

NEBRASKA STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY COLLECTION RECORD

RG0779.AM: Galvanized Yankees

Research materials: 1940

BACKGROUND NOTE

"Galvanized Yankees" was the name applied to some 6000 former Confederate soldiers enlisted from Union prisoner-of-war camps and sent west to fight Indians. Between 1864 and 1866, six regiments of these former rebels, officially known as United States Volunteers, were stationed throughout the west seeing action in Nebraska, Minnesota, Dakota Territory, Kansas, Colorado, and Utah.

In Nebraska, "Galvanized Yankees" from the 3rd and 5th Regiments were stationed at Forts Kearny and McPherson, and men from these regiments garrisoned many other minor posts and stations along the overland trail. They fought Indians, guarded surveying parties for the Union Pacific, escorted supply trains and stagecoaches, and rebuilt telegraph lines.

At the end of their terms of service the "Galvanized Yankees" were discharged at Fort Kearny or Fort Leavenworth. The last units were mustered out in November, 1866.

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTE

The collection consists of one series, Research Materials, gathered by Society Researchers in investigating the numbers and sources of "Galvanized Yankees" on the plains. Research on this issue was begun when the Society received questions about the war service of the 11th Ohio Volunteers. Based upon research conducted by Society staff, it was concluded that the 11th Ohio Volunteer Infantry saw service only in the south, and that the 11th Ohio Volunteer Cavalry saw service on the Plains; and that the 11th Ohio Volunteer Cavalry were not "Galvanized Yankees," but were regularly enlisted Union men. This research was conducted in 1940 and its conclusions dispute statements made by Capt. H. E. Palmer in his "History of the Powder River Indian Expedition of 1865" (Nebraska State Historical Society Transactions and Reports, Volume 2, 1887).

DESCRIPTION

Folder

1. Research Materials on "Galvanized Yankees"

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Subject headings:

Galvanized Yankees

Military service

Nebraska -- History -- 1854-1867

Ohio -- 11th Cavalry -- History

Ohio -- 11th Infantry -- History

United States -- History -- Civil War, 1861-1865