



CIVIL WAR SLAVE PENS

“Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States; or any place subject to their jurisdiction.”

This amendment had to be ratified by two-thirds of the states before it became law. In February, 1865, when the amendment was presented to the Kentucky General Assembly, the lawmakers refused ratification by a vote of 21 to 13 in the Senate and 56 to 28 in the House. Many other states, however, did ratify the amendment. On December 18, 1865, the Secretary of State announced that the necessary number of states had ratified the Thirteenth Amendment. Kentucky's slaves were free at last.

Although freedom for Blacks was finally official, both traditional discrimination and new legal restrictions reminded the black man that most whites did not acknowledge his status as a first class citizen.

For example, after 1866, black soldiers were excluded from serving in the regular Army by a

Congressional Act which authorized the formation of four regiments for black enlisted men—the Ninth and Tenth Cavalry and the Twenty-fourth and Twenty-fifth Infantry.²

Sergeant Brent Woods

During the Indian campaigns, (1866-1891) soldiers in these black regiments demonstrated patriotism and courage. Of the 419 Congressional Medals of Honor awarded for bravery during the Indian Campaigns, thirteen were earned by black soldiers. Among these thirteen black heroes honored by Congress was Kentucky's only black recipient of the Medal of Honor, Sergeant Brent Woods of Pulaski County.

In 1894, Sergeant Woods was awarded the Medal of Honor for saving the lives of his comrades and a group of white civilians during a skirmish with Apaches in 1881. Sergeant Woods, left in charge of company B of the Ninth Cavalry, rallied the 17 black cavalymen under his command and led the civilians to safety. Fighting his way to a high ridge, he