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FOUND! ONE UNDOCUMENTED CIVIL WAR RANK

by

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Although I run a historic site, I know better than to match my trivia skills with other Civil War buffs on the technical side of the war. I tend to look at the strategic picture and like to paint broad, sweeping panoramas to lay before my audience when I speak. However, recently I've been able to stump many aficionados with the simple question: "What rank is signified by U.C.A.D?" At round tables and generally, I've been able to muddy the coffee of the best. Now, the answer should be published and the rank should be officially recognized.

I first ran across the term U.C.A.D. while researching the index cards for the 2nd (New) Missouri Light Artillery, Company H. That company was at the Battle of Pilot Knob, Mo., where 1000 Union troops led by Brigadier-General Thomas Ewing, Jr., made a defiant and successful stand against the 12,000 man Confederate army of Major-General Sterling Price on 27 Sep 1864. Then, in the

cool of the night the Union forces strategically withdrew, blew up the powder magazine, and led the Confederates on a four day chase. This gave Union troops in St. Louis and Jefferson City time to organize.

Four men were in this battle who had that rank. Frank Joplin, George Murray, George Crittenden, and David (Hensley) Hensly all were listed as U.C.A.D. As I matched up the names to other information I had on the 2nd, I noticed that everyone so marked was also recorded in the Cyrus Peterson collection of papers on the battle as "colored."¹ Apparently, the term had something to do with being African-American and I quickly assumed that the 'AD' meant African descent. I then elicited the support of several historians in my agency (the Missouri Division of State Parks), the Missouri Secretary of State's Archives and the University of Missouri archives, but we could not reach a definite conclusion as to what it meant.

One night as I was reading a new civil war magazine, I saw that each company was allowed to have up to two African-Americans serving as "under-cooks."² The icing was on the cake, so to speak, when I found this order in the Official Records.

GENERAL ORDERS No. 323.

WAR DEPT., *ADJT. GENERAL'S OFFICE,*

Washington, September 28, 1863.

In section 10, act of March 3, 1863, it is enacted "That the President of the United States be, and he is hereby, authorized to cause to be enlisted for each cook (two allowed by section 9) two undercooks of African descent, who shall receive for their full compensation \$10 per month and one ration per day; \$3 of said monthly pay may be in clothing."

For a regular company, the two undercooks will be enlisted; for a volunteer company, they will be mustered into service, as in the cases of other soldiers. In each case a remark will be made on their enlistment papers showing that they are undercooks of African descent. Their names will be borne on the company muster-rolls at the foot of the list of privates. They will be paid, and their accounts will be kept, like other enlisted men. They will also be discharged in the same manner as other soldiers.

By order of the Secretary of War:

E. D. TOWNSEND,

*Assistant Adjutant-General.*³

Therefore, U.C.A.D. was created as a separate rank below private. As it was ordered by the Secretary of War, it should also, hereafter, be recognized as an official Union army rank during the Civil War.

NOTES:

¹ Peterson, Cyrus. "The Cyrus A. Peterson: Battle of Pilot Knob Research Collection."

(Missouri Historical Society, St. Louis, Mo.) Box 1 Folder 23.

² O'Beirne, Kevin. "A Guide To Leadership in Reenacting" Civil War Historian

Magazine Vol. 1, No. 3. (Yellow Springs, OH: Antique Power, Inc.), pp. 66.

³ United States War Department, The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the

Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies, Series 3, Vol. 3, Serial # 124.

(Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office) p. 843.

Walter E. Busch, is the site administrator of Fort Davidson State Historic Site, Pilot Knob, Mo. He holds a Master's Degree from California State University-Dominguez Hills and is the author of "General, You Have Made The Mistake of Your Life: The Life of Gen. Thomas Ewing, Jr," published by Two Trails Publishing, Independence, MO.

FIGURE 1: MUSTER CARD OF FRANK JOPLIN FROM MISSOURI SECRETARY OF STATE ON-LINE ARCHIVES.

108.

2d (New) Reg't Art. Vols.

..... Joplin, Frank Age

Rank U. S. A. D. Co. H

Captain Montgomery

Enlisted Jan. 25, 1864

Where Springfield, Mo.

Mustered in Aug. 16, 1864

Where St. Louis, Mo.

Remarks Died Oct. 10, 1865,

..... at Fort Laramie,

.....

.....

.....

.....

Mustered out 186

Where

Form No. 242, A. O. C., Mo., 11-19-19-23C