

Accession 2006-01

Civil War "Company Descriptive Book"

4th Regiment Volunteer Reserve Corps (Formerly known as Invalid Corp)

Company K

This corps consisted of men physically unable to serve in the field because of disabilities or wounds.

(For list of qualifications and disqualifications for admission into this corps please see General Orders, War Department, Adj. General's Office, No. 130. May 15, 1863)

The item covers the period of 1864-1865 and lists names and basic information for men who were assigned to Company K, 4th Regiment, Veteran Reserve Corps.

This Regiment was organized at Rock Island, Ill., October 10, 1863 by consolidation of the 128th, 129th, 135th, 136th, 137th, 138th, 140th, 153rd and 166th Companies, 1st Battalion. They mustered out July 17, 1865 to January 23, 1866. The Regiment consisted of men who had been wounded or became ill and were considered no longer capable of hard campaigning or prolonged exposure to the weather, but who could still serve their country. Twenty-four Veteran Reserve Corps regiments were stationed throughout the North from Minnesota and Iowa to New England and the nation's capital.

Most of the 4th Regiment was stationed at the Rock Island Prison Barracks on Arsenal Island. Based on reports found in Returns from U.S. Military Posts: Rock Island Barracks (National Archives & Records Service, Roll 1037, Nov.1863-Aug.1865) Company K was assigned to "detached service" at Camp Roberts in Davenport, Iowa "guarding deserters and prisoners" in March 1864. (Camp Roberts later was called Camp Kinsman, and then became the Iowa Soldiers' Orphans Home.) Reports through June 1865 state Company K was "guarding Indians" at Camp Roberts.

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Descriptive roll of Company with Enlistment info
Non-commissioned officers,
musicians, 3 privates p.10a-11b

Descriptive roll of Company with Enlistment info
Enlisted men- alphabetical p.12a-14b

Descriptive roll of Company with Discharge Info
Non-commissioned officers p.15a-16b

Descriptive roll of Company with Discharge Info
Musicians p.17a-17b

Descriptive roll of Company with Discharge Info
Enlisted men - alphabetical p.18a-36b

The "Descriptive roll of Company" includes the following information:

- Names
- Description
 - Age
 - Height
 - Feet/inches
 - Complexion
 - Eyes
 - Hair
 - Where born
 - Town or County/State
 - Occupation
- Enlistment
 - When
 - Where
 - By whom
 - Term
 - Remarks

The Discharge information is organized by rank. It includes the date and reason of discharge (or date of death or desertion) as well as the description of the individual.

Timeline

- 1863 Apr 28 Formation of Invalid Corps authorized by Sec. Of War [General Order No. 105]
1st Battalion: retained full use of limbs; given guard duties; armed with muskets
2nd Battalion: lost limb or unable to perform duty in 1st Battalion; given duty in hospitals, offices, storehouses, etc; armed with swords and revolvers
- 1863 Aug Construction began on prisoner of war camp on Arsenal Island
- 1863 Oct 10 4th Regiment organized at Rock Island, Illinois by consolidation of the 128th, 129th, 135th, 136th, 137th, 138th, 140th, 141st, 153rd, and 166th Companies, 1st Battalion.
- 1863 Nov 11 U.S. military prison on Rock Island opened (Tillinghast pg. 35)
- 1863 Dec 3 First Confederate prisoners arrive at prison;
468 prisoners of war captured in the Battle of Lookout Mountain in southeastern Tennessee
- 1864 Jan "GrayBeards" aka 37th Iowa Volunteers supplement the guard force
- 1864 Jan 16 Charles Wright (Tennessee Confederate Soldier) arrives at Rock Island Prison along with about 50 other prisoners from Columbia, Kentucky. He states:
"The parapet was first guarded by a regiment of old men, called Greybeards....The duty of calling the roll of prisoners was performed by several companies of the **Fourth Veteran Reserve Corps**. These men were soldiers who had seen service in various regiments, and on account of wounds or other disabilities were formed into corps for prison duty. ... The roll was called three times a day, and the barracks inspected every morning."
- 1864 Small-pox outbreak
- 1864 Mar18 Invalid Corps renamed Veteran Reserve Corps
- 1864 Mar 19 **Accession #2006-01** "Company Descriptive Book for 4th Regiment, U.S. Veteran Reserve Corps" appears to begin (1 death prior to this date is recorded)

- 1864 Apr 18 Inspection report submitted regarding Rock Island Barracks, Ill. "Commanding Officer Col. A.J. Johnson is...not as efficient as he ought to be....The grounds are neglected....The post sutler sells pies, candies, &c....Troops composing garrison, **Fourth Regiment Veteran Reserve Corps** and Thirty-seventh Iowa Volunteers; the latter a regiment of decrepit old men and the most unpromising subjects for soldiers I ever saw....Post quartermaster, Capt. Charles A. Reynolds, U.S. Army...was somewhat intoxicated....Number of prisoners 6,860."
- 1864 Jun/Aug Prisoners' food rations cut
(Diary of Lafayette Rogan) 1Jun1864 "Reduction in rations."
21Aug1864 "Order from Com. Gen. Of Prisons prohibiting us from receiving any supplies from friends and from buying anything to eat."
- 1864 Sep 24 U.S. 108th Colored Infantry Regiment assumed guard duty;
(Diary: Lafayette Rogan) 24Sep1864 "A regiment of Contrabands arrived at this port for garrison duty. One man to four companies for roll calls."
25Sep1864 "The contrabands have not yet come on the parapet. We hate it, but I suppose we must submit to this indignity."
26Sep1864 "8000 southern men to day are guarded by their slaves who have been armed by the Tyrant. One of our number was killed and two others wounded last night in cold blood."
- 1864 Sep Judge Grant of Davenport requests statement regarding prison conditions at Rock Island
(Diary of Lafayette Rogan: Mentions both Judge James and Mrs. Grant several times as bringing food, mending clothing.)
- 1865 Apr Surrender of Confederate Army at Appomattox;
Lincoln assassinated
- 1865 Jun Prisoners discharged
- 1865 Jun 27 28 soldiers of the Fourth Regiment Volunteer Reserve Corps are discharged
- 1865 Jul 5 All prisoners of war released at Rock Island, Ill.
Forces stationed as guards relieved (*War of the Rebellion; Series III; Vol. 7; p.701*)
- 1865 Jul 17 Begin to muster out 4th Regiment, Veteran Reserve Corps.
Continues until Jan 23, 1866 by detachments
- 1865 Jul 22 Prison closed (Tillinghast, pg.35)
- 1865 Aug 2 Prison vacated (*War of the Rebellion; Series III; Vol. 7; p.701*)

1865 Nov 25 Last 19 soldiers of Fourth Regiment Volunteer Reserve Corps discharged.

MORE BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Union: A Guide to Federal Archives Relating to the Civil War by Kenneth White Munden [SC 973.7 Mun]

p.344

The organization of an Invalid Corps was authorized by AGO General Order 105, Apr. 28, 1863 to consist of companies and, if desirable, of battalions.

The Provost Marshal General was responsible for executing this order; the troops organized under it were to be under the control of his Bureau; and a new branch was set up to handle the work.

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Official Army registers of the volunteer forces for the period of the War were published by order of the Secretary of War, in compliance with a joint resolution of the Senate and the House of Representatives. These give names of regiments, short historical accounts of their organization, names of officers, and lists of casualties. Vol. 8 contains sections on the Territories, Veteran Reserve Corps...There is an index ...

[Note: University of Iowa, Iowa City has this series: *Official Army Register of the Volunteer Force of the United States Army for the Years 1861-1865* as of 2/2006]

There were 21 prison camps operated by the Union during the Civil War.