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Brave Black Regiment: The Formation of the Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Regiment, January 1863-June 1864.

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Abstract : This study documents the Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Regiment's history from its

creation on 26 January 1863 through the attainment of equal pay on 15 June 1864. Previous historians have not chronicled, in detail, the early history of the Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Regiment. This study fills part of that gap. The Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Regiment was the first black regiment of the North organized after the Emancipation Proclamation became law. This study focused on the recruiting, training, and formation of that regiment. The Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Regiment trained and initially garrisoned at Camp Meigs located in Readville, Massachusetts. All officers assigned to the regiment were white. The white officers of the regiment were proud to serve in the black regiment and often stood by the black soldiers. The white officers did not allow the soldiers' skin color to affect their dedication to the regiment. All black enlisted soldiers assigned to the new regiment met strict screening requirements. Abolitionists recruited a large percentage of the black men for the regiment. Black men were recruited across the northern United States and Canada. The thesis concludes that the Fifty-Fourth Massachusetts Regiment, despite problems and setbacks, performed its first missions successfully, and subsequently impacted on black rights after the Civil War. The conclusion includes suggestions and areas for further study.

Descriptors : *MILITARY HISTORY , *ARMY PERSONNEL , *RECRUITS , *MASSACHUSETTS , *REGIMENT LEVEL ORGANIZATIONS , WARFARE , UNITED STATES , ENLISTED PERSONNEL , RECRUITING , CANADA , THESES , MISSIONS , DOCUMENTS , OFFICER PERSONNEL , HISTORIANS.

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