M2156

LISTS OF FEDERAL PRISONERS OF WAR WHO ENLISTED IN THE CONFEDERATE ARMY, 1862–1865

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Records arranged for filming by David Brown

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Washington, DC
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INTRODUCTION

On the single roll of this microfilm publication, M2156, are reproduced several rolls (lists) of Federal prisoners of war who enlisted in the Confederate army, 1862–65, and related materials (ARC Identifier 615175).* These records are part of Records of the Commissary General of Prisoners, Record Group (RG) 249.

BACKGROUND

On September 24, 1864, Confederate States of America Assistant Adjutant General John Blair Hoge, by command of Secretary of War James A. Seddon, authorized Maj. Garnett Andrews to enlist a battalion of infantry from foreign prisoners at Millen, Andersonville, “and other points in Georgia.” Irish and French men were preferred. “No citizens or natives of the United States” and “few if any Germans” were wanted. Enlistments were to be for three years, and its officers were to be appointed by the President, not elected by the men. Recruiting began soon afterward and continued until the end of the war. Subsequently, by Special Order No. 8, Headquarters, Military Division of the West, January 16, 1865, Col. John G. O’Neil, 10th Tennessee Regiment, was directed to “to proceed to the several depots for Federal Prisoners in Georgia, North and South Carolina and Virginia, for the purpose of enlisting such Irishmen and other Foreigners who may be willing to join the Confederate service…..” Ultimately, four units of foreigners were recruited:

**BROOKS’ BATTALION OF FOREIGNERS, CONFEDERATE REGULAR INFANTRY** was recruited from prisoners held at Florence, South Carolina. It was organized October 10, 1864, and served in McLaws’ Division until December 18, 1864, when it was returned to Florence because of desertions and mutiny.

**TUCKER’S CONFEDERATE REGIMENT** was recruited from prisoners at Florence, South Carolina; Salisbury, North Carolina; and Richmond, Virginia. It was organized October 16, 1864, as the 1st Foreign Battalion. It was later increased to regimental size and renamed the 1st Foreign Legion, and finally renamed Tucker’s Confederate Regiment on February 28, 1865.

**8TH CONFEDERATE BATTALION** was recruited from prisoners at Florence, South Carolina. It was organized December 26, 1864, as the 2nd Foreign Battalion. It was later known as the 2nd Foreign Legion until it was renamed the 8th Confederate Battalion on February 13, 1865.

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* The Archival Research Catalog (ARC) is available for research online at [www.archives.gov](http://www.archives.gov). This series is also identified as Entry (Series) 34, Rolls of Federal Prisoners of War Who Enlisted in the Confederate Army, in Patricia Andrews, Preliminary Inventory NM-68, *Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the Office of the Commissary General of Prisoners* (National Archives, 1966).
10TH TENNESSEE REGIMENT was recruited from prisoners in Georgia, beginning with about 250 men in October and November 1864. Initially, recruitment was limited to Irish and other foreign immigrants, but when few agreed, native-born Union soldiers were enlisted. The 10th Tennessee recruited about 150 Andersonville prisoners in January 1865, and 165 more in March 1865. The recruits were required to take an oath of allegiance to the Confederacy. Organized as Burke’s Battalion, 10th Tennessee, they were part of a force sent by Col. William W. Wier toward Tupelo, Mississippi, to repel a raid along the Mobile and Ohio Railroad by Union cavalry commanded by Brig. Gen. Benjamin Grierson. Burke’s Battalion and other units blocked the tracks at Egypt Station near Aberdeen, Mississippi. On the evening of December 27, 1864, six men deserted and made their way to Union lines, where they reported the presence of the former prisoners. After a battle the next day, Grierson’s forces captured more than 500 prisoners, including 253 former Union soldiers from Burke’s Battalion.

Grierson’s prisoners were shipped by steamer to the Union prison camp at Alton, Illinois, where claims that the prisoners desired restoration to their original units were investigated. On March 5, 1865, Maj. Gen. Grenville Dodge recommended that all the former Union soldiers and some Confederate troops be enlisted in the U.S. Volunteers for service in the West. Dodge’s recommendation was accepted, and the prisoners were permitted to enlist in the 5th and 6th U.S. Volunteers.

**RECORDS DESCRIPTION**

The records include several rolls (lists) created during and after the Civil War that name former Union soldiers in rough alphabetical order. Most lists identify each man’s rank, former Union regiment, date and place where captured, date of release, and remarks. There is also memoranda and correspondence created or copied within the Adjutant General’s Office (AGO) from 1882 to 1905, some of which discusses copying information in these records for inclusion in the Union and Confederate Compiled Military Service Records (CMSRs) created by the AGO. In addition, there are several oaths of allegiance to the Confederate Government, 1862–3. The records are described in more detail in the table of contents.

These records were filmed by National Archives in 1993 in response to a customer reproduction order, and a negative copy was retained by the National Archives for reference purposes. The records were described as “unarranged” in Patricia Andrews, Preliminary Inventory NM-68, Preliminary Inventory of the Records of the Office of the Commissary General of Prisoners (National Archives, 1966), and largely remained that way when they were microfilmed. This film was assigned the number M2156 in 2012 in order to issue it as a National Archives Microfilm Publication.
ROLL LIST

IMAGE NOS.  TITLE OR DESCRIPTION OF RECORD

Unnumbered  National Archives front material and this descriptive pamphlet

1–50  Undated list from a paginated volume. Two-page spread. Left page contains name, rank, Union regiment and company, and where captured. Right page contains when captured, when released, and remarks. These pages were apparently removed from their original binding by the War Department, or were received that way by the War Department. All extant pages were filmed. “Missing” pages were probably blank. Pages containing A–L surnames were filmed at frames 64–128.

PAGE NOS.  FIRST LETTER OF SURNAME
112–121  M
128–129  N
138–139  O
154–157  P
164–165  Q
168–173  R
176–183  S
190–191  T
200–201  U
204–205  V
210–215  W
226–227  Y
236–237  Z

51–52  Paper that reads: “Roll of Federal Prisoners of War who Joined the Rebel Army, and rolls of Federal Prisoners of War who took oath of allegiance to the Rebel Government 1862-3-4-5” and a heavy cardboard that reads: “FEDERAL DESERTERS Entered into new volume”

53  Order to Maj. Garnett Andrews from John Blair Hoge, Acting Adjutant General by command of the [CSA] Secretary of War, Sept. 24, 1864

54  Envelope labeled “Roll 169, Confederate Prisoners of War at Alton, Illinois, Jany. 16/20, 1865.” This relates to the roll that begins at Frame 177

55–61  Internal War Department correspondence, dated 1882, regarding these muster rolls, followed by papers (written on envelopes) describing different rolls
Extract of Special Order No. 8, Headquarters, [CSA] Military Division of the West, Jan. 16, 1865, directing Col. J. G. O’Neil, 10th Tenn. Regt., to “to proceed to the several depots for Federal Prisoners in Georgia, North and South Carolina and Virginia, for the purpose of enlisting such Irishmen and other Foreigners who may be willing to join the Confederate service . . . ”

Undated list from a paginated volume (continuation of same volume filmed at frames 1–50). Two-page spread. Left page contains name, rank, Union regiment and company, and where captured. Right page contains when captured, when released, and remarks. These pages were apparently removed from their original binding by the War Department, or were received that way by the War Department. All extant pages were filmed. “Missing” pages were probably blank.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAGE NOS.</th>
<th>FIRST LETTER OF SURNAME</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10–17</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23¹–28</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2–4</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>22¹</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>32–40</td>
<td>D</td>
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<td>G</td>
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<tr>
<td>76–81</td>
<td>H</td>
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<td>86–87</td>
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<td>90–93</td>
<td>J</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>98–101</td>
<td>K</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102–105</td>
<td>L</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Envelope labeled “Correspondence relating to carding rolls of the 8th and 10th C.S. Inf.” followed by internal Adjutant General’s Office correspondence, 1904–1905. Four rolls (lists) were carded in 1902 by direction of [Adjutant] General [Frederick Crayton] Ainsworth” with the “cards placed in the Federal files” [that is, Compiled Military Service Records (CMSRs)]. In Autumn 1904, the question arose whether the rolls would be carded a second time for placement in the Confederate Compiled Military Service files. They were, and this task was completed by May 8, 1905.

“Prisoners of War at Alton Military Prison, Jan. 23, '65,” dated Feb. 3, 1865, page 7, then 1–6. Page 7 (surnames T–Z plus one A) is badly torn with pieces missing. Remarks on page 1 (image 141) state:

¹ Page 22 (left side page) and related page 23 (right side page) are reproduced out of order.
“The men whose names are on this Roll are held as prisoners of war belonging to the 10th Tenn. Regt. captured at Egypt Station, Miss., and so reported. These men enlisted in the Rebel Army while held by the Confederate authorities as prisoners of war at Andersonville, Georgia.” Additional remarks were recorded opposite the names of some men.

147–157 Internal AGO (Record and Pension Office) correspondence regarding these records

158–159 Envelope followed by “List of United States Soldiers who took an Oath of Allegiance to the Conf. Govt. and enlisted in their service in the ‘Foreign Battn., Conf. Army’ to fight against the United States.” Includes a list of three men registered at Libby Prison as deserters from the United States Army.

160–161 Envelope that reads “List of Deserters from the U.S. Army to the Rebels, May 12 & 14th 1863, who refused to be Exchanged and were paroled on taking the Oath not to serve against the Confederate Government, May 14th, 1863,” followed by that list.

162–174 Oaths of allegiance to the Confederate government, 1862–3

175–176 Internal AGO records regarding format for carding certain enlistments for inclusion in the Confederate Compiled Military Service Records (CSMRs).

177–190 Roll of Prisoners of War, Alton Military Prison, January 23, 1865


215–270 Envelope “376” labeled “Handle this list with care” precedes a list of 1,933 men identified as a paper that was “part of the purchased Confederate Records received at this Office May 3, 1879. A.G.O. July 18, [18]79.”

271–307 “Roll of 496 Prisoners of War Received at Alton Military Prison, January 16th to 20th, 1865”

307 last record image

unnumbered NARA “End” frame