



African Canadians in Union Blue: Volunteering for the Cause in America's Civil War, Updated Edition (Studies in Canadian Military History Series)

Richard Reid

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Before Abraham Lincoln issued the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863, he made a last-minute change - a paragraph authorizing the army to recruit black soldiers. Over the next two years, approximately 180,000 soldiers and 18,000 sailors joined the cause. Several thousand came from Canada, the terminus of the Underground Railroad.

What compelled these young men to leave the comfort and safety of home to face death on the battlefield, loss of income for their families, and legal sanctions for participating in a foreign war? Drawing on newspapers, autobiographies, and military and census records, Richard Reid pieces together a portrait of a group of men who served the Union in disparate ways - as soldiers, sailors, or doctors - but who all believed that the principles of liberty, justice, and equality were worth fighting for, regardless of which side of the border they made their home.

By bringing the courage and contributions of these men to light, *African Canadians in Union Blue* opens a window on the changing nature of the Civil War and the ties that held black communities together even as the borders around them shifted or were torn asunder.



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