

the opportunity of issuing a Military Commission to you for some prospective employment, and was in hopes that the recent Volunteer movement in our State would have furnished me such an opportunity.

I take this occasion to advert to another letter lately received from you and accompanied by a petition asking for the appointment of Mr. Reley as Quarter master of 3rd Regt. P. M. Brigade — I have no doubt Mr. R. has been a meritorious officer, but there does not at present appear to be any vacancy in the office named — Lt. Matthews being the present Qr. master of the Regt. — if any vacancy in fact exists, no notification of it has reached me; you will oblige me by so saying to Mr. R. or his friends.

Yours very Respectfully
A. W. Bradford

War Department
Washington City
August 25th 1863

To His Excellency A. W. Bradford
Governor of Maryland
Sir:

Your letter of the 24th instant, with accompanying papers, in respect to the enlistment of rebel prisoners at Fort Delaware, has received attention.

This Department never designed to authorize the recruiting of troops at Fort Delaware or any where else, from prisoners of War, except in individual, special cases, where it was clear that loyal citizens of the United States had been forcibly impressed into the rebel service. To organize in one Regiment, seven companies taken from rebel prisoners, could not be sanctioned upon any principle consistent with the present state of Military affairs, or with safety to the service. It was with surprise, therefore, that information was received last week that Lieutenant Colonel Tevis was engaged in such recruiting among the rebels for his Regiment.

Upon examining the papers transmitted by you I am not less surprised to perceive an order from General Schoepf to the effect that Lieut. Col. Tevis has received authority "to recruit among the rebels for his Regiment." But among the papers I do not find any authority given to Col. Tevis to any such extent. The telegram of the Commissary General to Genl. Schoepf was distinctly limited to prisoners who had been "impressed into the rebel service," which by no means justified a general recruiting among them. I find upon examining the papers, that the Commissary General himself extended the authority beyond what he was authorized to do by any action of this Department, although still confining it within much narrower limits than are expressed by Genl. Schoepf's order. It will readily occur to your own mind that nothing could be more unwise than to organize, equip, and mount seven companies of rebels in one Regiment; and the only authority given by this Department in any case, was confined to the special cases presented.