confederate States Army*, 75-76.

Lookout Mountain where it suffered tremendously. By December of 1863, the unit had declined to 276 men, and after another year and a half of service, very few men survived to surrender in April 1865.⁵⁴ The men of the 27th Mississippi Infantry, mustered into service in December 1861, also served with the Army of Tennessee. Fighting at Murfreesboro, Chickamauga, and Chattanooga, it suffered eighty-three, 117, and 208 casualties. By December 1863, the regiment totaled only 491 men.⁵⁵ After suffering so conspicuously for two years and then being captured and confined in horrible prison conditions, the men at Rock Island Prison were incredibly tired of war.

After their capture, the fortunes of the men who joined the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry improved very little. At Rock Island, rations of food and clothing were insufficient, disease ran rampant, shelter was often lacking or ineffective at keeping the frigid northern winter air at bay, and, amazingly, Yankee bullets continued to whizz by their ears when guards fired into the prison yard and sometimes hit their marks.⁵⁶ The lack of food and clothing was one of the first hardships endured by the new prisoners. They had often gone hungry and undersupplied during their service in the Confederate army, but the lack of adequate rations in prison was particularly painful because the soldiers could see abundance all around them. In the fall of 1864, before the enlistment officers came seeking volunteers for frontier service, the rations at Rock Island had been cut to “12 ounces of bread on an average day...our meat remains the same: 4 or 5 ounces of fresh or 6 or 7 ounces of pickled beef three days in every ten—we will have 1 1/2 pts. hominy or rice for dinner”.⁵⁷ It was only enough, reported one soldier, to make him a

⁵⁴ Crute, *Units of the Confederate States Army*, 22.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 181-182.

⁵⁶ Rogan, *Diary of Lafayette Rogan*, Entry of 9 June 1864.

⁵⁷ McAdams, *Rebels at Rock Island*, 147.

single small meal a day; “I remain hungry all the time.”⁵⁸ The diet, insufficient in both quantity and quality, made the men weak and vulnerable to disease.⁵⁹

Crammed for days at a time into small, poorly heated barracks during the cold winter months, the men succumbed to an array of diseases. Smallpox, typhus, pneumonia, and diarrhea were the most common.⁶⁰ Worse still, both the hospital and the three men assigned to run it were woefully inadequate and soon the prison was experiencing an epidemic:

Between 700 and 800 sick [were in] various barracks.... Five barracks had been set apart as hospitals, and the sick and dying were piled up one above another in three tiers or on double beds. The hospitals as well as barracks were heated by 2 heating stoves—totally insufficient to make the room even indifferently comfortable.... The prisoners were but scantily clad, and had not even straw on which to lie, and no blankets, except such tatters as they brought with them.... In fact the whole sanitary condition of the prison was so deplorable as to be almost helpless.⁶¹

With the hospital in disarray and the barracks incapable of protecting the men from the winter cold, disease was a highly effective killer.

Adding to the wretched conditions the prisoners were forced to endure were the cruelties of the men guarding them. In 1863 and 1864, the North struggled to enlist sufficient numbers of volunteers to fill its ranks for the fight against the South. The introduction of the draft in 1863

⁵⁸ McAdams, *Rebels at Rock Island*, 147.

⁵⁹ Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*, 45-46. The insufficient diet and other miserable contributing conditions made the soldiers so weak that as they made the long journey from Rock Island to their posts on the Western frontier, even local teamsters noticed how pathetic they were. One such teamster, William Darnell, is quoted in Dee Brown's *Galvanized Yankees*. Darnell reported on the decrepit conditions of the men in the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry as they made their way to their western posts: “These Confederates... were a miserable looking, decrepit lot, run down physically, and unable to make a long march.... On account of their poor physical condition, orders had been given to limit the daily marches of these ‘galvanized soldiers’ to eight miles a day, the teams also being limited to an eight-mile haul instead of the usual twenty mile haul.”

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 52; Paul E. Steiner, *Disease in the Civil War: Natural Biological Warfare in 1861-1865* (Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, Publisher, 1968), 10-11.

⁶¹ T. R. Walker, “Rock Island Prison Barrack,” in *Civil War Prisons*, ed. William B. Hesseltine (Kent: Kent State University Press, 1972), 48-59; McAdams, *Rebels at Rock Island*, 51. Rock Island had no dedicated hospital when it accepted its first prisoners in December 1863. It had a doctor and two medical assistants, but they operated out of regular prison barracks commandeered as sick bays. It was not until Assistant Surgeon General A. M. Clark issued a report in February 1864 roundly condemning the medical conditions at the prison that construction of a new hospital was approved, but because of arguments over the funding for the project, the hospital was not finished until late summer 1864.

helped to bolster enlistment, but flamed the fires of discontent as unwilling men were forced into service. This deficit of volunteers and resistance to the draft was in part what prompted the Lincoln Administration to recruit rebel prisoners for the Union army. The other effect, however, was that almost all of the able-bodied volunteers and new conscripts were immediately sent south, leaving only those soldiers unfit for frontline service to serve as prison guards; men from the Veteran's Reserve Corps (V.R.C.)—a dumping ground for Union soldiers too old, broken, or lame to fight on the frontlines—or newly formed regiments of United States Colored Troops (U.S.C.T.). Neither source provided well-qualified men. Bored, poorly trained, and often cruel, the members of the 4th V.R.C. and the 108th U.S.C.T. assigned to guard duty at Rock Island made life for the prisoners even worse.⁶²

The guards routinely verbally and physically abused prisoners when dealing with even trivial matters. Even officers abused the men. In one instance, “Captain Hogendoble,” cursed prisoner John Wesley Minnich with “every vile epithet that would come to his base mind, while trying to strike [him] in the face with his clenched fist and then threatening [him] with his pistol because [he] would not stand up and meekly take his blows.”⁶³ At other times bored guards shot at the helpless prisoners. Camp diarists Lafayette Rogan and John Wesley Minnich both reported shootings during their time at Rock Island in which inmates died. Indeed, Rogan reported a “man killed by sentry last night [Wednesday, 8 June 1864] for asking to go to the privy—another shot today. No circumstances warrant such a line of conduct towards us.”⁶⁴ There was, however, little the prisoners could do to retaliate for such abuses except to avoid incurring the guards' wrath. This sense of helplessness may have pushed some prisoners to sign the oath of allegiance when the Union recruiters came to the prison in 1864. Desperate for any

⁶² McAdams, *Rebels at Rock Island*, 79-80, 99, 143-146.

⁶³ Minnich, *Inside of Rock Island*, 23.

⁶⁴ Rogan, *Diary of Lafayette Rogan*, Entry of 9 June 1864.

way to get out of the prison where they were dying of starvation, disease, exposure, and the actions of murderous guards, some prisoners were willing to accept the Union's offer of food, freedom, amnesty, and the assurance that they would not be fighting other Confederate soldiers.

Confederate prisoners at Rock Island endured psychological pressure as well as the physical hardships of starvation, disease, exposure, and violence. One of the highlights of any prisoner's day was receiving packages from home. The packages, often food and clothing, were also one of the chief sources of news in the camp. Frequently, the news was personal, raising the spirits of the desolate soldiers. Rogan wrote of letters he received from his wife, Ella, that "did much to revive my spirits" and packages from relatives that included delicacies like "currants, raspberries, lemons, cake & preserves."⁶⁵ Not every soldier received such comforting packages and even those who did also received reports of the mounting disasters of the Confederate war effort. News that Atlanta, Petersburg, and Mobile had fallen undermined prisoners' morale. Worse still, they often included rumors of Confederate victories, salvation through foreign intervention, and Northern disasters.⁶⁶ In one instance, Rogan fell prey to such a rumor. On 14 July 1864, he wrote that news was circulating that "Washington has fallen. Most reliable news is that skirmishing is going on near the place. Papers say our force is large & but feeble resistance can be offered."⁶⁷ Of course, the "news" was patently false, and once Rogan and his fellow prisoners realized the error, their demoralization was severe.

The nearly constant stream of bad news or good news that proved false eroded the already feeble morale of the Confederate prisoners and probably engendered one of three possible reactions. Some might respond, as did men like Lafayette Rogan, by denying the accuracy of the negative reports, opting to live in denial. They reinforced their resolve and

⁶⁵ Rogan, *Diary of Lafayette Rogan*, Entries of 17 and 27 June 1864.

⁶⁶ Phillips, *Diehard Rebels*, 116-118.

⁶⁷ Rogan, *Diary of Lafayette Rogan*, Entry of 14 July 1864.

prayed, “O that every knee was bent before God and that every heart would in faith—full faith—implore Him for His blessing upon our cause. . . .”⁶⁸ Other men accepted the inevitable and admitted that the Confederacy’s days were limited. These men, however, might have responded in one of two ways: either they accepted defeat and remained prisoners, eagerly awaiting the close of the war and their release, suffering in prison until that day; or they accepted the inevitable Union victory and, believing their allegiance to the Confederacy was no longer important, seized the Union offer of amnesty and abandoned the Confederate cause. For these men, the Union recruiters’ tempting offer of bounty money, improved rations, new uniforms, and release proved too tantalizing to decline. Not blinded by a belief in Confederate invincibility as was Lafayette Rogan, many also saw an added benefit in recanting their Confederate loyalties and signing the oath of allegiance: post-war leniency.

By the time the Union recruiters arrived at Rock Island Barracks in the fall of 1864, the Civil War was fast approaching its end. Some Confederates still expected a Confederate victory, but by far the majority must have realized that the war was not going to end well for them. Even Lafayette Rogan, the Confederate prisoner of war who preached the gospel of Confederate invincibility and prophesized the eventual victory of Confederate armies had, by the close of December 1864, begun praying for a quick end to the war, whatever the outcome: “I have ever felt that I would cheerfully accept the result of this contest believing that God won’t cause it to end to our ultimate advantage and to His eternal glory. I pray for a speedy coming of the end. I pray for a release of all prisoners and their return to Homes and families.”⁶⁹ Other soldiers agreed with Rogan’s assessment, but the question of what would come next was surely also on their minds.

⁶⁸ Rogan, *Diary of Lafayette Rogan*, Entry of 27 December 1864.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, Entry of 28 December 1864.

Few summed up the men's fear as succinctly as John Wesley Minnich in his memoir of his time as a prisoner at Rock Island Barracks between 1863 and 1865. Minnich recalled how, as the prisoners sensed the impending end of the war, "it brought small comfort to us except in the thought that our term of imprisonment would soon end."⁷⁰ The specter of an uncertain future after the war overshadowed this small glimmer of hope. Minnich wrote: "Then indeed were the dark days come. Worse than all else, the knowledge that we were crushed to the earth at last, all power of resistance gone, and uncertain of our own ultimate fate was our bitterest portion."⁷¹ Dreading their uncertain future and possible Northern retaliation against defeated Confederates, some men in 1864 may have seen the Union's amnesty offer as the deliverance for which they had prayed. Perhaps, they may have thought, if they renounced their Confederate allegiance and swore to serve the Union against the Indians on the Great Plains, the soon-to-be victorious Northerners would be more lenient when they decided their post-war fate. Union service was also a way to ensure a speedy return home—get out of prison, serve for a year, pocket the bounty and service pay, and return home a fully reconstructed Union veteran. It did work out that way for some of the men who joined the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry.

On 6 February 1865, just over two months before General Robert E. Lee surrendered at Appomattox Court House effectively ending the Civil War, the slow-moving Federal military bureaucracy finally ordered Union General John Pope to organize the Rock Island volunteers and assign officers to the regiment.⁷² Within two weeks Pope had the Confederate prisoners at Rock Island who had sworn allegiance to the Union in the fall of 1864 clothed, provisioned, and commanded by Union officers—in short, they had become the 2nd United States Volunteer

⁷⁰ Minnich, *Inside of Rock Island Prison*, 52.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 53.

⁷² *OR*, Ser. I, vol. XLVIII, pt. I, 761.

Infantry.⁷³ On 20 February, as they waited for the train that would take them to their first posting at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas, they must have reflected on the long journey that had brought them to that terminal. This diverse collection of men, now wearing the uniform of their erstwhile enemy, had suffered dramatically for months and years and made bold, decisions to change their allegiances and be rebranded as Union soldiers. How they came to make these bold decisions is not, however, easy to explain.

This analysis of the motivations of these ‘Galvanized Yankees’ is the best, most reasoned analysis of what may have been motivating the men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry when they made the decision to enlist in the Union army in October 1864. None of these men left written records describing their reasons for switching sides and abandoning their former Confederate comrades, but it seems reasonable that latent Unionist sympathies or ambivalence about the Confederate cause, war-weariness, battle fatigue, a sense of hopelessness, deplorable prison conditions, demoralization, concern for the post-war future, and simple pragmatism wore down the men’s commitment to the Confederate cause. When Union recruitment officers arrived in the fall of 1864 to enlist these desperate and demoralized Confederates into Union service, the opportunity to start life anew triggered them to renounce their Confederate allegiance and join the Union army, leaving the Confederacy and their starving fellow prisoners behind.

⁷³ Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*, 15; Dyer, *Compendium of the War*, 1717.

Epilogue

“A Link Between the North and the South” Reconstruction and the United States Volunteer Infantry

On 20 February 1865, over a thousand beleaguered men stood at attention in the cold winter air at the train station in Rock Island, Illinois. These men represented the first contingent of the recently mustered 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry. They shivered in the cold as they stood in their new blue uniforms and anxiously awaited the arrival of the train that would free them from their misery in the Rock Island Prison ‘calf pen’ and take them to their newly assigned posts in Kansas. Since enlisting in the Union army in October 1864, these Confederate prisoners of war turned Union soldiers had endured appalling deprivations, caught in bureaucratic limbo—no longer Confederate prisoners of war and not entitled to prison rations, but not yet mustered into Union service and not entitled to soldiers’ rations either. Now, almost five months after their enlistment, they were equipped, assigned officers, and ready to execute their orders, if only the train would arrive. At long last the train pulled into the station, and as the men boarded, many surely wondered what lay in store for them as they ventured into the West. To some, the West—a region extending from the Dakotas in the north, down the Mississippi in the east, along the Rio Grande in the south, all the way to the Pacific Ocean on the western coast—was an unfamiliar and hostile region teeming with savages and isolated from the rest of the nation. To others, however, it was a land of opportunity, a place where they could, as one member of the U.S.V.I. argued, wash away their Confederate “sins” and rebrand themselves as ‘loyal Americans’.¹

¹ Heather Cox Richardson, *West from Appomattox: The Reconstruction of America after the Civil War* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007), 32-33; Adams, *Frontier Scout*, Vol. 1, no. 4, 6 July 1865; Vol. 1, no. 15, 12 October 1865.

Between 20 and 24 February 1865, the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry traveled by rail from the Union prison camp at Rock Island, Illinois, to Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Commanded by Colonel Andrew Patrick Caraher, an Irish-born veteran of the 28th Massachusetts Infantry and the second-in-command at Rock Island Prison where he earned a reputation among Confederate prisoners for fair and humane treatment, the 2nd U.S.V.I. was assigned to General Grenville M. Dodge and ordered to man the Federal outposts along the Santa Fe Trail from Fort Leavenworth to Fort Dodge.² It was a daunting mission. Working with troopers from the 11th Kansas, 2nd Colorado, and 7th Iowa Cavalry, the men of the 2nd U.S.V.I. were responsible for guarding wagon trains, stagecoach routes, and telegraph lines across the state of Kansas, a hotbed of Indian violence.³ Indeed, during the summer of 1864, Indian violence swelled to such a level that it closed the Overland Route for a month—no mail, telegrams, or pioneers could cross from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific Ocean. California’s only contact with Washington, D.C. was by steamboat around the Horn of South America or by land across the Isthmus of Panama.⁴

Fortunately for the men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry, after they left Fort Leavenworth in March 1864, the rebellious Kiowa and Comanche left them virtually unmolested for the first three months of their service.⁵ Regrettably, the consequence of this lack of engagement was complacency. When, on 8 June, the men of Companies F and G, posted at Fort

² Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*, 15-16, 45; Dyer, *Compendium of the War*, 1717, OR, Ser. I, vol. XLVIII, pt. I, 761.

³ Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*, 47; Dyer, *Compendium of the War*, 1717. I have established the strength of the regiment at 1,058 soldiers after amassing all of the individual soldier records and removing all those that were clearly duplicates.

⁴ Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*, 4.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 16; Richardson, *West from Appomattox*, 35. After the massacre of Cheyenne Indians at Sand Creek, Colorado by U.S. cavalry soldiers in November 1864, the Cheyenne allied with the Sioux, Arapaho, Kiowa, and Comanche Tribes in defying the U.S. government and raiding and pillaging the Plains settlements and pioneer wagon trains. In Kansas, where the 2nd U.S.V.I. was stationed, the Kiowa and Comanche Tribes were the Indians the soldiers most commonly encountered.

Dodge under the command of Major William F. Armstrong, saw a line of riders clad in blue uniforms heading toward the fort's horses and mules, they suspected nothing. When that line of blue-clad riders rode into the herd, stampeded it, and made off with sixty of the fort's seventy animals, the men were dumbfounded. They had fallen for a brilliant trick—the blue-clad riders were Kiowa warriors wearing captured Federal uniforms. No one was harmed in the attack, but just four days later, on 12 June, pickets alerted the garrison in time to defend itself from attack by three to four hundred Kiowa raiders. The men held the fort, suffering only three men wounded and two captured or killed (their bodies were never found), but lost the remainder of their horses and mules.⁶ Such brazen attacks were, however, uncommon. The rest of that June the 2nd U.S.V.I was attacked only once and in that engagement, no one was harmed.⁷ The area remained peaceful for the next three months.

In July, General Dodge concentrated his men at Fort Larned, Kansas, in preparation for a late summer offensive campaign against the Kiowa and Comanche. The 2nd U.S.V.I. soldiers thought they would finally see battle, but just as the swirl of preparation reached its zenith, a change in Indian policy in Washington brought it all to a halt.⁸ The Union had endured four costly years of war against the Confederacy and was wary of committing to a punitive Indian war “thrice the length of that lately waged against the Southern Confederacy.” It would, argued the *New York Times*, “entail great bloodshed on our side as well as the other, and also enormous expense.” To avoid the cost in men and resources, Washington politicians adopted a conciliatory Indian policy.⁹ The Army sent Colonel John B. Sanborn and Colonel Jesse H. Leavenworth to

⁶ *OR*, Ser. I, vol. XLVIII, pt. I, 311-312.

⁷ Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*, 48.

⁸ Richardson, *West from Appomattox*, 36-37, 76.

⁹ “The Indian Convention,” *New York Times (1857-1922)*, 15 September 1865.

negotiate with the Plains Indians, and on 18 August, Leavenworth announced a peace agreement that would be signed on 4 October 1865.¹⁰

With the peace agreement in place and only three months left in their term of enlistment, the men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry prepared to march to Fort Leavenworth and muster out of service. But just before they could begin the trek home, three 2nd U.S.V.I. soldiers on patrol outside Fort Larned were brutally killed by an Indian raiding party.¹¹ Fortunately, they were the last regimental casualties, and shortly after burying their dead, the 2nd U.S.V.I. began the march toward Fort Leavenworth.

General John Pope, Commander of the Department of Missouri, was reluctant to part with the United States Volunteer Infantry and telegraphed General Ulysses S. Grant for authority “to consolidate into one regiment and re-enlist for one year the Second and Third U.S. Volunteers, whose terms of service expire this month.” He knew that they were better soldiers than the “dissatisfied and mutinous” state volunteer regiments on the Plains that were “even now rapidly deserting.” The 2nd U.S.V.I. was a regiment of “good soldiers, in good discipline... [without which he would] have great difficulty on the plains.”¹² Grant was unmoved. Anxious to close this chapter in history and needing to reduce the number of black troops in the East, he denied Pope’s request, but did offer him “four regiments of colored infantry, or more if they can be used to advantage, to take the place of the white volunteers on the plains.”¹³ With no chance for reenlistment, the men of the 2nd U.S.V.I. marched to Fort Leavenworth. On 7 November

¹⁰ Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*, 52; *OR*, Ser. I, vol. XLVIII, pt. II, 1218-1219.

¹¹ Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*, 52-53.

¹² *OR*, Ser. I, vol. XLVIII, pt. I, 1239-1240.

¹³ *Ibid.*

1865, just a little over a year after enlisting, they mustered out of service, ending their long, tumultuous, and unique military careers.¹⁴

The fate of the men after they mustered out of service in November 1865 is largely unknown. Both the officers and enlisted men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry left nothing behind that has survived. Some must have tried to go home, but the social ostracism they would have faced had they returned to the South would have been severe. In the South, young men who chose not to fight for the Confederacy suffered greatly for their decision, especially in small towns, especially when courting young ladies, a fate James M. McPherson and Kenneth W. Noe both describe in their works on Civil War soldiers.¹⁵ If men who remained at least outwardly loyal to the Confederacy but chose not to enlist experienced social ostracism and public shaming, the ostracism the men of the 2nd U.S.V.I. would have faced—men who had fought for the enemy—would have been far worse. If, however, they did not return to their Southern homes, perhaps they went to the North or, more likely, stayed in the West. It would have been far easier for them to reestablish themselves in the West and live out their days on the Great Plains or in the Rocky Mountains than to face persecution and vigilante justice in the South. Wherever they went after mustering out of service, these men simply faded away.

The men of the 2nd United States Volunteer Infantry disappeared from the written record after the War, but scholars must not allow them disappear from history. The 2nd U.S.V.I. was a remarkable regiment that served during a remarkable period and successfully executed a remarkable mission. These men served actively for only eight months, fought in only one

¹⁴ Brown, *Galvanized Yankees*, 53; Dyer, *Compendium of the War*, 1717; Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com).

¹⁵ James M. McPherson, *For Cause and Comrades*, 23, 28; Noe, *Reluctant Rebels*, 67-68.

inconsequential skirmish and three small raids, and suffered only a handful of casualties, but they are part of a little known, but fascinating story of a bizarre wartime policy, political intrigue, and shifting loyalties. This regiment was not, as Kenneth Noe and Richard Nelson Current assert, an assortment of “reluctant rebels”, but was in fact comprised of volunteers from 1861 and 1862. The majority of the men came from regions of the South known for their Unionist or anti-Confederate leanings—eastern Tennessee, northern Alabama, and the Georgia Upcountry—or from foreign nations.¹⁶ The unit also defies common perceptions about its service; it served admirably and apparently with a very low rate of desertion and little dereliction of duty. Indeed, the regiment was so successful that General John Pope, an early opponent of enlisting Confederate prisoners of war, came to view them as superior to state volunteers who shirked their duty after the Civil War concluded and their reason for enlisting disappeared.¹⁷ The men of the 2nd U.S.V.I. deserve to be remembered for these reasons alone, but they may have served an even more important function in the reunification of the nation.

The policy that spawned the United States Volunteer Infantry regiments was controversial from the beginning. It took two years of trial, error, and refinement by field commanders, senior members of the War Department, and prominent members of the Lincoln Administration, including the President himself, to become official policy. Even after it was implemented, it faced opposition from powerful and influential men like General Ulysses S. Grant. Grant opposed the use of United States Volunteer Infantry regiments against their former comrades, and sent all of the U.S.V.I. regiments to the West to protect settlers, ensure the

¹⁶ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com); See Appendix V and XII.

¹⁷ *OR*, Ser. I, vol. XLVIII, pt. I, 1239-1240.

delivery of mail and supplies, pacify hostile Indians, and maintain law and order in a habitually lawless region.¹⁸ Even when the war neared its conclusion, the policy remained controversial.

When the existence of these units and the unorthodox policy that gave them birth became public knowledge, Congressman Schuyler Colfax of Indiana, Speaker of the House of Representatives, conducted an inquiry into the program. Congress demanded to know “whether rebel prisoners have been enlisted into [U.S.] service, have received bounties, and have been credited to quotas of one or more States; and if so, how many have been so enlisted and credited, and when and to what States; and also whether any of said persons so credited are still under guard at Rock Island or elsewhere.”¹⁹ Congress suspected that the bounties came from the Federal coffers and that credit for the enlistment of the soldiers may have gone to states that did not deserve it as a means of political patronage. On 28 February Secretary of War Edwin Stanton provided a detailed explanation of the policy, its evolution, its implementation, and the role Lincoln himself played in it. The explanation apparently satisfied Congress because it did not press the issue any further.²⁰

The policy of enlisting Confederate prisoners of war had been important to the Lincoln Administration. It grew out of Lincoln’s 1863 Proclamation of Amnesty and Reconstruction and functioned, whether by design or merely by coincidence, as both a facet of Lincoln’s reconstruction program and a rehearsal for it. Lincoln favored rapid reconstruction; “forgive, but do not forget” seemed to be his motto, and the policy of enlisting Confederate prisoners without restriction or penalty was in keeping with this philosophy. Lincoln treated the new recruits as though they had been recruited from any town or city in the Union, and not from a prisoner of war camp. He even had them swear the same oath as all other Union enlistees—they had only to

¹⁸ *OR*, Ser. I, vol. XLI pt. II, 619; Ser. III, vol. IV, 744.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Ser. III, vol. IV, 1202-1203.

²⁰ *Ibid.*

pledge their allegiance to the United States and to obey the orders of the President of the United States of America.²¹ In short, Lincoln's goal was to treat these men as though they were and had always been loyal Unionists.

Lincoln also used the men as a model for a reunited America. By labeling them United States Volunteers, not reformed rebels or rebel deserters, Lincoln declared that they were Americans and ignored their past transgressions. He gave them a truly American mission: to fight Plains Indians—not Confederate armies—and to protect the nation's westward expansion. In this respect, the men of the United States Volunteer Infantry were the vanguard of American westward expansion as the healing nation refocused American projections of power from the east to the west after the Civil War. They represented what America hoped to become after Reconstruction—a powerful unified nation intent on westward expansion, consolidating its holdings in the American West, asserting its power over native peoples and foreign powers, looking beyond old sins from a troubling past.

This analysis of the greater value and mission of the United States Volunteer Infantry regiments is not entirely new. Indeed, at least one contemporary grasped the broader importance of what the U.S.V.I. was and what it represented. Enoch G. Adams, Captain of B Company, 1st Regiment U.S.V.I. and the editor of *The Frontier Scout*, the 1st U.S.V.I.'s regimental newspaper, was a staunch defender of U.S.V.I. soldiers. When the 1st U.S.V.I. mustered out of service in late October 1865, Adams wrote a short editorial that perfectly articulated the meaning of the U.S.V.I. "We are the first fruits of a re-united people," he wrote; "We are a link between the North and the South—let us prove that it is a golden link, and of no baser metal. If we go north,

²¹ Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com).

south, east, or west, let us bear the flame of liberty in our hearts, and let us be a nucleus around which every good thing shall cluster.” He counseled the men, beseeching them, “Do not imagine the Government looks upon you as aliens. She looks upon you as her sons, as part and parcel of her own existence.” Finally, he appealed to the his men’s pride, imploring them never to “regret the sacrifice you have made, it will yet be the proudest boast of your life, ‘I have been a Union soldier.’” Adams was writing about the experiences of the 1st U.S.V.I., but his words most assuredly applied to the 2nd U.S.V.I. as well. Like the men Adams addressed, the men of the 2nd U.S.V.I. were truly “the first fruits of a re-united people.”²²

²² Adams, *Frontier Scout*, Vol. 1, no. 15, 12 October 1865.

Appendices

Appendix I¹ *Enlistment Date (U.S. Army) of 2nd U.S.V.I. Soldiers* *(Number in Sample = 1058)*

<i>Date Enlisted</i>	<i>Number of Soldiers</i>
Unlisted	112
10/3/1864	89
10/6/1864	541
10/13/1864	269
10/14/1864	1
10/17/1864	4
10/31/1864	1
1/20/1865*	1
2/18/1865	3
2/20/1865	1
2/21/1865	8
2/22/1865**	2
2/23/1865	1
2/24/1865	2
2/25/1865	3
3/1/1865	9
3/2/1865	3
3/7/1865	1
3/13/1865	1
3/19/1865	1
3/20/1865	1
3/31/1865	1
4/24/1865	1
5/1/1865	1
5/22/1865	1
-	1058

*Possibly Misfiled

**One Enlisted Man

¹ All raw data included in these appendices and the data from which the averages included here are calculated, comes from original documents housed at the National Archives Building in Washington, D.C. and available online at Fold3.com and Ancestry.com. Compiled Service Records of Former Confederate Soldiers who Served in the 1st Through 6th U.S. Volunteer Infantry Regiments, 1864-1866, 2nd Regiment U.S. Volunteer Infantry, National Archives Microfilm Publication, M1017, rolls 15-24, Carded Records Showing Military Service of Soldiers Who Fought in Volunteer Organizations During the American Civil War, Compiled 1890-1912, Documenting the Period 1861-1866, Record Group 94 (National Archives Building, Washington, D.C., Accessed on Fold3.com).

Appendix II
Ages of 2nd U.S.V.I. Soldiers
(Number in Sample = 1058 / 941)

<i>Age (Yrs.)</i>	<i>Number of Soldiers</i>	<i>Proportion of Rgmt. (1058)</i>	<i>Proportion of Rgmt. Without Unknowns (941)</i>
Unlisted	115	10.87%	-
Questionable	2	0.19%	-
48	1	0.09%	0.11%
46	2	0.19%	0.21%
45	8	0.76%	0.85%
44	2	0.19%	0.21%
43	5	0.47%	0.53%
41	2	0.19%	0.21%
40	14	1.32%	1.49%
39	8	0.76%	0.85%
38	13	1.23%	1.38%
37	15	1.42%	1.59%
36	10	0.95%	1.06%
35	24	2.27%	2.55%
34	21	1.98%	2.23%
33	15	1.42%	1.59%
32	24	2.27%	2.55%
31	23	2.17%	2.44%
30	25	2.36%	2.66%
29	25	2.36%	2.66%
28	41	3.88%	4.36%
27	49	4.63%	5.21%
26	53	5.01%	5.63%
25	66	6.24%	7.01%
24	77	7.28%	8.18%
23	70	6.62%	7.44%
22	88	8.32%	9.35%
21	76	7.18%	8.08%
20	71	6.71%	7.55%
19	67	6.33%	7.12%
18	45	4.25%	4.78%
17	1	0.09%	0.11%
-	1058	100.00%	-
-	941	88.94%	100.00%

Appendix III
Birthdate Brackets of 2nd U.S.V.I. Soldiers
(Number in Sample = 1058 / 941)

<i>Birth Date Bracket</i>	<i>Number of Soldiers</i>	<i>Proportion of Rgmt. (1058)</i>	<i>Proportion of Rgmt. Without Unknowns (941)</i>
Unlisted/Questionable	117	11.06%	-
1820 and Before (≥ 44)	13	1.23%	1.38%
1821-1830 ($43 \leq x \leq 34$)	112	10.59%	11.90%
1831-1835 ($33 \leq x \leq 29$)	112	10.59%	11.90%
1836-1840 ($28 \leq x \leq 24$)	286	27.03%	30.39%
After 1840 ($x \leq 23$)	418	39.51%	44.42%
(Total)	1058	100.00%	100.00%

Appendix IV
Average Age of 2nd U.S.V.I. Soldiers
(Number in Sample = 1058 / 941)

<i>Type</i>	<i>Average Age (Yrs.)</i>
Without Unknowns (1058)	25.69606801
With Unknowns (941)	22.85444234

Appendix V
State or Country of Origin of 2nd U.S.V.I. Soldiers
(Number in Sample = 1058 / 905)

<i>Location (State/Country)</i>	<i>Number of Soldiers</i>	<i>Proportion of Rgmt. (1058)</i>	<i>Proportion of Rgmt. Without Unknowns (905)</i>
Unlisted	152	14.37%	-
Questionable	1	0.09%	-
IL	10	0.95%	1.10%
IN	6	0.57%	0.66%
KY	54	5.10%	5.97%
MA	1	0.09%	0.11%
MD	8	0.76%	0.88%
ME	1	0.09%	0.11%
MO	16	1.51%	1.77%
NJ	1	0.09%	0.11%
NY	8	0.76%	0.88%
OH	9	0.85%	0.99%
PA	7	0.66%	0.77%

<i>Location (State/Country)</i>	<i>Number of Soldiers</i>	<i>Proportion of Rgmt. (1058)</i>	<i>Proportion of Rgmt. Without Unknowns (905)</i>
AL	140	13.23%	15.47%
AR	12	1.13%	1.33%
FL	6	0.57%	0.66%
GA	115	10.87%	12.71%
LA	11	1.04%	1.22%
MS	31	2.93%	3.43%
NC	41	3.88%	4.53%
SC	57	5.39%	6.30%
TN	211	19.94%	23.31%
TX	3	0.28%	0.33%
VA	46	4.35%	5.08%
Canada	4	0.38%	0.44%
England	6	0.57%	0.66%
France	2	0.19%	0.22%
Germany	14	1.32%	1.55%
Ireland	80	7.56%	8.84%
Prussia	3	0.28%	0.33%
Scotland	2	0.19%	0.22%
(Subtotal – Unknown – 2)	153	14.46%	-
(Subtotal – Union – 11)	121	11.44%	13.37%
(Subtotal – Confederacy – 11)	673	63.61%	74.36%
(Subtotal – Foreign – 7)	111	10.49%	12.27%
(Total)	1058	100.00%	100.00%

Appendix VI

*Civilian Occupation Categories and Distributions of 2nd U.S.V.I. Soldiers
(Number in Sample = 1058 / 906)*

<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Number of Soldiers</i>	<i>Proportion of Rgmt. (1058)</i>	<i>Proportion of Rgmt. Without Unknowns (906)</i>
Unlisted/Questionable	152	14.37%	-
Farmer	659	62.29%	72.74%
Professional	48	4.54%	5.30%
Skilled Worker	83	7.84%	9.16%
Student	5	0.47%	0.55%
Unskilled Worker	72	6.81%	7.95%
White-Collar Worker	39	3.69%	4.30%
-	1058	100.00%	100.00%

Appendix VII
Individual Civilian Occupations of 2nd U.S.V.I. Soldiers
(Number in Sample = 906)

<i>Occupation Category</i>	<i>Specific Occupation</i>
Professional	Baker (2)
	Blacksmith (9)
	Butcher (2)
	Cabinetmaker (1)
	Coppersmith (1)
	Gunsmith (1)
	Harness Maker (1)
	Locksmith (1)
	Miller (3)
	Musician (2)
	Printer (11)
	Saddler (1)
	Shoemaker (5)
	Silversmith (2)
	Tailor (5)
	Wheelwright (1)
White-Collar Worker	Civil Engineer (1)
	Clerk (25)
	Cotton Broker (1)
	Engineer (2)
	Merchant (5)
	Teacher (5)
Skilled Laborer	Brass Finisher (1)
	Brick Layer (2)
	Carpenter (20)
	Machinist (11)
	Mason (4)
	Mechanic (41)
	Molder (2)
	Nail Maker (1)
	Telegrapher (1)
	Unskilled Laborer
Fireman (1)	
Fisherman (1)	
Laborer (48)	
Painter (6)	
Plasterer (2)	
Porter (1)	

<i>Occupation Category</i>	<i>Specific Occupation</i>
Unskilled Laborer (Cont.)	Seaman (4)
	Steamboatman (3)
	Stonecutter (1)
	Teamster (2)
	Wagoner (1)
Farmer	Farmer (659)
Student	Student (5)

Appendix VIII
Confederate Service Sample of 2nd U.S.V.I. Soldiers
Design

First, I took the information I had for the proportion of soldiers from each state or nation, excluding those whose state or nation of origin could not be determined (this reduced the number soldiers from 1,058 to 905 individuals), and converted them to percentages of the unit rounded to the nearest whole percentage point.

I then combined all Northern states that contributed one percent or more of the total regiment (based off of 905 soldiers—I excluded those whose state or nation of origin could not be determined). Those states were Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Maryland, Missouri, New York, Ohio, and Pennsylvania. Together, these states represent fourteen percent of the sample.

I combined all foreign nations that contributed one percent or more of the total regiment (based off of 905 soldiers—I excluded those whose state or nation of origin could not be determined). Those nations were England, Germany, and Ireland. Together, these nations represent twelve percent of the sample.

In rounding the percentages to the nearest whole percentage point, some states and nations were reduced to zero percent and not included in the sample. These states and nations were Massachusetts, Maine, New Jersey, Texas, Canada, France, Prussia, and Scotland. In order to have as representative a sample as possible, I combined the percentages of all states and nations that contributed less than one percent of the total regiment and combined them in a category labeled “Other”. Together, these states and nations represented one percent of the total regiment when rounded to the nearest percentage point.

I then applied these proportions to a one-hundred-man sample that represented 11.04% of the total regiment—enough to maintain accuracy yet small enough to manage efficiently.

I multiplied the one-hundred-man sample by the proportions of the regiment that I calculated for each state, region, foreign grouping, and “Other”. This gave me the number of men I needed from each area to fill my sample.

Finally, I assigned each man in the regiment a number and used a random number generator to select the correct number of soldiers from each location needed in the sample. When the generator provided a number already used, I generated numbers until it gave me an unused number.

Once I had a list of soldiers to fill the sample, I analyzed the information I had collected about each of them and used it to make inferences about the entire regiment.

Appendix IX
Confederate Service Sample of 2nd U.S.V.I. Soldiers
Proportions

<i>State, Region, or Group of Origin</i>	<i>Proportion of Soldiers</i>	<i>Sample Size of Men Needed (x * 100)</i>
AL	0.15	15
AR	0.01	1
FL	0.01	1
GA	0.13	13
LA	0.01	1
MS	0.03	3
NC	0.05	5
SC	0.06	6
TN	0.23	23
VA	0.05	5
Northern	0.14	14
Foreign	0.12	12
Other	0.01	1
-	1.00	100

Appendix X
Confederate Service Sample of 2nd U.S.V.I. Soldiers
Regimental Data

<i>State (Number of Soldiers)</i>	<i>C.S.A. Regiment</i>	<i>Rgmt. Total Enlistment</i>	<i>Company</i>	<i>Number of Soldiers</i>
Alabama (14)	7th Cav.	2	K	2
	11th Cav.	1	E	1
	18th Inf.	1	C	1
	19th Inf.	1	F	1
	24th Inf.	2	H	1
	-	-	K	1
	27th Inf.	1	I	1
	28th Inf.	4	B	1
	-	-	D	1
	-	-	E	1
	-	-	G	1
	31st Inf.	1	H	1
	Hurt's Battalion. Light Art.	1	-	1

<i>State (Number of Soldiers)</i>	<i>C.S.A. Regiment</i>	<i>Rgmt. Total Enlistment</i>	<i>Company</i>	<i>Number of Soldiers</i>
Arkansas (2)	9th Inf.	1	A	1
	15th (Josey's) Inf.	1	D	1
CSA (1)	1st Cav.	1	K	1
Florida (2)	4th Inf.	2	B	2
Georgia (7)	6th Cav.	1	H	1
	9th Inf.	1	H	1
	12th Cav.	1	I	1
	25th Inf.	1	I	1
	42nd Inf.	1	G	1
	57th Inf.	1	A	1
	Phillips' Legion	1	F	1
Kentucky (4)	2nd Mounted Inf.	1	H	1
	2nd (Woodward's) Cav.	1	A	1
	13th Cav.	1	A	1
	CPT Cobb's Co. Light Art.	1	-	1
Louisiana (2)	20th Inf.	1	E	1
	25th Inf.	1	A	1
Mississippi (5)	4th Inf.	1	F	1
	21st Inf.	1	I	1
	27th Inf.	2	E	1
	-	-	H	1
	29th Inf.	1	H	1
Missouri (5)	4th Cav.	2	C	1
	-	-	A	1
	5th Inf.	1	E	1
	9th (Elliott's) Cav.	1	A	1
	Wood's Cav.	1	C	1
Tennessee (10)	1st (Field's) Inf.	1	D	1
	6th (Wheeler's) Cav.	2	C	2
	11th Inf.	1	E	1
	16th Batt. (Neal's) Cav.	1	D	1
	19th Inf.	1	F	1
	22nd (Bartean's) Cav.	1	D	1
	26th Inf.	1	A	1
	31st Inf.	1	I	1
	35th Inf.	1	A	1
Texas (1)	18th Cav.	1	C	1

<i>State (Number of Soldiers)</i>	<i>C.S.A. Regiment</i>	<i>Rgmt. Total Enlistment</i>	<i>Company</i>	<i>Number of Soldiers</i>
Virginia (3)	1st Cav.	1	C	1
	26th Battalion Inf.	1	B	1
	41st Battalion Cav.	1	F	1
(Total)	47	56	51	56

Appendix XI
Confederate Service Sample of 2nd U.S.V.I. Soldiers
State of Birth vs. State Regiment

	<i>Same State of Birth & Rgmt.</i>	<i>Different State of Birth & Rgmt.</i>
Without Foreigners	30	21
With Foreigners	30	26

Appendix XII
Confederate Service Sample of 2nd U.S.V.I. Soldiers
Enlistment and Capture Dates

<i>Year</i>	<i>Number Enlisted</i>	<i>Percent of those Enlisted</i>	<i>Number Captured</i>	<i>Percent of those Captured</i>
1861	22	47%	0	0%
1862	19	40%	0	0%
1863	6	13%	35	64%
1864	0	0%	20	36%
(Total)	47	100%	55	100%

Appendix XIII
Confederate Service Sample of 2nd U.S.V.I. Soldiers
Location of Capture

<i>State of Capture (Number of Soldiers)</i>	<i>Location of Capture</i>	<i>Number of Soldiers Captured</i>
AL (3)	Larkinsville	1
	Rogersville	2
AR (3)	Izard Co.	1
	Jefferson Co.	1
	Longview	1
GA (14)	Andersonville	1
	Big Shanty	2
	Calhoun	1

<i>State of Capture (Number of Soldiers)</i>	<i>Location of Capture</i>	<i>Number of Soldiers Captured</i>
	Cassville	4
	Dallas	2
	Graysville	1
	Hiwassee	1
	Ringgold	2
KY (1)	Louisa	1
MO (2)	Randolph Co.	1
	Saline Co.	1
TN (27)	Charleston	1
	Chattanooga	8
	Dandridge	2
	Franklin	1
	Knoxville	5
	Missionary Ridge	8
	Montgomery	1
	Putnam Co.	1
VA (3)	Charleston	1
	Fayette Co.	1
	Randolph	1
(Total)	-	53

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