Copies 4418

Statements in relation to Adkins — aiding soldiers to desert

Recd H'd Qrs D.C. Apl. 13 1863

Office of the Chief of Police
Army of the Cumberland.

In the case against Harvey Atkins, who is charged with paroling Federal soldiers, and also with assisting Federal soldiers to escape through the lines, the following evidence was taken before Mr Truesdail Chief of Army Police.

Camp 7th. Ind. Battery.
3d Div. 21st Army Corps.
Feby 6th 1863.

Private James Atkins is a member of my Battery. was enlisted by Lt. O.N. Morgan, on the 18th Decr 1862 at Terre Haute, Ind. he went into action on the morning of the 31st. Decr. 62. The Battery soon fell back & he fell back with it unhurt. but failed to halt until he reached Nashville, when he reported the Battery captured & the officers killed. since that time nothing has been heard from him.

Geo. R. Swallow. Capt.
7th. Indiana Battery.

Head quarters Office of Police
Nashville January 31st 1863

Statement of J. R. Harwell,

I am a resident of Nashville, I am minister of the Gospel but at present a Medical Student. I am married & have my family in Nashville - I have been a resident of Nashville 6 or 7 years - I have not been out of the City since the Federal authorities took possession of the City except once last summer, when I went with my wife & family on a visit a few miles in the country

to Mr. Richards, who resides between the Dickerson & Gallatin Pike, on dry creek - I sympathize with the south, but am opposed to secession & would rather see the Union as it was. A few nights ago I was in the office of my preceptor when a gentleman who I had always supposed to be a Union man made a proposition to me to parole Federal soldiers, which I refused to do - this mans name was M. M. Hinkle Jr. we then commenced a conversation about the army and the dissatisfaction existing in it - and he said he had a plan to decimate the Federal army - which was to parole the soldiers & get them out of the City & to their homes - I cannot recollect the day this occurred - there was no one present at the time - Mr. Hinkle is the only person I have heard speak of this subject - ~~We~~ have never approached any one upon the subject myself, Mr. Hinkle asked me to introduce him to Mr. Adkins & I think stated that he wished to see him about paroling soldiers - I paid very little attention to this subject having no idea of entering into it - I merely introduced Mr. Hinkle to Mr. Adkins because he requested it - Hinkle remarked when he requested the introduction, that Adkins had been

recommended to him as a sharp shrewd man and one capable of doing such things

I never heard Adkins say he had paroled soldiers - but have heard him speak in an obscure way of soldiers getting away - on one occasion I heard him say he knew of a soldier who had got away, I think this occured about two weeks ago. I paid little attention to it at the time, and the place where it occured, or whether any one was present has passed from my memory - When Hinkle and myself, had the conversation & before he was introduced to Adkins, we spoke of Adkins having got a man off, or that he knew how a soldier had got away - both of us know this, but which first spoke of it, I cannot now recollect. I know of no one else that has spoken of or been spoken to upon the subject of paroling soldiers or getting them away -

J. A. Harrell

Subscribed & sworn to before me
this 31st day of January AD 1863
Geo. T. Hampton, Assistant Provost Judge

Nashville Feby 2d 1863

Statement of J. E. Mills - resident of Nashville Tenn.

I am a merchant - grocery trade. was raised here, Have been a Southern rights man - now wish for peace - Am a widower board at Mrs Cockrills - Am acquainted with Mr. Atkins - known him from boyhood. He has been a plasterer by trade - when the war broke out he joined the Southern Army, as a private I presume, He came back from the army some three or four months ago - I believe he said he was discharged - Have not talked much with him, I have heard nothing what ever of the paroling of soldiers, by citizens nor know nothing of it, in any way, shape or manner, myself - Have never heard or known of any such operations of Atkins - I have taken the oath of allegiance, some two months since, and gave bond of $2.000 and consider the oath now binding, and now earnestly desire the restoration of the Union.

John E. Mills

Subscribed and sworn to before me, this 5d day of February. 1863

John Fitch
Provost Judge

Nashville, Feb. 4. 1863

Affidavit of M. M. Hewlett, a resident of near Nashville, in reference to paroling and running Federal soldiers out of the lines.

I am 31 years of age - my business a physician - lived here some fourteen years my sentiments are for the old Union, if the equal rights of the South are preserved. I was a Commissary in the State rebel service, resigned when the State troops were turned over to the Confederate service.

As regards the accusations against me of meddling with Federal soldiers, to get them to desert, or pretending to parole them, or to run them off out of the lines, I have not done it. I know nothing myself of any other persons in Nashville or vicinity having done so. I heard a Mr. Harrell, a preacher, living then & now in Nashville say, that a man by name of Atkins was mighty good hand to get Federal soldiers out of the lines. That was about the language used by Mr. Harrell, he said farther that Atkins had assisted his (Atkins) brother and another soldier belonging to a Federal Battery, to get out of the lines, and go South. Harrell described this Battery

by saying it was nearly annihilated at Murfreesboro, only four men being left.
I told Harrell to introduce me to Atkins as I knew of some Federal soldiers who wished to be paroled, and to bring him up to my office, on Cherry street, He and Atkins came up, that night - Atkins staid but a short time - when they both went out and Harrell soon came in again, by himself, and said Atkins had gone home was in a hurry - I remarked that Atkins would not do - that he was not a man of nerve, Harrell said I was mistaken he had nerve and was shrewd man, but was in hurry, and also there were other persons in my office, preventing his stay to do the business.
I have had no further intercourse with said Harrell or Atkins, on this subject.
Nor do I know of any other person or persons so doing. I recollect Mr. Harrells saying to me, at that interview that Mr. Atkins had belonged to the Confederate army, was in the first Tennessee Regt. under Col. Manney

M. M. Hinkle Jr.

Subscribed & sworn to this 4th day of February 1866 before me

John Fitch
Probate Judge

Nashville. Feb. 4 1863

Statement of J. A. Harrell.

I was standing in front of Dortch's drug store on the public square in Nashville about ten days ago and Mr. M. M. Neakle Jr came up & told me he wished to see me at the office of Drs. Watson & Briggs as soon as I could find it convenient to call. I told him I would do so & in a few minutes did call. He then informed me that he had a plan on foot to decimate Gen. Rosencrans' army & said it was to get men here in Nashville to give them paroles. He asked me if I would not go into it, to which I replied in the negative. He then asked me if I knew of a man that would do it, stating at the same time that a Mr. Adkins had been recommended to him as a good hand for such work. I told him that Adkins was too illiterate to write paroles, but that I thought he could get them through the lines, that I knew to be naturally a shrewd man, that I had heard him speak of doing so - that I had heard him say that he knew of two soldiers who got away a few nights after the battle of Murfreesboro one of whom was said to be his (Adkins) brother, belonging to an Ohio Battery. I never heard which the

other soldier was. Beatle then told me to tell Adkins to come up there. I did so & as I was going to the office myself, Adkins & I met together. There were several gentlemen in the back room of the office where we remained a few minutes. Dr. W. T. Briggs, my preceptor, was among the number in the office & as he started to go home I followed him to the pavement in front for the purpose of talking with him in reference to matters connected with the medical college. Adkins I observed standing in the front door after we had been talking a little while.

After speaking of the affair connected with the College I told him what Beatle had been trying to do & told him it was too dishonorable & too hazardous a business for me to engage in for a moment. I told him also that Beatle had sent for Adkins on the same business. To which he replied that it was a dangerous matter and I ought not to encourage Adkins in it. I told him I had not & should not. Here the conversation ended & we parted. I then went back into the office & saw Adkins still standing in the door who

said he was in a hurry & should go home & did go. I went into the back room remained a short time & left. As to Adkins getting away soldiers I know nothing, except what I have heard him say. I have several times heard him speak of soldiers getting away & say that he knew of some getting through the lines. His brother who belonged to an Ohio battery I saw once at the table at my boarding house & he was pointed out to me as his brother. I heard Adkins say his brother was tired of fighting for the Union & wanted to desert & go south. I dont know that I heard the subject mentioned again till the next day when Adkins said in my presence that he knew of two men who got through the lines the night before - and it was said, whether by Adkins or some one else who was present (and I cant remember who was present) that there were persons or a person in Edgefield whose names or name was not given who received the soldiers, carried across the river and helped them through the lines. I have also heard Adkins say that he had got passes for soldiers

to cross the river. Who the persons were if any, that assisted Mr. Adkins in getting soldiers away I do not know.

I only know that Mr. Adkins frequently spoke of this affair as if he knew something about it & assisted in it.

The above conversations as far as I recollect took place within the last month.

J. R. Harrell

Subscribed & sworn to this
4th day of February 1863

John Fitch.
Provost Judge.