

confront the dogmas of conventional history is admirable. The volume is essential reading for students of the War of 1812, Harrison, Tecumseh, and British-Indian operations in the Old Northwest.

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The Black Civil War Soldiers of Illinois: The Story of the Twenty-ninth U.S. Colored Infantry. By Edward A. Miller, Jr. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1998. Pp. xi, 267. Map, illustrations, appendix, notes, bibliography, index. \$29.95.)

The inspiration for this book came, the author tells us, from the request of archivists at the Fort Ward Museum & Historic Site, Alexandria, Virginia, for information about "two black regiments thought to have served in Alexandria during the war" (p. x). The 29th USCT (United States Colored Troops) from Illinois was one of the regiments, the other being Indiana's 28th USCT. Although there is no comparable study of the 28th, with this work Edward A. Miller, Jr., has amply responded to the need for a history of the 29th. Readers will appreciate the thoroughness with which he has accomplished the "tedious task" of researching "the thousands of individual files that hold the story of a single regiment" (p. x). The title is somewhat misleading, however, because the book does not encompass those black soldiers from Illinois who served in U.S. infantry regiments or artillery or cavalry units.

Successive chapters deal with the recruiting of men from Illinois and elsewhere and the regiment's formal organization at Quincy, April 24, 1864, under Lieutenant Colonel John Armstrong Bross; its record in the Second Brigade of the black Fourth Division of the Ninth Corps, particularly at the Battle of the Crater, Petersburg, Virginia, July 30, 1864; and the health-shattering hardships of postwar duty along the Mexican border of Texas with Major General Godfrey Weitzel's Twenty-fifth Corps. There, in the summer and fall of 1865 with the 28th USCT, the 29th formed part of Third Brigade, Second Division under Brigadier General Charles S. Russell, who had been the first colonel of the 28th. The final chapter gives interesting details about the postwar careers of a number of soldiers. Indeed, an important feature of this book is the information of potential genealogical value that Miller provides through his research in the military and pension records of individual officers and men. One misses, however, in the pages dealing with recruitment, any reference to the support that black churches, particularly the African Methodist Episcopal Church, gave to the war effort.

The numerous illustrations include photographs of Colonel Bross, General Weitzel, and some of the privates of the 29th. The

few noteworthy lapses include the misspelling of Thomas Wentworth Higginson's name and L'Ouverture Hospital as "L'Overture." Miller confuses Major General David B. Birney with his brother Brigadier General William Birney. A map of the battlefield at Petersburg described in the cutline as "drawn by a participant, showing Ledlie's division and lines at the crater" and bearing an original title, "Position of the 1st Brig. 1st Div. 9th Corps. Before Petersburg Va.," in fact shows the deployment of the First Brigade, First Division in early 1865, long after Ledlie had been cashiered for misconduct at the Battle of the Crater (p. 144).

Without exaggerating their contribution on the field of battle, Miller has written an informed and respectful tribute to the men of the 29th USCT, concluding that "they did their duty. This is the best compliment one can pay to a soldier" (p. xi).

GEORGE P. CLARK, professor emeritus of English, Hanover College, edited *Into the Old Northwest: Journeys with Charles H. Titus, 1841-1846* (1994). With Shirley E. Clark, he contributed "Heroes Carved in Ebony: Indiana's Black Civil War Regiment" to *Traces of Indiana and Midwestern History* (Summer 1995).

As If It Were Glory: Robert Beecham's Civil War from the Iron Brigade to the Black Regiments. Edited by Michael E. Stevens. (Madison, Wis.: Madison House Publishers, Inc., 1998. Pp. xx, 236. Illustrations, notes, index. \$28.95.)

Memoirs of the Civil War are a well-known genre. Their value inevitably depends on the significance of the writers' experiences, the sophistication of the writers' insights, and their literary talent. On all three counts, Beecham's account is absolutely first rate.

Beecham's war is highly dramatic, beginning with his enlistment as a private in the distinguished Second Wisconsin Volunteers of the Iron Brigade. Although absent from the field on several occasions because of illness, he participated in Burnside's Mud March and the battles of Chancellorsville and Gettysburg. He was captured in the latter battle and imprisoned in the Confederate prison camp at Belle Isle. Once exchanged, he volunteered to become an officer in a black regiment, and became a first lieutenant in the 23rd U.S. Colored Troops, serving despite the Confederacy's threat to execute captured officers of black regiments. Having trained his soldiers, he led them into the bloody fiasco at the Crater, where he was wounded and again captured. Imprisoned in Columbia, South Carolina, he escaped but later surrendered in order to take advantage of an expected prisoner exchange. Resigning after Appomattox, he returned to his wife. The family lived in Wisconsin, Minnesota, Nebraska, and the state of Washington. He was a lawyer, insurance agent, and public employee and was always civically involved.

This colorful career serves as the outline of Beecham's story. To it he brings an unusual political and social sophistication, a will-