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Abstract

On December 2, 1862, just eleven days before the Battle of Fredericksburg, Virginia, Jeremiah Mickly said goodbye to his wife and two children and reported for duty with the 177th Pennsylvania Infantry to become a Civil War chaplain. The only known photograph of Mickly shows him dressed in the standard chaplain's uniform of the day: a plain black frock coat with a standing collar and black buttons with plain black pantaloons. Like many other Civil War soldiers, Mickly re-enlisted for service after his stint with the 177th ended, becoming chaplain of the 43rd Regiment, United States Colored Troops. Impressed with the educational progress and courage of the black soldiers he served with, Mickly wrote a history of the 43rd Regiment. The 88-page booklet was published in 1866 in Gettysburg by J. E. Wible, Printer. Mickly's book and correspondence prove that his Civil War experience shaped his belief that black people are entitled to equal rights. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Adams County Historical Society, ACHS, Adams County, Pennsylvania History, Civil War, Battle of Fredericksburg, 177th Pennsylvania, USCT, United States Colored Troops, 43rd USCT

The Civil War Letters of Chaplain Jeremiah Mickly of Franklin Township, Adams County

by Eric Ledell Smith

On December 2, 1862, just eleven days before the Battle of Fredericksburg, Virginia, Jeremiah Mickly said goodbye to his wife and two children and reported for duty with the 177th Pennsylvania Infantry to become a Civil War chaplain. The only known photograph of Mickly shows him dressed in the standard chaplain's uniform of the day: a plain black frock coat with a standing collar and black buttons with plain black pantaloons. Like many other Civil War soldiers, Mickly re-enlisted for service after his stint with the 177th ended, becoming chaplain of the 43rd Regiment, United States Colored Troops. Impressed with the educational progress and courage of the black soldiers he served with, Mickly wrote a history of the 43rd Regiment. The 88-page booklet was published in 1866 in Gettysburg by J. E. Wible, Printer. Mickly's book and correspondence prove that his Civil War experience shaped his belief that black people are entitled to equal rights.

Jeremiah Mickly was born at Flohr's, Franklin township, Adams county on January 29, 1833, the eldest of three children of Peter and Sarah Mickly.¹ Peter was a farmer and grandson of John Jacob Mickly of Northampton county, Pennsylvania. Legend has it that during the American Revolutionary War John Jacob helped move the Liberty Bell into an Allentown church after the British capture of Philadelphia.² After the war, Mickly's ancestors moved to Adams county, where Jeremiah grew up in the family community of McKnightstown. During the antebellum period, Franklin township, Adams county had very few African-Americans. In 1810, the township boasted a total of 889 residents, 472 white males, 390 white females, 3 slaves, and 24 free colored persons. In 1820, the township had a total population of 1,456 of whom 47 were African-American freemen. By 1860, however, the white population had expanded to 2,092 while the number of black citizens fell to 23.³ Blacks, therefore, constituted a tiny minority of the Franklin township community, and we can only speculate as to how much contact the Mickly family had with African Americans.

Jeremiah Mickly attended Franklin and Marshall College, graduating in 1858 at age twenty-five, and that same year he married twenty-three year old Emily C. Fraine of Lancaster.⁴ The Micklys started a family: a son, Edgar, was born in 1859, and a daughter, Lillie, arrived in 1860. As far back as John Jacob Mickly, the family had been members of the German Reformed faith, and when Jeremiah Mickly graduated from Mercersburg Theological Seminary in 1859, he was ordained a minister in that denomination.

Mickly's ministry sent him traveling across south-central Pennsylvania. He preached first in McKnightstown and then in Perry county as pastor of the Blaine Church.⁵ By the time he was mustered into the Union army, Mickly had moved once more, but the historical evidence is unclear. On his regiment's muster-in roll, Mickly cited Lancaster as his hometown, whereas his 1862 official military records give his residence as "Cashtown, Franklin county."⁶ It is conceivable that Mickly was a "visiting pastor," a minister without a permanent congregation. A Union army chaplaincy, on the other hand, offered a minister more security in that he gained a steady evangelical audience and more money than civilian work offered. But the work was dangerous; technically, an army chaplain was a soldier, and at any moment he might be called upon to pick up a rifle to assist his regiment.⁷

Mickly was drafted for a nine-month hitch in the 177th Pennsylvania Regiment of the Union army, one of many Union army companies raised in Adams county, although not the first. The first company was the 2nd Pennsylvania Regiment, company E, which left for the battlefield on April 19, 1861, and the second company was the First Pennsylvania Reserve, Company K, which was mustered in on June 8, 1861.⁸ Mickly and the 177th left Pennsylvania for Virginia on December 2, 1862, arriving in Suffolk, where it spent eleven weeks clearing forests and erecting military forts. But Mickly and the 177th did experience some brief moments of military drama. On January 30, 1863, "a reconnaissance was made, in which the entire force in and about Suffolk joined, with the exception of the 177th, which by order of General Peck, was left in charge of the defenses. During the absence of the forces, Colonel Wiestling was attacked by a body of rebel cavalry which was handsomely repulsed."⁹ By March 1863, the 177th was transferred to Deep Creek, Virginia, where it infiltrated an enemy mail line carrying attack plans of Confederate General James Longstreet.¹⁰ Later that spring, the regiment chased Confederate mail boats on the Blackwater River in Virginia. The 177th was mustered out in Harrisburg on August 7, 1863.

It was not unusual for white men to serve in more than one Civil War military outfit, but white officers of black troops were considered non-conformists. They were ridiculed by their fellow Union soldiers and despised by the Confederates. Mickly's military record is silent about Mickly's motives for wishing to serve with the colored troops, but there are commendation letters from Adams county clergymen: William Dietrich, minister of the German Reformed Church of Gettysburg; William Reilly, professor of theology at Mercersburg Seminary; and Reverend Jacob Ziegler of the German Reformed Church of Gettysburg. Ziegler wrote that Mickly was "in every way qualified" for the job as chaplain.¹¹ These endorsements persuaded the 43rd Regiment to elect Mickly as chaplain on September 27, 1864.

Mickly vividly describes his experience with the 43rd in both his correspondence and his history of the regiment. In the fall of 1864, the 43rd was part of the 25th Army Corps, First Brigade, commanded by Major Godfrey Weitzel. The men were stationed just south of Petersburg, Virginia, in October, 1864, when Union General Ulysses S. Grant decided to surprise Robert E. Lee's forces at Hatcher's Run.¹² The plan was to distract Lee by moving Union troops across the James River near Fair Oaks, while on the other side, three Union corps, including the 43rd Regiment, would attempt "to cut, and if possible hold both the Boydton Plank Road and the Southside Railroad, the two remaining arteries whose severance would bring on the collapse of Petersburg." Things went wrong, however, when a gap opened between the Union lines, allowing Confederates to disrupt the Union initiative. Mickly wrote that the 43rd "held the position of skirmishing on the advance of the 9th Corps line of battle and most gallantly assisted [sic] two lines of breast works." The last regiment to leave the field, the 43rd counted 1 officer and 4 men killed, 8 officers and 54 men wounded and 6 men missing. It was during this battle that Mickly suffered a knee injury in a fall from his horse. He recovered enough to remain in uniform until his muster-out, but he suffered knee problems for the rest of his life.¹³

About mid-November, the 43rd Regiment was stationed in the vicinity of Bermuda Hundred, a Federal-held stronghold between the James and Appomattox Rivers, fifteen miles south of Richmond. In his book, Mickly records that during a military encounter with Longstreet's forces, the black soldiers of the 43rd were heckled by the Confederates. He wrote that the regiment "moved on to the line Sunday, p.m., and was instantly welcomed by Longstreet's bravadoes, exulting yet in their recent victory, with a storm of balls and shells, and the significant appellation of

“Smoked Yankees.” But when these brave “Smoked Yankees” replied, as they did at once, by a most brilliant charge, that made them masters of the situation, driving Longstreet’s bravadoes to their old kennels and recovering the lost ground, the Rebel hilarity ceased.”¹⁴ According to Mickly, one of the African-American soldiers shouted back at the Confederates: “I obeys de order ob de obicers. When de orders be to fire, I fires on you, and de orders be to charge, I charges on you; you must den get out, Johnnie Reb.” Mickly frequently pointed to episodes like this as evidence of the bravery of the African-American soldier.

From December 1864 until the capture of Richmond in March 1865, the 43rd remained in southeastern Virginia, with not much to do except read and study. As a Union chaplain, Jeremiah Mickly thought it his moral duty to educate his brethren in the word of God, and promotion of literacy produced mutual benefits for the Army and the black man in that a literate soldier was a more productive soldier and attainment of literacy was an important step for blacks who wanted to become officers. Mickly’s classroom was occasionally a school house, but more often he would teach his pupils outdoors, perhaps under shaded trees. As Mickly’s letters show, much of the soldier’s reading materials were religious in nature, thanks to the donations of the civilian organization, the U.S. Christian Commission.¹⁵ The Commission collected bibles, religious newspapers, hymn-books, knapsack-books, and tract excerpts for the military. With these supplies and with his steady patience, Mickly gradually saw his work reap rewards: soldiers who had never learned the alphabet could now write intelligent letters home. Yet as late as September 30, 1865, Mickly criticized the ethical character of the black soldiers, complaining to the adjutant general that “I do not observe any remarkable progress in the moral improvement of this command.” Mickley lamented that not only did the men fail to attend church services, but they also engaged in other “immoral” behavior. Yet Mickly did not entirely blame black soldiers for this situation. “Our soldiers,” wrote Mickly, “by example of some superiors, have been invited to strong drink and gaming.”¹⁶ The chaplain believed that if white officers would practice sobriety, cease swearing, and honor the Sabbath, then their black troops would be more likely to do so too.

On April 3, 1865, Mickly and the 43rd participated in the taking of Richmond, and then they were ordered to Brownville, Texas, to await muster-out orders. With the cannons and rifles cooling off, the regiment used its leisure time to study under Chaplain Mickly. Mickly was elated with the progress of his students, declaring “the question of education in

the case of the colored race is not truly debatable." This was a fairly progressive opinion for that period since not all white men believed that blacks were capable of being educated. At last the 43rd Regiment was sent home to Harrisburg where Mickly said goodbye to his colored students on November 30, 1865.

Almost immediately after his muster-out, Mickly began writing his history of the 43rd Regiment United States Colored Troops. It was published in Gettysburg in 1866. Because few histories of the colored troops survive, Mickly's document is of considerable interest to students of black Civil War soldiers. Much encouraged by his encounter with African Americans, Mickly wrote to Thaddeus Stevens¹⁷ in early 1866, asking the Adams county congressman's help in obtaining a teacher's post with the Freedman's Bureau. The Freedman's Bureau was established by the War Department by an act of Congress on March 3, 1865, charged with supervising all affairs relating to freedmen, including collecting bounties, pensions, and back pay, distributing food and clothing and providing schools for freedmen. The bureau operated primarily in the former Confederate States, the border states, and the District of Columbia. This explains why Mickly inquired about teaching in a freedmen's school in Texas. Unfortunately, there is no record of a reply from Stevens in the Thaddeus Stevens Papers, and this author's search of the Freedman Bureau's Papers in the National Archives in Washington, D.C. has thus far failed to produce any documentation of Mickly's possible service with the bureau.

Mickly continued his ministry after the Civil War, serving as pastor in Akron, Ohio in 1866, in Newsburg, Clearfield county, from 1887 to 1888 and in Burkettsville, Maryland in 1888. In the 1870s, Mickly began to acquire property in Franklin township, Adams county; he shows up in the county tax records for the years 1866, 1869, 1870, 1877, and 1878. In 1870 Mickly paid \$5.12 in taxes for ownership of one acre. By 1877 he had acquired 15 more acres, of which the gross value was \$384, and Mickly's taxes for that year were \$115. But he seems to have spent most of his time after the war serving as postmaster in McKnightstown from 1871 to 1885.¹⁸

Some assert that Mickly served under General George Crook in the Apache wars in the 1870s. But this contradicts the fact that Mickly was in Adams county during that time and that both his military and pension files do not mention any subsequent military service after the Civil

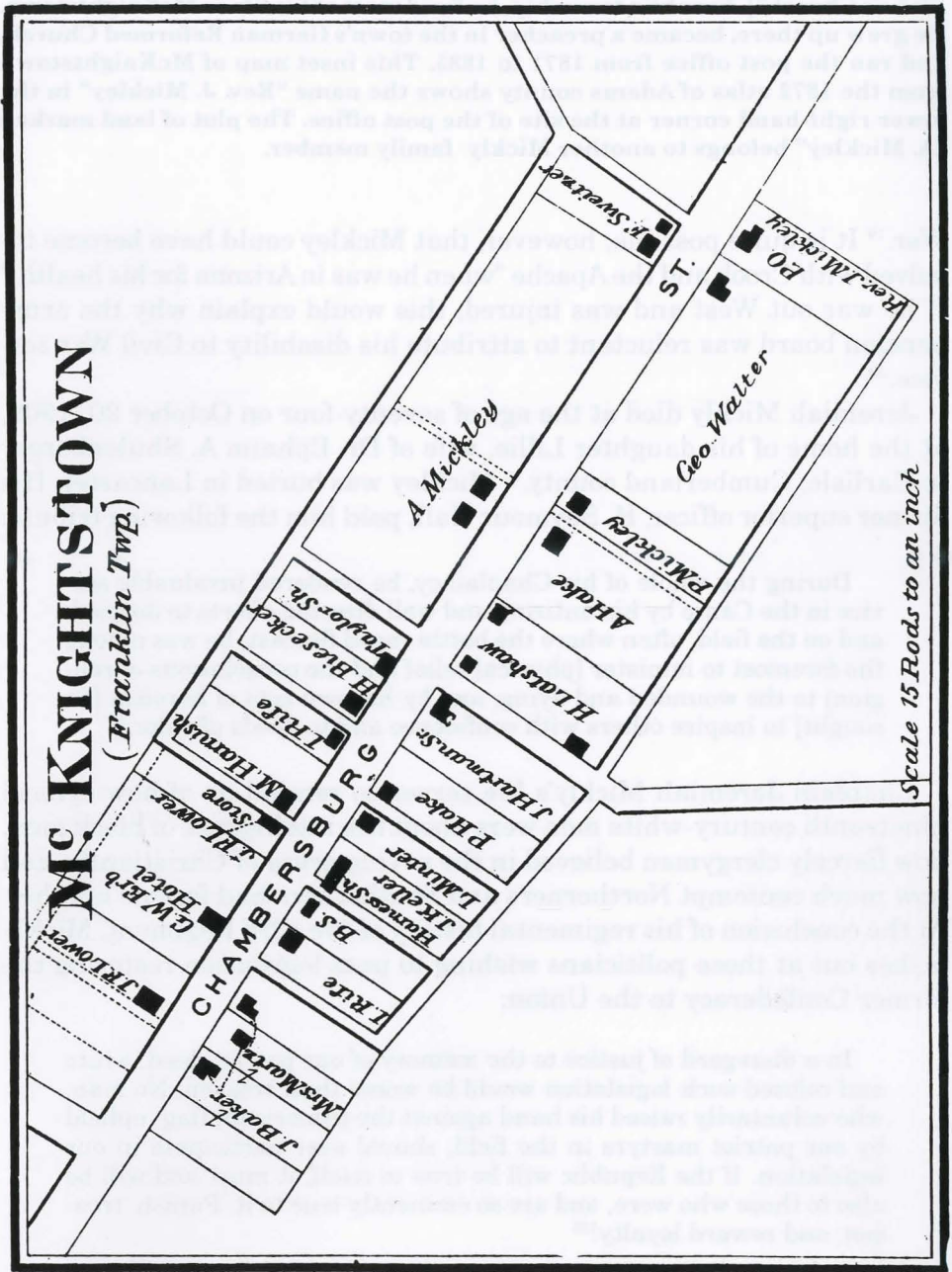


Fig. 1: (Left) Although Jeremiah Mickly was born in Flohr's [near the site of Flohr's Church?], Franklin township, he lived most of his life in McKnightstown. He grew up there, became a preacher in the town's German Reformed Church, and ran the post office from 1871 to 1885. This inset map of McKnightstown from the 1872 atlas of Adams county shows the name "Rev. J. Mickley" in the lower right-hand corner at the site of the post office. The plot of land marked "A. Mickley" belongs to another Mickly family member.

War.¹⁹ It is quite possible, however, that Mickley could have become involved with Crook and the Apache "when he was in Arizona for his health." If he was out West and was injured, this would explain why the army pension board was reluctant to attribute his disability to Civil War service.²⁰

Jeremiah Mickly died at the age of seventy-four on October 20, 1909, at the home of his daughter Lillie, wife of Dr. Ephaim A. Shulenberger in Carlisle, Cumberland county.²¹ Mickley was buried in Lancaster. His former superior officer, H. Seymour Hall, paid him the following tribute:

During the whole of his Chaplaincy, he rendered invaluable service in the Camp by his untiring and well directed efforts to do good; and on the field, often where the battle raged fiercest, he was among the foremost to minister [physical relief and the consolations of religion] to the wounded and dying, and by his own acts of heroism [he sought] to inspire others with confidence and to deeds of valor.²²

Chaplain Jeremiah Mickly's life serves to remind us of how cynical nineteenth century-white men were about the intelligence of black men, how fiercely clergymen believed in the saving grace of Christianity, and how much contempt Northerners and Southerners had for one another. At the conclusion of his regimental history of the 43rd Regiment, Mickly lashes out at those politicians wishing to pass legislation restoring the former Confederacy to the Union:

In a disregard of justice to the memory of our patriot dead, white and colored such legislation would be worse than treason. No man, who voluntarily raised his hand against the [American] flag, upheld by our patriot martyrs in the field, should ever participate in our legislation. If the Republic will be true to itself, it must and will be also to those who were, and are so eminently true to it. Punish treason, and reward loyalty!²³

The Civil War letters and published history of the 43rd Regiment, United States Colored Troops tell us much about Jeremiah Mickly of

Adams county. He was a pious Civil War chaplain who kept the faith, served Pennsylvania in two army regiments, and with unflinching patience, strove to educate "the sable sons of Liberty."

* * *

Reprinted below are the extant letters of Jeremiah Mickly.

[near Richmond, Virginia]

January 31, 1865²⁴

Sir:

I have the honor to report to you for the month ending as above, and will also beg you to consider the work of my office inclusive in this report, with this explanation: Not until very recently was I aware of an Order according to Sec. 3 Act of Congress approved April 9, 1864, making it the duty of Chaplains to report monthly. In the absence of anything to the contrary, I was governed by Published Regulations 1863. Hereafter I shall furnish you my reports agreeable to existing order.

Immediately after becoming chaplain of this Regiment, I commenced the work of canvassing it, with a view to acquaint myself with its history, and more particularly to prepare the way for my labors. The Officers of the Regiment afforded me all necessary assistance in the satisfactory accomplishment of this purpose.

The average number present of the command is about (450) Four Hundred and Fifty, including non-commissioned officers and privates. A majority of this number, about (325) Three-Hundred and Twenty Five were Free Men of Color before enlisting: They are principally from the State of Pennsylvania. The remainder are Freedmen, and generally from the States [of] Maryland and Kentucky.

Upon examination, I found that (70) Seventy of the whole number were able to read, but very few could understand intelligently what they did read. There were (30) Thirty who could write their own signature, and attend themselves to their own correspondence; but their composition was not correct in any of the essentials. Those who had so far, although very imperfectly, acquired some education, were with few exceptions, Free Men of Color. The others were unacquainted with the alphabet. This occasions no surprise, as the miserable institution of Slavery wherever existing, studies to prevent intellectual culture in the enslaved, and is altogether unfavorable to such pursuits.

Agreeable to instructions, suitable and convenient School Houses are to be erected here in each Regiment for the benefit of our colored Troops. In consequent of frequent changed of situation, the colored Troops of this Regiment were hitherto prevented [from] enjoying school conducted in a suitable house. In several instances, the building was erected, but we were required to leave before the work fairly commenced. However, I have been ministering to their instructions without the house by supplying them with books, &c, and exercising the supervision of the work. Officers and others have cheerfully assisted me. I supplied the Regiment with a sufficient number of "First Lessons" for Beginners published by the American Tract Society and "First Reader" and "Second Reader," published by the American Sunday School Union, besides the New Testament Scriptures, and copies of the *Freedman, Christian Banner*, and in fact all the different religious papers coming to the army through the Christian Commission. I also receive regularly, direct from the American Tract Society of Boston, suitable and valuable reading matter. All have made very commendable progress. They apply themselves closely whenever their duties permit. I find the Freedmen especially appreciate most sincerely these advantages so unjustly denied them in their servitude. The question of education in the case of the colored race is not truly debatable. I am satisfied that they will make surprisingly rapid progress, as those do who have the facilities granted them.

We have again in course of erection a School House which we expect to finish in a few days. This convenience will allow us to adopt practically the best system, and we intend therefore to organize our colored troops of this Regiment each man in a class suitable to his studies. For the improvement of the non-commissioned officers, and the benefit of such improvement to the Regiment as well as to themselves, we intend to organize them in classes separated from the others, and bestow on them our special attention for the time being. With a view to success in this whole work, we will need more reaching force. We expect and will no doubt receive the aid of Officers of the Regiment in this particular.

Said School House will also be used as a house of divine worship for the Regiment where services will be conducted as often and regularly as practicable. Heretofore in our public services we suffered some interruption which was made unavoidable by the inclemency of the weather, and by military moves. We very gladly accepted an invitation lately extended by the Christian Commission²⁵ to join them in services conducted in their Large Tent in this Corps. We are pleased to mention that some of our colored Soldiers are generally very attentive hearers to the preach-

ing of the Gospel. Many in this Regiment profess faith in the Redeemer, and give evidence of the sincerity of their Christian profession. We hope others, their companions in arms may be inducted shortly to enlist under the Banner of the Cross, and thus become soldiers of the Heavenly Country, with the same distinguished bravery they are manifesting in this sacred cause now.

Suitable religious service has been conducted in the burial of all soldiers who died present with the command.

Permit me herewith to acknowledge the uniform kindness and courtesy extended to me by Colonel Yeoman, commanding this Regiment and all the other officers under him, Brigade General Thomas, commanding the Brigade, Brigade General Wild, commanding the Division, as well as all others of the Department to whom I have had occasion to apply for aid facilitating my work. They are intelligent military gentlemen, and true friends and supporters of the cause of education and Christianity among our colored Troops. Respectfully submitted by
Your OB[edient] servant.

J. M. MICKLY

* * *

Camp 43rd U. S. C. T.
3rd Brig. 1st Div. 25th Corps
Near Brownsville, Texas
August 31, 1865²⁶

Adj. Gen. USA
Sir:

I have the honor to report to you for the month ending August 31st. The moral and religious interest of this command during the month have been generally speaking commendable. We have indeed many (and we earnestly wish we could say all) sincere worshippers of the Great Jehovah. They are pleased to remember with suitable thanksgiving and praise that Almighty Providence who has so directed & controlled all events in the war which has closed as to permit them and the Race to celebrate their freedom. They delight also in the Liberty of the Gospel and their faith possesses a remarkable simplicity.

By unavoidable circumstances, our Sabbath services during this month have not been a regular as formerly. We [sic] are now the only chaplain in this Brigade we have been accustomed to hold divine service with the

Brigade and also with our Regiment on the Sabbath. To this end, Officers of the respective commands afford us opportunity. A Prayer meeting is also conducted in the Regiment every evening which is increasing in interest. But it is true, all do not belong to the Israel of God. Tares grow among the wheat here as elsewhere.

During this month as before we have distributed a large amount of religious reading matter. This gives very beneficial employment to the soldier in his leisure hour. We should be glad we were able to state that our supply increase with the demand. Our main source was by & through the U.S. Christian Commission which now informs us it has discontinued its operations. We trust that the friends of Education & Christianity throughout the North will not now forget our Freedmen & colored Soldiers, but will continue to forward to us for their use regularly a sufficient supply of good reading matter. Books, tracts, pamphlets, & paper are all anxiously inquired for by the soldier.

Since moving out from Winter Quarters [,] this Regiment, as was reasonably expected, has not had the same conveniences for School. We then had a finely fitted School House. However, the work of education goes on with little interruption. Men are employing their leisure time in this particular to great advantage, and they have made most praiseworthy progress. More than one-half of the command are now able to read. Some of this number were beginners a few months ago. Many of them are excellent readers. We might also furnish fine specimens of penmanship of these colored soldiers. They attended to their own correspondence. Other as yet less advanced are prosecuting the work diligently. The fact is clearly demonstrated, in the order of intellectual culture, these sable sons of liberty can & will become the equals of, and in many cases exceed their former chivalrous masters who regard the Race altogether their inferiors and by no means susceptible of improvement.

There have been no deaths occurring in the Regiment during the month, except one by accidental drowning. All others took place at Hospital. Suitable services are conducted in the case of all burials. We are pleased to be able to renew our expressions of satisfaction that the Officers of this Regiment favor the educational & religious interest of their men.

Respectfully submitted by
Your obedient servant
J. M. MICKLY
Chaplain 43rd U.S.C.T.

* * *

Camp 43rd U.S.C.T.
Near Brownsville, Texas
September 30, 1865²⁷

Adj. General USA
Sir:

I have the honor to present my report for the month ending September 30th. I do not observe any remarkable progress in the moral improvement of this command. Since the date of my last report, the religious interest in our evening prayer meetings continues about the same. Divine service has been conducted on the Sabbath except in the instance of one Sabbath which omission was in consequence of my illness at the time.

This regiment has made very commendable progress in their education. We have just made an arrangement with the American Theological Board & American Tract Society for more school books and also a library. In case we remain here they engage to furnish us these in the course of a month. They promise to send us an assistant teacher whose salary will be paid by the Boards. In order to provide comfort and necessary convenience, a suitable school house is needed. We hope to be able to erect this as soon as lumber can be obtained.

We must testify that our labors with the command have been pleasant to us. We have been pleased with the character of the men and their commendable interest, generally speaking, in their moral culture as well as intellectual attainments. But we regret that we should have anyone who comes short [of] the standard of a soldier in any true sense of the name. Bad influences have been multiplying themselves latterly. Our soldiers, by example of some superiors, have been invited to strong drink and gaming. Permit us in this connection earnestly to recommend to the proper authorities that the sales of intoxicating liquors under whatever name and gaming cards to soldiers be prohibited to all Sellers and Storekeepers and any person whomsoever-and further that they be required in all cases to observe the Sabbath day by closing their stores. We regard these restrictions as eminently right and necessary.

Respectfully submitted,
Your obedient servant,
J. M. MICKLY
Chaplain 43rd U.S.C.T.

* * *

Cashtown, Adams County, Pa.

Jan. 9, 1866²⁸

[To the] Hon. [Thaddeus] Stevens

Dear Sir:

I will trouble you with a few lines by which I desire to state that I am back again from the army, having been discharged with my Regiment Nov. 30/65 under the order discharging some organizations of the Colored Troops, especially such as were organized in the Northern States. My experience as chaplain in the active field commencing Dec. 1862 and in connection with both white and colored troops has been considerable, and my return so recently from the Southern States enables me to contribute at least something positive in the knowledge of their condition. In a word then, the rebels of those States generally speaking & including the oath of allegiance segomists & the pardoned prodigals (no States excepted) entertain & manifest the same contempt of our government's authority. There is no use to concede the true state of things. Instead of a disposition to be faithful to the federal government, there is a chided disposition to the contrary. But I will not tire you with instances under this head. You know all about the status of the matter and with what satanic imprudence & insult those men now call on you and ask for their rights. I am again ready to serve the country in any suitable capacity in which I can be useful as I do not intend resuming the ministerial relations in any church for reasons entertained before I left it to enter the army, namely, it has in it too much copperheadism.²⁹ My attention has been called to the Freedman's Bureau by Colonel Hall³⁰ of my regiment who is now assistant Superintendent of it in the Department of Texas, and more particularly for the establishing & conducting Schools for the Freedmen. But I understand the Freedmen's Bureau in that State is without funds to employ or compensate Teachers in this work. I hope Congress will continue this Bureau & imburse it with the necessary funds to secure the advantages of Schools to all our Freedmen, either by direct appropriation or from fund of sales of confiscated property.

I have had experience in teaching the Colored Troops and found them quite susceptible of intellectual culture. I inclose [sic] to you copies of testimonials which you are at liberty to use as you deem fit. I can send more if necessary. You will do me a favor by referring these to the Department of the Freedmen Bureau in Washington with such endorse-

ment or recommendation by yourself you can give requesting my appointment in it as Superintendent of Schools or in any capacity I can be useful. The Micklys of your acquaintance in Adams County view your position in Congress with pleasure & satisfaction. They are all well.

Yours Respectfully,

Your obedient servant

Rev. J. M. Mickly

Late Chaplain 43rd U.S. Colored Troops, Cashtown, Adams Co. Pa.

Notes

1. Minnie F. Mickly, comp. *The Genealogy of the Mickly Family of America* (Mickly, Pa., 1893), p. 57; cited hereafter as *Mickly Family Genealogy*; Jeremiah Mickly alumni file, Franklin and Marshall Archives, Lancaster, PA. On the cover page of Mickly's book, his name is spelled "Mickley." However, I spell this gentleman's name as he signed his letters: "Mickly."
2. U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Heads of Family At the First Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1891* (Washington, DC: 1908): 182; U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Seventh Census of the United States, 1850: Pennsylvania, Adams County*, p. 157; *Mickly Family Genealogy*, p. 40; Daniel Miller, *Early History of the Reformed Church in Pennsylvania* (Reading: 1906), pp. 135-6; John Baer Stoudt, *The Liberty Bell in Allentown and Allentown's Liberty Bell* (Allentown: 1987), pp. 41-46. Stoudt disputes Mickly's role in rescuing the Philadelphia Liberty Bell.
3. *History of Cumberland and Adams Counties, Pennsylvania* (Chicago: 1886), p. 248.
4. Franklin and Marshall College, Catalogue of Officers and Students, 1787-1903 (Lancaster, 1903), p. 49; Mickly file, United Church of Christ Archives, Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, Lancaster, PA; Jeremiah Mickly alumni file, Franklin and Marshall College Archives.
5. *Mickly Family Genealogy*, p. 57; *Almanac for the Reformed Church in the United States* (Philadelphia: 1911): 51. U.S. Bureau of the Census. *Sixth Census of the United States, 1860. Pennsylvania, Perry County, Saville Township* (Washington DC: 1861), p. 761.
6. Samuel P. Bates, *History of Pennsylvania Volunteers, 1861-1865*, 5 vols. (Harrisburg: 1869-71), 4: 1253; *Mickly Family Genealogy*, p. 58; Muster rolls of the 177th Pennsylvania Regiment, RG 19, Records of the Department of Military Affairs, Pennsylvania State Archives; *Annual Report of the Adjutant General of Pennsylvania for the Year 1866* (Harrisburg: 1867), p. 895. In a letter, Major Horace Bumstead claimed that "Mr. Mickly's address is Cashtown, Adams County, Penn" (Military Record of Jeremiah Mickly, National Archives).
7. Not all chaplains were white; according to Ira Berlin, "approximately two dozen black chaplains and surgeons served in the Union army. But regulations required the election of chaplains by regimental officers; consequently, black chaplains remained subject to the prejudicial whims of white officers." See Ira Berlin, ed., *Freedom: A Documentary History of Emancipation, 1861-1867*, Series II: *The Black Military Experience* (Cambridge: 1983), p. 309. Furthermore, not all colored regiments had chaplains. Of the 11 colored regiments assembled at Camp William Penn at La Mott, only the 3rd, 6th, 8th, 43rd, and 45th had chaplains. Of these chaplains, at least one Jeremiah Asher of the 6th Regiment, United States Colored Troops, was undeniably African American. See "Letters Received By the Office of Adjutant General" (Main Series, 1861-1870), Roll 385, National Archives.
8. *History of Cumberland and Adams Counties*, p. 84.
9. Bates, 4: 1253.
10. Bates, 4: 1253-1254, 1256-1268.
11. Letters c. August 1864 of William Dietrich, William Reilly, and Jacob Ziegler, in Jeremiah M. Mickly military record, National Archives; Letter, Major Horace Bumstead to J. M. Mickly, 27 September 1864, Jeremiah M. Mickly military record, National Archives.
12. Shelby Foote, *The Civil War: A Narrative: Red River to Appomattox* (New York: 1974), pp. 561, 573.
13. Deborah Cooney and Gail McDonald claim to have seen Mickly's pension file. "His application for a disability pension in the 1880s is supported by several statements from doctors detailing his difficul-

ties." Mickly applied several times for a pension as Cooney and McDonald attest: "Apparently the pension board was not convinced that Jeremiah's various medical conditions were caused by his wartime service and rejected his first application. More statements were submitted in a second application, after which he was awarded a pension." Deborah Cooney and Gail McDonald, "Jeremiah Marion Mickly," undated ms. in Mickly alumni file, Franklin and Marshall College Archives; Jeremiah M. Mickly pension file, National Archives.

14. Bates, 4: 1083; Jeremiah Marion Mickley, *The Forty-Third Regiment, United States Colored Troops* (Gettysburg: 1866), p. 77.

15. A. S. Billingsley, *Christianity in the War* (Philadelphia: 1872), pp. 332-3.

16. J. M. Mickly to Adjutant General USA, 31 January 1865, National Archives, RG 94, "Letters Received by the Adjutant General" (Main Series, 1861-1870), Roll 377.

17. J. M. Mickly to Thaddeus Stevens, 9 January 1866, Library of Congress, also reproduced in Beverly Wilson Palmer, ed., *Thaddeus Stevens Papers* (Wilmington, DE: 1993), Microfilm 4/0708, Reel 4317.

18. Adams County Board of Commissioners, Tax Records, Pennsylvania State Archives; Mickly pension file, National Archives.

18. Martin F. Schmitt, ed., *General George Crook: His Autobiography* (Norman, OK: 1946); Cooney and McDonald state that "the pension file does not mention any subsequent army or ministerial service." Jeremiah had a brother James, who was a captain in Company C of the 182nd Regiment, Pennsylvania Volunteers. Perhaps he was the one who served under General Crook during 1873-74.

20. The Mickly file at the United Church of Christ Archives claims that Mickly was in Arizona during the Apache episode. Both this file and the citation in the Almanac for the Reformed Church, 1911, claim that

Mickly preached in Burkittsville, Maryland, and Newburg, Pennsylvania, so he was not completely incapacitated.

21. *Biographical and Portrait Cyclopaedia of Cumberland, York, and Adams Counties, Pennsylvania* (Laughlintown, PA: 1986), pp. 402-403; Obituary of Jeremiah Mickly, 26 October 1909, *Carlisle Evening Sentinel*.

22. Mickly, p. 20.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 87-88.

24. J. M. Mickly to Adjutant General U. S. A., 31 January 1865, National Archives, RG 94, "Letters Received by the Adjutant General" (Main Series, 1861-1871), Roll 377.

25. The U. S. Christian Commission assisted army chaplains in organizing prayer meetings and Sabbath services.

26. J. M. Mickly to Adjutant General U. S. A., 31 August 1865, National Archives, RG 94, "Letters Received by the Adjutant General" (Main Series, 1861-1871), Roll 385.

27. J. M. Mickly to Adjutant General U. S. A., 30 September 1865. *ibid.*

28. J. M. Mickly to Thaddeus Stevens, 9 January 1866, Library of Congress, reproduced in Thaddeus Stevens Papers, microfilm reel 4317.

29. A "copperhead" was a person in the North who sympathized with the South during the Civil War. The existence of such persons in Adams County is not surprising, when one considers that many people in Pennsylvania counties along the Mason-Dixon Line had Southern relatives and thus Southern sympathies.

30. This is a reference to H. Seymour Hall, who was Lieutenant Colonel and later Brevet Brigadier General of the 43rd Regiment United States Colored Troops. Hall lost an arm at the Battle of Petersburg on July 30, 1864, and he later wrote a preface for Mickly's history of the regiment. Because Hall and Mickly were apparently friends and Hall was working in Texas for the Freedmen's Bureau, Mickly asked

Stevens to help him get a Freedmen Bureau's teaching job. However, the idea of working for no pay must have been discouraging, since Mickly had a family to support. See Bates, 10: 1084 and *Official*

Army Register of the Volunteer Force of the United States Army for the Years 1861, 1862, 1863, 1864, 1865, 9 vols. (Washington, DC: 1867), Part VIII: 216.