

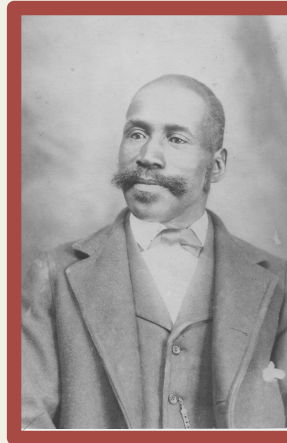


CUMBERLAND VALLEY RAIL TRAIL



Enlisted Soldiers and the Draft

The Draft: Both sides in the Civil War relied on volunteer soldiers, but Union and Confederate forces also experimented with conscription as the conflict dragged on. The U.S. Congress passed the Enrollment Act in March of 1863, the first federal draft in American history. Northern men aged 20 to 45 registered for service, and different classes faced possible conscription by lottery depending on congressional district quotas (though few were actually drafted). Potential draftees could purchase commutation or substitution, and many were exempted for physical or family reasons.

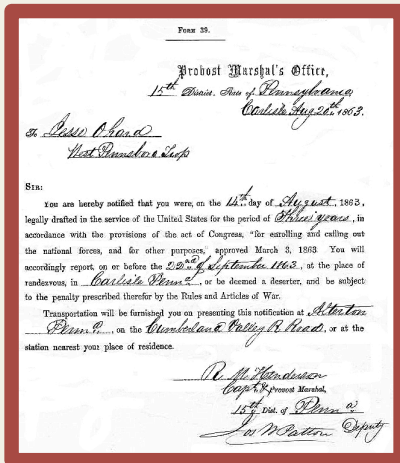


Alex Almstead (left) was living in a Chambersburg orphanage as a boy when Johnson Allen took him out to live with the Allen family in Shippensburg, PA. When Allen was conscripted to serve in the Union Army, he paid the standard \$300 fee so that someone else, in this case Alex Almstead, could serve in his place. Almstead returned to Shippensburg to resume living with the Allen family after the war.

Image credit: Shippensburg Historical Society

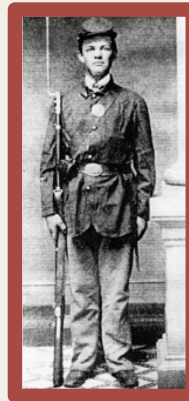
African-American troops in the Union Army: Congress authorized the use of African-American troops in July of 1862, and the War Department began experimenting with their training later that year. In the spring of 1863, with the need to bolster the Union forces becoming ever more dire, the War Department created the United States Colored Troops (USCT) in which African-Americans – mostly volunteers – served under white officers in segregated combat regiments.

More than 200,000 African-Americans – including more than 100 African-American men from Cumberland County – served the Union’s cause during the Civil War. By the end of the war, nearly one in ten Union soldiers was of African-American descent.



The Cumberland Valley Railroad (CVRR) provided some conscripts free passage to their first duty station. Jesse O’Hara of West Pennsboro Township received a draft notice that instructed him to produce the letter at left for free passage to Carlisle as he boarded the train at *Alterton*. The CVRR’s *Alterton Station* was located between Newville and Carlisle at what is now Kerrsville Rd.

Image credit: Cumberland County Historical Society



John Hemminger (left) of Carlisle, and Augustus Kyle (right) of Newville, were among the many local men who served in the Union Army. Both served three-year tours from 1862 to 1865.

Image credit: Cumberland County Historical Society

