THE BLACK BRIGADE

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CINCINNATI:

BRING A

REPORT OF ITS LABORS

AND A

MUSTER-ROLL OF ITS MEMBERS;

TOGETHER WITH

VARIOUS ORDERS, SPEECHES, ETC.

RELATING TO IT.

PETER H. CLARK.

CINCINNATI:

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THE BLACK BRIGADE.

At the request of many members of the Black Brigade, who desired to have in a convenient form for preservation, the report, muster-roll, orders, and addresses which are here presented, I have undertaken the compilation of this volume.

The Black Brigade was the first organization of the colored people of the North actually employed for military purposes. The conference of the loyal Governors at Altoona, where the organization of colored regiments in the North was first agreed upon, had not been held; Massachusets had not yet issued the call which rallied the noble Fifty-fourth and Fifty-fifth Regiments; colored men of the North were every-where contemptuously refused permission to participate in the great struggle which is opening the prison-doors to their brethren in the South. In no community was this exclusion more generally ratified by public sentiment than in Cincinnati.

In the South, General Butler, with that sublimity of common sense which characterizes all his actions, had employed, as laborers, the freedmen in the vicinity of Fortress Monroe, under the name of "Contrabands;" and, in an order dated August 24, 1862, nine days before the organization of the Black Brigade, he had called upon the free colored people of Louisiana to rally to the defense of the Union.

The city of Cincinnati always has been, and still is, proslavery. Nowhere has the prejudice against colored people been more cruelly manifested than here. Further north or further south the feeling is not so intense; but here it almost denies him the right of existence. For about thirty years the city has, at intervals, been disgraced by ferocious outbursts of mob violence against the colored people and their friends, resulting frequently in loss of life, and always in the destruction of property. It is true that anti-slavery speakers have at times been allowed free utterance; but Cincinnati is a commercial as well as a pro-slavery city. Abolition buyers from the North and slaveholding buyers from the South jostle each other in her streets; hence the influential classes maintained free speech to conciliate Abolition customers, while the rabble were permitted to mob colored people to placate slaveholders. Even this balance was broken when the traitor Yancey spoke for disunion in a thronged house, and without interruption, while Wendell Phillips, speaking for the Union, was driven from the same platform by mob violence, and halls were closed, lest a lecture by Henry Ward Beecher should provoke a riot.

Such was the state of the public mind when the siege of Cincinnati begun. The raid of John Morgan in July, and defeat of the Union forces at Richmond, Kentucky, August 30, had given warning of impending danger. Various calls were made by the authorities for the citizens to prepare for defense. Regiments had been organized for drill, and a large part of the people were filled with martial ardor. The colored people paid no attention to these calls, because they did not feel themselves addressed in them.

There is an ellipsis universal in American writing or speaking. When an American writes, "All men are created free and equal," he means all white men. When he solicits the patronage of the public for his book, his lecture, his concert, his store, his railroad-car or steamboat, he means the white public. colored people have long since come to understand this fact, and to act upon it. It was most bitterly and insultingly impressed upon their memories when, in the great outburst of indignant patriotism, all the North rushed to arms to avenge the fall of Sumter. They, too, desired to maintain the supremacy of the violated Constitution, for they hoped that some day the American people would remember that it was ordained "to secure the blessings of liberty;" they, too, had hopes centered in that flag; they, too, had homes to defend against the ravages of war. A meeting of the colored citizens of Cincinnati was called, to organize a company of "Home Guards." They did not propose to invade the South, but merely desired to aid in the defense of the city, should the necessity arise. The blood boils with indignation at the remembrance of the insults heaped upon them for this simple offer. The keys of the school-house, in which a second meeting was proposed, were roughly demanded by the police. The proprietor of a place selected as a recruiting station was compelled to take down an American flag which he had raised over his door. The proprietors of another place were told by the police: "We want you d-d niggers to keep out of this; this is a white man's war." Commercial reiterated the same advice, shorn of its profanity, but as needlessly and cruelly insulting. It was even said that a mob was brewing—that the steamboatmen were organizing for riotous purposes. Colored men were warned that serious danger impended. Whether this was true, or merely a pretext to justify the abuse of the police, is hard to decide. The chairman of the meeting was induced to publish a disclaimer, and "the matter ended.

In such a community, appeals to all citizens to organize for defense fell upon the ears of colored men unheeded. They remembered their lesson: "This is a white man's war, and you d—d niggers must keep out of it."

On Monday evening, September 1, General Lewis Wallace assumed command of the city, placing it under martial law, and making in the proclamation the following declaration:

"This labor ought to be that of love. The undersigned trusts and believes it will be so. Anyhow, it must be done. The willing shall be properly credited; the unwilling promptly visited. The principle adopted is: Citizens for the labor; soldiers for battle."

The negro-hating portion of the population rejoiced greatly that the Black Brigade was assigned to fatigue duty; but it will be seen, from this extract, that they performed the duty assigned by the General to all citizens.

The papers of Tuesday morning also contained the following proclamation from the Mayor of the city:

"MAYOR'S OFFICE, City of Cincinnati.

"In accordance with a resolution passed by the City Council of Cincinnati on the 1st instant, I hereby request that all business, of every kind or character, be suspended at ten o'clock of this day, and that all persons, employers and employees, assemble in their respective wards, at the usual places of voting, and then and there organize themselves in such manner as may be thought best for the defense of the city. Every man, of every age, be he citizen or alien, who lives under the protection of our laws, is expected to take part in the organization.

"Witness my hand and the corporate seal of the city of Cincinnati, this 2d day of September, A. D. 1862.

"GEORGE HATCH, Mayor."

At two o'clock on the morning of the same day, the Mayor issued another proclamation, notifying the citizens that the police force would perform the duty of a provost-guard, under the direction of General Wallace.

The Mayor's proclamation, under ordinary circumstances, would be explicit enough. "Every man, of every age, be he citizen or alien," surely meant the colored people. A number thought themselves included in the call; but, remembering the ill-will excited by former offers for home defense, they feared to come forward for enrollment. The proclamation ordered the people to assemble "in the respective wards, at the usual places. of voting." The colored people had no places of voting. Added to this, George Hatch was the same Mayor who had broken up the movement for home defense, before mentioned. Seeking to test the matter, a policeman was approached, as he strutted in his new dignity of provost-guard. To the question-humbly, almost tremblingly, put—"Does the Mayor desire colored men to report for service in the city's defense?" he replied: "You know d-d well he doesn't mean you. Niggers ain't citizens." "But he calls on all—citizens and aliens. If he does not mean all, he should not say so." "The Mayor knows as well as you do what to write, and all he wants is for you niggers to keep quiet." This was at nine o'clock on the morning of the 2d. The military authorities had determined, however, to impress the colored men for work upon the fortifications. The privilege of volunteering, extended to others, was to be denied to them. Permission to volunteer would imply some freedom, some dignity, some independent manhood. For this the commanding officer is alone chargeable. Mayor Hatch did not mean the colored people, though he had written "every person;" nor had he given his officers any orders at their first going out. It may be said that the commanding General had no time, in the press of business, to care for such small matters

as the desires and feelings of colored men. This may be so; but it is the lack of time to attend to such small matters as mercy and justice, that has involved the nation in this wasteful and bloody contest.

If the guard appointed to the duty of collecting the colored people had gone to their houses and notified them to report for duty on the fortifications, the order would have been cheerfully obeyed. But the brutal ruffians who composed the regular and special police took every opportunity to inflict abuse and insult upon the men whom they arrested. The special police was entirely composed of that class of the population which, only a month before, had combined to massacre the colored population, and were only prevented from committing great excesses by the fact that John Morgan, with his rough riders, had galoped to within forty miles of the river, when the respectable citizens, fearing that the disloyal element within might combine with the raiders without, and give the city over to pillage, called a meeting on 'Change, and demanded that the riot be stopped. The special police was, in fact, composed of a class too cowardly or too traitorous to aid, honestly and manfully, in the defense of the city. They went from house to house, followed by a gang of rude, foul-mouthed boys. Closets, cellars, and garrets were searched; bayonets were thrust into beds and bedding; old and young, sick and well, were dragged out, and, amidst shouts and jeers, marched like felons to the pen on Plum Street, opposite the Cathedral. No time was given to prepare for camp-life; in most cases no information was given of the purpose for which the men were impressed. The only answers to questions were curses and a brutal "Come along now; you will find out time enough." Had the city been captured by the Confederates the colored people would have suffered no more than they did at the hands of these defenders. night, September 2, was a sad night to the colored people of Cincinnati. The greater part of the male population had been dragged from home, across the river, but where, and for what? none could tell.

The captain of these conscripting squads was one William Homer, and in him organized ruffianism had its fitting head. He exhibited the brutal malignity of his nature in a continued

series of petty tyrannies. Among the first squads marched into the yard was one which had to wait several hours before being ordered across the river. Seeking to make themselves as comfortable as possible, they had collected blocks of wood, and piled up bricks, upon which they seated themselves on the shaded side of the yard. Coming into the yard, he ordered them all to rise, marched them to another part, then issued the order, "D——n you, squat." Turning to the guard, he added, "Shoot the first one who rises." Reaching the other side of the river, the same squad were marched from the sidewalk into the middle of a dusty road, and again the order, "D——n you, squat," and the command to shoot the first one who should rise.

The drill of his men was unique, and not set down in Scott or Hardee. Calling up a squad, he would address them thus: 'Now, you fellows, hold up your heads. Pat, hold your musket straight; I believe you are drunk. Now, then, I want you fellows to go out of this pen and bring all the niggers you can catch. Don't you come back here without niggers." Then looking up at the Cathedral clock, he adds: "I'll give you forty minutes to be gone. Be sure and come back in that time, and bring niggers; don't come back without niggers."

No paper of the city protested against the outrages, except the Gazette In its impression of Thursday, the 4th, the following appeared:

"Let our colored fellow-soldiers be treated civilly, and not exposed to any unnecessary tyranny, nor to the insults of poor whites. We say poor whites for none but poor-spirited whites insult a race which they profess to regard as inferior. It would have been decent to have invited the colored inhabitants to turn out in defense of the city. Then there would have been an opportunity to compare their patriotism with that of those who were recently trying to drive them from the city. Since the services of men are required from our colored brethren, let them be treated like men."

This saturnalia of ruffianism continued until Thursday, September 4, 1862, when Judge W. M. Dickson was assigned the task of collecting into one body all the working bands of colored men, overseeing their rations, &c.

The order giving Judge Dickson command of the Black Brigade was as follows:

"HEAD-QUARTERS U. S. FORCES, CINCINNATI, September 4, 1862.

"William M. Dickson is hereby assigned to the command of the negro forces from Cincinnati working on the fortifications near Newport and Covington, and will be obeyed accordingly.

"By order of Major-General Lewis Wallace.

"J. C. ELSTON, JR., A. D. C."

To Judge Dickson and his aids, especially James Lupton, Acting Camp Commandant, the members of the brigade can never be sufficiently grateful. Under their command kind treatment took the place of brutality. The men were permitted to return to their homes, to allay the fears of their families, and to prepare themselves the better for camp-life. The police were relieved of provost-guard duty, and on Friday morning more men reported for duty than had been dragged together by the police. Many had hidden too securely to be found; others had escaped to the country. These now came forward to aid in the city's defense. With augmented numbers, and glowing with enthusiasm, the Black Brigade marched to their duty. Receiving the treatment of men, they were ready for any thing. Being in line of march, they were presented with a National flag by Capt. Lupton, who accompanied it with the following address:

"I have the kind permission of your commandant, Colonel Dickson, to hand you, without formal speech or presentation, this national flag—my sole object to encourage and cheer you on to duty. On its broad folds is inscribed, . 'The Black Brigade of Cincinnati.' I am confident that, in your hands, it will not be dishonored.

"The duty of the hour is work—hard, severe labor on the fortifications of the city. In the emergency upon us, the highest and the lowest alike owe this duty. Let it be cheerfully undertaken. He is no man who now, in defense of home and fireside, shirks duty.

"A flag is the emblem of sovereignty—a symbol and guarantee of protection. Every nation and people are proud of the flag of their country. England, for a thousand years, boasts her Red flag and Cross of St. George; France glories in her Tri-color and Imperial Eagle; ours the 'Star-spangled Banner,' far more beautiful than they—this dear old flag!—the sun in heaven never looked down on so proud a banner of beauty and glory. Men of the Black Brigade, rally around it! Assert your manhood, be loyal to duty, be obedient, hopeful, patient. Slavery will soon die; the slaveholders' rebellion, accursed of God and man, will shortly and miserably perish. There will then be, through all the coming ages, in very truth, a land of the free—one country, one flag, one destiny.

"I charge you, Men of the Black Brigade of Cincinnati, remember that for you, and for me, and for your children, and your children's children, there is but one Flag, as there is but one Bible, and one God, the Father of us all."

For nearly three weeks the Black Brigade labored upon the fortifications, their services beginning, as we have seen, September 2, and terminating September 20. At first, by compulsion, and under the control of vile men who sought to degrade its members below their own bestial level, at a later period under kind and competent leaders, they always labored cheerfully and acceptably. The shame meant to be inflicted upon them rebounded upon their enemies, and the members of the Black Brigade returned to their homes with the proud consciousness that, while the fortifications erected by their own hands had deterred the enemy from attacking in front, their uniform good conduct had completely routed the horde of rebel sympathizers in the rear, who had vented upon the Brigade the spite they felt toward the Union and Liberty.

But one serious accident occurred during the period of their service. On the 17th, Joseph Johns was killed by the falling of a tree. The blow fell heavily upon his wife, who with an infanwas left to mourn the loss of a loving husband and father. That they were not molested by the enemy was due to their good fortune, and not to any prudence on the part of the military authorities. General Wallace, having first ordered their impressment for a work in which they would have proudly volunteered, next placed them far in advance of the Union lines, with nothing but spades in their hands, this, too, at a time when an attack was momentarily expected. So far in advance were they, that they were once mistaken for the enemy; and if the officers serving underCol. J. R. Taylor, of the 50th Ohio, had not possessed more courage and prudence than their commander, serious consequences would have ensued. If Col. Taylor did not obtain one of Gov. Tod's squirrel-hunting medals, he should apply for one, and wear it, as a perpetual reminder that his prowess is terrible to squirrels only.

Members of the Black Brigade have since proved themselves men on bloodier fields. When Massachusetts called on the free colored men of the North to fill her regiments, they responded with joy. Others are enrolled in regiments stationed in the Mississippi Valley. I have before me a letter written by one of them—a rough, straight-forward soldier's letter. It is written with a pencil, with a fallen tree for a desk; for he and another member of the Brigade are doing picket duty in the everglades of Florida. He recounts the the deeds of his regiment, the 54th Massachusetts, in the bloody fight of Olustee; speaks modestly, as a true soldier does, of his own deeds, but we know that he stood by his flag, for in the report of the losses of Company I, 54th Massachusetts, we read: "Thomas Bowman shot through the leg." Many have met the glorious death of the soldier on the battle-field; some languish in the prisons of Richmond or Charleston; some sleep in that pit where Robert Gould Shaw lies "buried with his niggers." There let them rest; their burial place will be a resort of pilgrims of a redeemed race, in those glad days, when free black children shall sing songs of Liberty and Union, over the tombs of John C. Calhoun and Preston S. Brooks.

One does not wonder at the heroism of Lytle, Jones, Whitcomb, L'Hommedieu, and others of our city's sons, who have gone forth and sacrificed their lives for their country. Them she loved, strewed their youthful pathway with flowers, encouraged their opening manhood, and stood ready to crown their riper years with the honors she accords to those who have served her well. But these poor outcasts, what has she done for them? Slavery, social and political proscription, these were her gifts to them; yet they hope for more: they wish to be numbered among the children of the nation, to be invested with the privileges wherewith she endows her sons, to feel the heart throb when gazing upon the country's flag; to say with proud joy: we too are American citizens! Is this too much to hope for?

On the afternoon of Saturday, September 20, the Brigade was ordered into line, to return to their homes; their work was done. Judge Dickson had won the esteem of the men by his numerous acts of kindness, by the prompt vindication of their rights, by his incessant and efficient supervision of their labors. They had determined to present a sword to him as token of their regard. When all was ready, Mr. Marshall P. H. Jones stepped forward and addressed the commander as follows:

"Col. Dickson: The 2d day of September will ever be mem-

"Col. Dickson: The 2d day of September will ever be memorable in the history of the colored citizens of Cincinnati.

"Previous to that date the proffered aid of that class of citizens, for war purposes, was coldly, we may add, forcibly rejected. Many calls for aid and assistance to suppress this gigantic rebellion, as full in their demands as the one on that day, so far as this class of persons is concerned, had been made, yet there was no demand for our services.

"Deep in the memory of colored citizens of Cincinnati is written indelibly that eventful day, the 2d of September, 1862. We were torn from our homes, from the streets, from our shops, and driven to the mule-pen on Plum Street at the point of the bayonet, without any definite knowledge of what we were wanted for. Dismay and terror spread among the women and children, because of the brutal manner in which arrests were made. The colored people are generally loyal. This undue method of enlisting them into the service of Uncle Sam had the appearance (though false) that the colored people had to be driven, at the point of the bayonet, to protect their homes, their wives, and their children. They went unwillingly, under such circumstances. Contrast this with the alacrity with which they responded to the gentlemanly request, even before they knew they would be remunerated for their services.

"Sir, I have been selected by the members of the Black Brigade to thank you—deeply thank you—for the very great interest you have taken in our welfare, for your exertions and final success in collecting all of the different working parties into one brigade, for the kindness you have manifested to us in these trying times. We deeply thank you; our mothers thank you; our sweethearts thank you; our children will rise up, thank you, and call you blessed.

"It would be unpardonable injustice not to make favorable mention of those kind and gentlemanly officers you have associated with you in conducting the management of the Black Brigade. Our thanks are due to Messrs. T. C. Day, William Woods, J. Stacey Hill, Jacob Resor, J. W. Hartwell, J. W. Canfield, W. Dickson, William H. Chatfield, and last, though not least, Capt. James Lupton, whose urbane and gentlemanly presence has been as constant as our shadows, and whose efforts for our comfort have been as universal as his wide-spread benevolence.

"We, the members of the Black Brigade, perceive all the

necessary qualifications in all of the above-named gentlemen to constitute them true men of honor, right, and justice; but it is left for you, our gallant Colonel, to combine all virtues in one.

"Therefore, as a small expression of the high esteem the members of the Black Brigade entertain for you, they all, each and every one, present you this sword, the emblem of protection, knowing that, whenever it is drawn, it will be drawn in favor of freedom. And should you be called on, under other circumstances, to demand the services of the Black Brigade, you will find they will rally around your standard in the defense of our country."

The Colonel accepted the sword with a few appropriate words of acknowledgment; when the Brigade, with music playing, banners flying, with their commander at their head, marched through the streets of Covington to the pontoon bridge, and across to Cincinnati.

Passing through the principal streets in this order, the Black Brigade, so ignominiously recruited, so insulted and outraged at its going forth, was every-where received with kindly enthusiasm. Halting at the corner of Fifth and Broadway, they were dismissed by Colonel Dickson, with the following address:

"SOLDIERS OF THE BLACK BRIGADE! You have finished the work assigned to you upon the fortifications for the defense of the city. You are now to be discharged. You have labored faithfully; you have made miles of military roads, miles of rifle-pits, felled hundreds of acres of the largest and loftiest forest trees, built magazines and forts. The hills across yonder river will be a perpetual monument of your labors. You have, in no spirit of bravado, in no defiance of established prejudice, but in submission to it, intimated to me your willingness to defend with your lives the fortifications your hands have built. Organized companies of men of your race have tendered their services to aid in the defense of the city. In obedience to the policy of the Government, the authorities have denied you this privilege. In the department of labor permitted, you have, however, rendered a willing and cheerful service. Nor has your zeal been dampened by the cruel treatment received. The citizens, of

both sexes, have encouraged you with their smiles and words of approbation; the soldiers have welcomed you as co-laborers in the same great cause. But a portion of the police, ruffians in character, early learning that your services were accepted, and seeking to deprive you of the honor of voluntary labor, before opportunity was given you to proceed to the field, rudely seized you in the streets, in your places of business, in your homes, every-where, hurried you into filthy pens, thence across the river to the fortifications, not permitting you to make any preparation for camp-life. You have borne this with the accustomed patience of your race, and when, under more favorable auspices, you have received only the protection due to a common humanity, you have labored cheerfully and effectively. · "Go to your homes with the consciousness of having performed your duty-of deserving, if you do not receive, the protection of the law, and bearing with you the gratitude and respect of all honorable men. You have learned to suffer and to wait; but in your hours of adversity, remember that the same God who has numbered the hairs of our heads, who watches over even the fate of a sparrow, is the God of your race as well as mine. The sweat-blood which the nation is now shedding at every pore is an awful warning of how fearful a thing it is to oppress the humblest being. Until our country shall again need your services, I bid you farewell."

Although the service of the Black Brigade was in 1862, during which time the Hon. David Tod was Governor of Ohio, the following report was made by Colonel Dickson to his successor in office, Hon. John Brough. The report was also read in the Ohio Legislature, and ordered to be placed on the record.

The muster-roll contains no names of persons who did not serve in the Brigade during and after the second week, it not having been made up until that time.

THE BLACK BRIGADE—ITS SERVICES IN THE SIEGE OF CINCINNATI.

To His Excellency, John Brough, Governor of Ohio:

I beg leave to present to you, for preservation in the archives of the State, the accompanying enrollment of the Black Brigade of Cincinnati, serving in the defense of that city, in 1862.

This brigade was not formed under the authority of the State; but its labors were in the defense of her soil, and it seems but proper that some memory of it should be preserved in her records. The enrollment is not complete. It has seven hundred and six names. The brigade numbered about one thousand. Some three hundred of these, in the beginning of the service, and before an enrollment had been made, were assigned to various duties in camps, on gun-boats, and in the city, separate from the rest of the brigade, and their names were never obtained. But the enrollment is complete as to the body of the brigade, who for three weeks, as a separate and distinct force, labored upon the fortifications in the rear of Covington and Newport, opposite Cincinnati. The rank and file, and all the company officers except three, were colored men.

There was no complete military formation: the nominal brigade, regimental, and company organization had reference to the convenience of the service to which they were assigned. The requirements of the occasion, and the prejudices of the time, limited this to duty as a fatigue force. The colored men did not shrink from this duty; they gladly performed it; but they desired the privilege of defending themselves, and the works their hands had made, with arms. Organized companies of them, armed and equipped at their own expense, tendered their services to aid in the defense of the city. But this privilege was denied them, and they cheerfully performed the duty assigned.

The defeat of the national forces at Richmond, Kentucky, August 30, 1862, opened the way for rebel invasion of that State to the Ohio River. There was no organized force to resist this—none to protect Cincinnati.

Major-General Lewis Wallace, at that time in command of the city, promptly commenced the organization of a citizen force for the protection of the city. In the morning papers of September 2, there appeared an order from him declaring martial law, suspending business, and directing the "citizens" to assemble at designated places in each ward, for military organization. It was well understood that this order was not intended to, and did not, include colored citizens. Numbers of these, however, offered themselves for any service in which they

might be useful. This offer was accepted; but before any arrangement had been made for their employment; before any order had been given them, or request made of them, on the morning of the 3d of September, 1862, the police, acting in concert, and in obedience to some common order, in a rude and violent manner, arrested the colored men wherever found-in the streets, at their places of business, in their homes—and hurried them to a mule-pen on Plum Street, and thence across the river to the fortifications, giving them no explanation of this conduct, and no opportunity to prepare for camp-life. This unwonted and cruel procedure filled their minds, and the minds of their families, with alarm and terror, and called forth for them the sympathy of the citizens who witnessed it. Some of these informed General Wallace of this conduct, and remonstrated against it. He condemned it, and, for the purpose of protecting the colored men, and organizing them for their work; requested me to take command of them, publishing the following order:

"CIRCULAR.

"Head-quarters United States Forces, Cincinnati, September 4, 1862.

"William M. Dickson is hereby assigned to the command of the negro forces from Cincinnati, working on the fortifications near Newport and Covington, and will be obeyed accordingly.

"By order of Major-General LEW. WALLACE.

"J. C. ELSTON, JB., A. D. C."

Upon assuming command, September 4, I organized my staff as follows:

Timothy C. Day, A. A. G.

J. Stacey Hill, Quartermaster.

William Woods, Commissary.

James Lupton, Volunteer Aid and Camp Commandant.

Volunteer Aids—Jacob Resor, jr., James W. Canfield, John W. Hartwell, William J. Dickson, William H. Chatfield, Alexander Neave, David A. James.

I then proceeded to the fortifications, where the colored forces were. I found them at work on the rifle-pits and trenches about Fort Mitchel, on the Lexington Road, in the rear of Covington. They had been faithfully laboring during the previous

night, and had already been commended by the engineer in charge, for efficient work. They were, however, weary from long labor, and anxious about their families. They were also alarmed because of the treatment they had received from the regiments of soldiers near them. These seemed to look upon the colored men as abandoned property, to be seized and appropriated by the first finder. They detailed squads of soldiers, who appeared among the negroes at work, selected from them the number they wanted, and, at the point of the bayonet, marched them off to the camps of the regiments, there to be employed as cooks, or in some menial capacity, for the officers. A corporal's guard was engaged in this business when I reached Fort Mitchel. The colored men objected to this. They justly apprehended that they might be carried off with the regiments, or abandoned in Kentucky, where their presence as freemen was one of the most grievous crimes known to that State's laws, punishable with the enslavement of them and their posterity forever. They expressed entire willingness to labor on the fortifications under proper protection, but they desired to first return to their families and make preparations for camp-life.

My first care was to visit the camps of all the regiments in the vicinity, and to bring from them the kidnapped colored Having done this, and assembled them together, I marched them back to the city to the intersection of Sixth Street and Broadway, where I established head-quarters, reaching. there about dusk. I then explained to them that I designed forming them into a "Black Brigade," for fatigue duty; that they should be kept together as a distinct body, and have assigned to them a given part of the fortifications for their work; that they should receive protection and the same treatment as white men; that the necessities of the hour required of them constant and severe labor; that I expected this would be cheerfully rendered, and that their sense of duty and honor would cause them to obey all orders given, and thus prevent the necessity of any compulsion; that, at all events, I would try them, and would, therefore, dismiss them to their homes, expecting every one of them to meet me next morning promptly at five o'clock, to proceed to the fortifications, there to remain until their labors were ended.

They received this promise of protection and fair treatment with grateful emotion, and assured me that they would endeavor to do their duty. They felt some apprehension that the police would arrest them; but, as I had advised the city authorities of my action in the premises, and had received assurances that there would be no more arrests, I told them that they could go home without fear in this respect, and dismissed them. In this I was, however, mistaken. Scarcely had these men, wearied with thirty-six hours of constant labor—upon half rations, and without sleep—broken ranks, when they were set upon by the police, and numbers of them, with blows and imprecations, dragged to the nearest cells. I reported the matter to General Wallace, and bore from him to Mayor Hatch a peremptory order prohibiting the arrest of any colored man, except for crime. This opened the prison-doors, and by a late hour of the evening, with the assistance of my staff and some citizens, all the men arrested had been released and returned to their This order secured exemption from further arrests for some days, until Major-General Wright assumed immediate command of the city, when, for some unknown reason-perhaps because it was thought that the removal of General Wallace from the command had annulled his orders—the police, a third time, began arresting the colored men, those to whom, for sickness or other cause, I had given passes to return to the city. I again bore a peremptory order, this time from General Wright, to Mayor Hatch, commanding him not to arrest colored men, except for crime. This again opened the prison-doors; and since that time no colored man has been arrested in the city of Cincinnati, merely because he was a colored man. Whether these arrests were made by the police of their own volition, or in obedience to orders from superiors, I know not. Each time that I delivered a peremptory order from the commanding General to Mayor Hatch, he promised obedience to it.

The number of men dismissed on the evening of the 4th was about four hundred. On the morning of the 5th, at the given hour, 5 o'clock, about seven hundred reported for duty. A number of them were detailed for special duties, and about five hundred marched with me across the river to Newport, and thence to the cemetery on the Alexandria road in the rear of

Newport. A handsome National flag, presented to them by Capt. Jas. Lupton, was borne in their midst, and their march was enlivened by strains of martial music, from a band formed from the ranks, of their own motion. They were cheered on their way to their work by the good words of the citizens who lined the streets, and by the waving handkerchiefs of patriotic ladies. As they passed the different regiments in line of battle, proceeding to the fortifications, mutual cheers and greetings attested the good feeling between these co-workers in the same cause.

The section of work assigned to their special care, lay between the Alexandria road and Licking river, along the Cemetery ridge and Three-mile creek. It embraced the making of military roads, the digging of rifle-pits and trenches, the felling of forests, and the building of forts and magazines. The men commenced their work in the rifle-pits, on their arrival at Cemetery ridge.

Everything had to be improvised; the Quartermaster and Commissary departments required immediate attention, and gave most trouble; but in a few days all was in working order. The men discovered a special aptitude for camp life, and with grass, brush and trees, made "Camp Lupton" an agreeable summer residence. New accessions were received to the ranks every day; colored men singly, in squads and companies, from every part of Southern Ohio, joining them, until they exceeded 700, independently of the details made for special duties. Upon the section assigned them they continued to labor until the 20th. During this time they worked faithfully, always doing more than was required of them, and receiving again and again the commendation of the Engineers in charge, to the effect that they were the most efficient working men in the service. There was no occasion for compulsion, and for discipline, but a single in-They labored cheerfully and joyfully. They made miles of military roads, miles of rifle pits; felled hundreds of acres of the largest and loftiest forest trees; built forts and magazines. Some displayed a high order of intelligence, and a ready insight into the work they were doing, often making valuable suggestions. Upon one occasion, one of them suggested a change in the engineering of a military road ascending a

steep hill. The value of the change was obvious when named, and admitted by the Engineer, yet he ordered the road to be made as originally planned, and deprecated further suggestion.

They committed no trespass on private property. In one instance, upon changing the camp, a German asked me if they could not remain longer, as they protected his grapes. They were not intimidated by any danger, though compelled to labor without arms for their protection.

During the few days that the soldiers stood in line of battle, expecting an attack, the Black Brigade was working nearly a mile in front of the line of battle, and with nothing between it and the enemy but the cavalry scouts. Upon the occasion that it moved upon St. John's Hill, over-looking Licking Valley, so far was it in front of the lines that Colonel Jonah R. Taylor, of the 50th Ohio Volunteer Infantry, then in command as Acting Brigadier General of the forces nearest it, supposing it was the enemy, sounded the alarm, ordered out a battery to bear upon it, and, in his trepidation, actually ordered it to be fired upon; but this was prevented by the good sense of the officer in command of the battery, who refused obedience, and when pressed fired blank cartridges, and then induced the sending of a flag of truce. This was received with becoming formality, and the fears of the redoubtable commander were allayed. The men were fully advised as to their position, but said they would go wherever they were ordered.

During the first week they labored, as did the whole fatigueforce, without compensation. During the second week they received a dollar a day per man; and during the third week a dollar and a half—as did also all the fatigue-force, black and white.

Upon the 20th their labors were ended; the siege of Cincinnati had been raised: the banners of rebellion had receded, never to return, and the men with bappy hearts, with the good will of soldier and citizen, returned to the city and were dismissed to their homes. And thus closed, in joy and happiness, a service that had been commenced with violence, in anxiety and gloom.

I was much indebted to the intelligent and efficient aid I received from the gentlemen composing my staff—volunteers to

an arduous, and then thankless duty. It will not be considered by any of them an unfair discrimination, when I particularize in a single instance. To the constant attention by day and by night, and to the discreet supervision of Mr. James Lupton as camp commandant, the brigade was greatly indebted for its well-being and comfort.

Many of the members of the brigade have since entered the military service. Many are there still. Some have fallen, and now sleep well amid the sands of Morris Island, and of the banks of the Mississippi. Others have been taken prisoners, and their fate is enshrouded in impenetrable mystery. All have done their duty.

It is to be regretted that they were not permitted to enter the service under the auspices of their own State, whose soil they had defended; but this privilege, which the authorities of their State denied them, was granted them by the sagacious, patriotic and noble governor of the ancient Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

But there has been progress, and since then numbers of the Black Brigade have entered the service of their own State.

There can now, therefore, be no objection to preserving, in the archives of the State, as a part of the history of the times, this enrollment of the first organization of colored men in the West, for military purposes.

Respectfully, yours,

WILLIAM M. DICKSON,

Commandant Black Brigade.

CINCINNATI, January 12th, 1864.

MUSTER-ROLL OF THE BLACK BRIGADE

OF

CINCINNATI.

WILLIAM M. DICKSON,	Commandant.
TIMOTHY C. DAY,	Ass't Adjutant General,
J. STACEY HILL,	Quartermaster.
WILLIAM WOODS,	
JAS. LUPTON,	Volunteer Aid and Act- ing Camp Commandant.

VOLUNTEER AIDS:

Jacob Resor, Jr.

James M. Canfield.

John W. Hartwell.

David A. James.

William J. Dickson.

William H. Chatfield.

Alexander Neave.

FIRST REGIMENT.

Co. A.—44 MEN.

Wm. W. Powell, Captain. John Bond. Charles Briscoe. Albert Shaw. S. Davis. Sandy Mix. Joseph Hunster. Thomas Williams. Albert Warrick. David Anderson. Henry Allis. Charles Williams. Hercules Brown. Luke Green. Madison Taylor. Frank Gordon.

Thomas Holberson. George Brown. Silas Bond. William Parker. William Woodyer. Levi Ward. P. Askins. Benjamin Robinson. William Henry. Isaac Newton. Minor Williams. C. W. Thomas. William W. Neal. Dennis Lewis.

William Brown. Thomas Berkshiers. Thomas Jenkins. O. C. Harris. Harry Davenon. Joseph Lucas. Balak Middleton. Robert Butler. Abraham Mason. Daniel Davenon. Robert Henderson. William Grandstaff. Virgil Payne. Benjamin Butler.

Co. B.—51 MEN.

James Vansant, Captain. Thomas Holmes. J. C. Crowder. J. H. Jackson. John Burris. James Ghee. Hanse Bailey. William Hastie. Samuel Coleman. William Boon. William Simonton. L. Erskines. S. C. Tilman. Henry Casey. William Steers. William Webb. Mason Spencer.

George Frey. O. C. Donley. William Washington. Green Wilson. W. Gardner. Job Thompson. James Baylis. Albert Grey. Burke Smith. Benjamin Barbee. Luther Griggs. William Cooper. Lewis Harris. Washington, Shelton. Henry Holmes. William Hill. George Harris.

William Ross. Monroe Harris. Richard Rose. James Conrad. John Freeman. Thomas Johnston. J. Lewis. J. Brown. Robert Story. George Roots. Thomas Riley. Green Hill. William Lancaster. Jasper Beadle. W. N. Irons. Jesse Reynolds.

Henry Benson.

Co. C.—63 Men.

Isaac N. Delaney, Captain. William H. Clark. John R. Tinsley. Henry Porter. Samuel Jones. Milton Franklin. Simeon Tate. John Black. Young, Rice. Joseph Patterson. Frank Love. William H. Taylor. Daniel Decker. Richard Toney. Isaac Craft. John Shelby. John Green. Adam Seaton. Albert Moore. George Weaver. Caleb Calloway. Jerry Mason.

Nathaniel Ferrell. George Lee. Allen Robertson. Sylvester Moore. Benjamin Smith. Amos Freeman. James Buckner. Nelson Mosee. Harvey Wilson. Samuel Grant. Charles, Ferguson. Robert Burbage. James Clarkson. John Morgan. John Price. Jerry Hall. James Abrams. Thomas Hill. Samuel Harris. Isaac Turner.

Simon Wright. John Palmer. John H. Wilson. J. Turner. Joseph Henry. Tabbs, Gross. R. C. Ball. Henry W. Smith. Richard Griffin. Arthur Brown. Isaac Jenkins. Jerry Ross. Littleton Jones. Jacob Brown. John T. Johnston. William Wilson. Thomas Hickey. Charles Barkley. Charles Ross. David H. Baird. Charles Watkins.

Co. D.—44 MEN.

H. B. Alger, Captain. James S. Fremont. Edward Benedict. Charles Henry. William Williams. Samuel Washington. George Hall. William Stevens. Andy Edmundson. Sanders M. Pinn. George Snowden. Nelson Hudson. James Spotswood. Walker Calloway. John Edmundson.

J. H. Johnson. Benjamin Calamese. Henry Baxter. Benjamin Lee. M. Brown. William Spotswood. Frank Werk. J. M. Conrad. Jerry Dean. William Lewis. Peter Cluff. G. W. Armstrong. A. Baker. Isaiah Smith. W. B. Hudson.

E. Hinsley. John Williamson. Aaron Rankin. Charles Wyatt. Constant Perkins. James W. Williams. H. D. Conrad. *John Williams. W. F. Scott. G. O. Williams. John Ross. John Wilson. Isaac Smith. Willis Bryant.

* It may be worthy of mention, that a stray bullet, carelessly fired from the camp of the 4th Cincinnati Volunteers, struck the shovel from this man's hands, passing directly through the broad part of the shovel handle, and within a few inches of his head. The brave fellow never flinched, but gaily proceeded with his day's work, as if he enjoyed the smelling of gunpowder.

Co. E.-34 MEN.

William Scott, Captain.
Albert White.
Alexander Hubbard.
John Easton.
Converse Roots.
Alex. McAllister.
Caleb Bell.
Nicholas Perkins.
William Buckner.
Lloyd B. Taylor.
Alonzo Anderson.
John Black.

Charles H. Taylor.
George Burgess.
James Marshall.
Lewis Marshall.
John Buxton.
Austin Smith.
Martin Wadsworth.
W. Lockwood.
John Liggins.
John Turner.
Albert Bragg.

William Stanton.
Charles Smith.
J. James.
James Hartgrove.
Moses Carr.
Jesse Wilson.
John Reeder.
James Burton.
Edward Casey.
Charles Taylor.
W. J. Brown.

Co. F.-42 Men.

J. H. Dixon, Captain.
Samuel Lewis, sr.
Thomas Price.
Edward Booker.
Moses Gale.
Samuel Rhodes.
Thomas M. Coy.
Charles Farrow
Peter B. Bartlett.
Philip B. Ferguson.
London Lucas.
Archer Lewis
James Johnston.
Peter Wilson.

Edward Butler.
Henry Campbell.
Thomas Wesley.
Wiliam Parram.
James Simpson.
Robert H. Smith.
John W. Saunders.
John E. Bell.
Isham J. Brown.
Charles Lloyd.
Jamuel Lewis, jr.
Edward Harris.
Jesse Woodson.
Henry Griffin.

Thomas Bowman.
Robert B. Troy.
Jerry Butler.
Joshua Liverpool.
Berkley Jones.
Milton, Bentley.
James Scott.
William Steele.
Reuben Shipley.
Allen Cruse.
George W. Bail.
George Bradshaw.
James Townsend.
Henry Sullivou.

Co. I.—39 Men.

Charles Hall, Captain.
John Wilkinson.
William Lindsay.
Harvey Brown.
H. H. Pettigrew.
Joseph Holmes.
Thomas Jones.
James Price.
John Kelley.
Dangerfield Early.
Wingfield Early.
Alexander Jackson.
Joseph Early.

John Newsome.
James Morgan.
Nelson Briggs.
Noah Brown.
Henry Simpson.
John Valentine.
William P. West.
Samuel Wells.
George Bell.
Liston L. Crewett.
John Lott.
Amos Bowman.
Greene Buster.

Branch Goode.
Isaac Blakesley.
Benjamin Scott.
Jackson Murray.
Martin Tilman.
Matthew Busby.
Thomas Tilman.
Henry Tivis.
Benjamin Mason.
Robert Johnson.
William Lawson.
John Simms.
James Monroe.

SECOND REGIMENT.

Co. B-37 Men.

*James Mason, Captain.

B. Lee.

P. H. Kinney.

C. S. Shorter.

R. F. Cousins.

P. Johnson.

J. Kinney.

D. A. Norris.

L. Ellis.

W. Ellis.

John Brown.

W. H. Hill.

James Rolls.

A. Bently.

J. Tompkins.

R. Boner.

F. Livins.

A. Graham.

W. H. Harrison.

W. Bailey.

R. Goines.

George Wilson.

Frank Holmes.

George Merchant.

A. Logan.

W. Jonas.

George Hayes.

J. Jonas.

S. Pool.

W. Williams.

F. Limus.

D. R. Kinney.

George Leonard.

M. Smith.

M. Tate.

E. Cousins.

George Allen.

Co. C-45 Men.

M. Bowdree, Captain.

D. Curtis.

Henry Hawkins.

Daniel Mundowney.

Thomas Mercer.

John Farrow.

Charles Johnson.

David Liggins.

Daniel Harris.

John Taylor.

A. Hiller.

Robert Lewis.

John Webb.

J. C. McDougal.

James Harris.

William Cooper.

John Johnston.

James Martin.

Alexander Scruggs.

John Hill.

George Harris.

George Tenbrock.

John Crow.

H. Campbell.

Robert Kite.

John Green.

R. Stewart.

Anthony Cherry.

John Arnold.

Samuel Moss.

S. Hollandworth.

Charles Fields.

Marcus Rankill.

S. Richardson.

Adam Riley.

John Hubbard.

James Cox.

Elijah Kite.

Samuel W. Nickens.

R. Turpin.

Alfred Stevens.

Charles Harris.

William Rankill.

James King, jr.

Robert G. Jones.

Co. D-40 MEN.

Charles Austin, Captain.

William Thomas.

Frederick Somers.

Elder Willis.

Wilson Casey.

Tilford Sneed.

Benjamin Davis.

Charles Armstead.

Frank Hays.

Augustus Gaines.

George Kinney.

G. F. Butler.

^{*} Formerly body servant of Mason, rebel Minister to England.

Enos Parker.
Riley M. Truss.
John Ducker.
David Nickens.
Daniel Keith.
Abraham Jones.
James Morton.
James McAllister.
John Liggins.
Benjamin Cheek.

Richard Sims.

Emmanuel Patterson.

John Keith.

Charles Shelton.

Henry Henderson.

Richard Armstead.

Robert Crow.

James Bartlett.

Charles Williams.

Nicholas Saulsbury.
Nathaniel Lytle.
James Ferguson.
David Long.
Wesley Turner.
Benjamin Franklin.
John Alexander.
James Battise.
Wesley Jones.

Co. E-41 MEN.

John McAllister, Captain. William Wilson. John Haskins. A. W. Hays. Albert Lindsey. D. F. Carter. William Stewart. Cyrus Brown. James Carr. Frank Noton, or Knowlton Richard Blackburn. Joshua Eddy. John Lucas. P. Powell. Nathaniel Goines. Emmanuel Davis. Elim Miller. James Morris. Warner Durett. William Jones. Charles Tirley. M. W. Jackson. N. W. Hagerman. B. D. Payne. Hamilton Baker. Jacob Frederick. *Joseph Johns. William Griggs.

Isaac Jones.
C. F. Buckner.
Robert Lewis.
William Buckner.
George Collins.
Eli Covington.
John Hill.
Joseph Hagerman.

John R. Henry.

John Webb.

Morton Brown.

Johnson Howard.

Vernon Woods.

David Scott.

Co. F.—29 Men.

Peter F. Fossett, Captain. John Harris. W. B. Scott, Thomas Dixon. John Lewis. Jesse Oliver. William Lewis. G. W. Kinney. W. H. Baltimore. A. J. Mosby. Daniel Thomas. William H. Mills. Asa Butcher. Stephen Irwin. Nathan Williams. Charles Points. Lloyd Johnston. P. Templeton. Chapman Vinee. Randolph Jones.

Marshall Jordan.
J. Williams.
Charles Johnston.
John Mann.
Benjamin Dabney.
Allen Foster.
Harry Hodrick.
Wallace Shelton.

*This worthy man was accidentally killed. A large tree he had nearly chopped down in clearing obstructions from before the guns of Fort Shaler, swayed by the wind, fell upon and crushed him, a day or two only before the colored men were relieved from duty; after their return to Cincinnati he was buried by his late companions and the officers of the Black Brigade—much honored and lamented.

THIRD REGIMENT.

Co. No. 1-37 Men.

Simon Shepherd, Captain. James Copely. Marshal P. H. Jones. William Flewellan. Robert Blackstone. Alfred Keith. Charles Harrison. Henry Kizer. Francis Jones. James Kirk. James Ellis. Thomas Stewart. Powhatan Beatty. Moses Johnston.

C. W. Williams. L. W. Crewitt. W. I. Toney. G. Strange. Alfred Harrison. Isaac Smith. Solomon Anderson. Shadrach Kirke. George Trimble. Francis Bond. S. Napier.

William Smith. John Collier. William Carr. Sanford Lewis. Martin Scott. Henry Johnston. Lloyd Lewis, jr. Lloyd Lewis, sr. William Porter. James King. Isaac Lancaster. Isaiah Mitchell.

Co. No. 2.—44 MEN.

George Mack, Captain. Charles Carter. C. C. Hubbard. William Sanders. Ranly Miles. S. P. Dorsey. William Page. David Ellis. Samuel Taylor. Lewis Scott. Samuel Scott. Henry Cooper. Albert Jenkins. Alex. Sanders. Richard Corbin.

Newton Garrison. D. Harris. David Pleasants. Robert Gaines. Henry Casey. Miller Merchant. David P. Jones. Marshal Ditcher. Norvall Jackson. Samuel Hines. James James. Martin 'Morris. Robert Smith. Henry Allen. Amos Brown.

James Towles. Benjamin Stewart. Harry Green. Samuel Smith. Albert Chapman. J. Mernro. W. Early. George S. Allen. Andy Wilkinson. Walter Scott. Thomas Casev. John Cousins. George Burgess. Edward March.

Co. No. 3.—42 Men.

W. H. Looker, Captain. L. Bruce. H. Bryant. G. Ware. W. Wilson. M. Rust.

A. J. Holloway. W. Holloway. W. Satchell. B. Hogan. B. Hamilton. M. Johnson.

W. Satchell, Sr. G. F. Butler. Isaac Mitchell. J. Turner. E. Bates. H. B. Renson.

S. Holloway.
L. Holloway.
O. Madden.
P. Alexander.
J. Mundowney.
H. Boyer.

J. Gates.

S. Riddle.

J. Dermegall.
J. Bates.
W. H. Anderson.
W. H. Steinway.
Lewis Scott, Jr.
Andrew Tait.
Peter Custello.

C. Corrall.

Amos Brown.
Augustus Gaines.
Martin Tilman.
Thomas Tilman.
Henry Tivis.
Arthur Brown.
George Whitcomb.
Richard Tostson.

Co. No. 4.—30 Men.

T. Perry, Captain.
William Hudson.
Charles H. Payne.
Charles Mazee.
Daniel Early.
Charles St. John.
Philip Willis.
John Campbell.
Clark, Powell
Lewis Hughes.

Aston Wilson.
John Hill.
Willis Bryant.
John Findley.
Lewis Johnson.
Henry Johnson.
James H. Wilson.
H. Brown.

H. Brown.
William Hudson, Jr.
M. Reynolds.

J. Battise.
William Spriggs.
Samuel Ray.
Jackson M. Moore.
Lewis Stratton.
E. Miller.
W. H. Washington.
W. H. Bush.
Sylvester Bird.
William Lawson.

Co. No. 5.-44 MEN.

M. Jackson, Captain.
T. J. Goode.
W. Wilson.
W. Fisher.
S. Burgess.
F. Marshall.
B. Simmons.
N. Dolsby.
L. Cooper.
W. Peyton.
C. Jones.
R. Goines.
A. Posey.
M. Raglin.
E. Ferguson.

G. Ralton.
M. J. Epps.
J. Gibbs.
W. Smith.
F. Buckner.
G. Henry.
W. H. Mann.
B. Wilkinson.
S. Blakey.
W. Sanders.
H. Smith.
L. Alexander.
L. Givens.
J. W. Wilson.
A. Triplett.

William Fisher.
H. Patterson.
W. Smith.
E. Solomon.
B. Turner.
C. Jones.
L. Griggs.
George Harvey.
L. G. Hilton.
Henry Casey.
Robert Butler.
G. Leonard.
Charles Raglan.
William Davis.

RECAPITULAION.

First	Regiment,	Company	<u> </u>	44
(-	cc	44	В,	51
44	"	"	С,	63
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Second	££	"	В,	37
5.6	££	£ (C,	45
"	ει	cc .	D,	40
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66	66	"	F,	29—192
Third	"	¢¢.	No. 1,	37
"	£¢.	· · ·	No. 2,	44
66	66	££	No. 3,	42
66	"	"	No. 4,	30
ει	££	66	No. 5,	44—197
1	Total enrol	lment,	•	706