

were defrayed from a private fund raised chiefly in Massachusetts. Major Stearns stationed these agents at various eligible points and directed recruits to be brought to Nashville, to which place the fragment of the second regiment (now the Thirteenth U. S. Colored Troops) was ordered. His agents, by public meetings, by personal appeals, and by the employment of colored assistants, procured recruits freely. It was upon the 24th of September, 1863, that recruiting began; upon the — of — the Thirteenth U. S. Colored Regiment was filled.

All officers of these regiments had up to the battle of Chickamauga been appointed by General Rosecrans.

The derangement of travel following that battle and the pressing demands of the army prevented prompt replies to Major Stearns' requests for officers; consequently permission was granted to Governor Johnson and Major Stearns to appoint officers. (See letter from the Secretary of War dated —.)

Recruits came in so freely that Major Stearns decided to raise four other regiments of infantry—respectively designated the Fourteenth, Fifteenth, Sixteenth, Seventeenth. The Fourteenth was organized at Gallatin, the Fifteenth was started at Shelbyville, the Sixteenth at Clarksville, and the Seventeenth at Murfreesborough.

It was a part of Major Stearns' plan to have the officer who was to command the regiment appointed first, that he might shape and tone the regiment from the beginning. The persons so appointed were in all cases commissioned officers, and though they did not draw pay as of the grade to which appointed, their local rank sufficed to give them command and the pay of their old grade to support them till entitled to muster in. Captains were to stay with their companies; the subalterns to recruit, if thought best.

His plan is developed in General Orders, No. 1, headquarters Commissioner for Organization U. S. Colored Troops, appended.\* Frequent scouts were ordered to be made by the nascent regiments. Upon these scouts all who desired, of the negroes found on the way, were recruited; none were pressed.

Troops, as soon as organized, were generally assigned to some duty at the post where raised, and their practical acquaintance with the duties of soldiers began at once.

#### LABOR.

The Twelfth and Thirteenth regiments were stationed on the Nashville and Northwestern Railroad as laborers, and as guards to other laborers.

About November 20, 1863, General Meigs, Quartermaster-General, then at Chattanooga, requested of Major Stearns what colored men could be spared for fatigue duty at Bridgeport, Ala. In accordance with this request four companies of the Fourteenth U. S. Colored Infantry were sent from Gallatin. They remained at Bridgeport engaged in fatigue duty till about the 1st of February, 1864, when the regiment was reunited at Chattanooga. At Chattanooga the regiment was set to work upon fortifications.

The Sixteenth Regiment U. S. Colored Infantry was ordered to Chattanooga about the 1st of April, 1864, and also set at work upon the fortifications. The Fifteenth U. S. Colored Infantry late in

\* Omitted