

## **PART XII. NORTHERN ATROCITIES AND WAR CRIMES**

**Unit Introduction:** In part twelve we briefly examine some of the Northern atrocities and war crimes that were committed against the Southern people. As we move further away from the 1860's, we find less and less mention of these horrific acts. In order to put in perspective some of the terror that was felt by those left a home during the war, we attempt to summarize the acts of war perpetrated on civilians of the South. Realize that much of the items reported here can be found in the Official Records of the War. Officers writing reports, would generally not be in the habit of reporting incidents that made them and their command look bad. Most certainly they would not incriminate themselves if they were involved with war crimes, looting, rape, plunder, profiteering, etc. Imagine how many acts were not reported for fear of persecution during and after the war?

**Unit Objective:** To develop an awareness of atrocities and war committed by Northern armies against the Southern people.

### **A. The Massacre At Palmyra, Missouri**

On September 12, 1862, Colonel Joseph C. Porter and the Confederate troops of the First Northeast Missouri Cavalry under his command rode into the Union occupied town of Palmyra, Missouri in an effort to free the townspeople from its oppressive occupation. On this raid they captured a man named Andrew Allsman, a sixty-year old citizen of Palmyra. Allsman had enlisted in the Union Army when the war broke out in 1861, but was soon discharged due to his age. He later figured that he could better serve the Union cause by becoming an informant in his hometown. There was much Southern sentiment amongst people of Missouri even though the state had been occupied since the early period of the war. The Union feared that if left unchecked this supportive population could be a hindrance to the Union cause. With Allsman informing on suspected Southern sympathizers, thousands of people were arrested. Some were arrested for expressing free speech, publicly speaking of their sentiment with the Confederate States.

Allsman was called upon frequently to testify against Missourians as being disloyal to the United States. If Allsman said a man was a rebel the Union authorities believed him without question. These accused rebels were thrown into jail immediately while their families at home would be targeted for robbery and other acts of terror by U.S. soldiers. There was deep resentment for Allsman in the town of Palmyra. Reportedly, when Porter had captured the much despised Allsman, some of the ladies of Palmyra had said to Colonel Porter, *"Don't let old Allsman come back alive."*



Three days after Allsman's capture Colonel Porter decided he could no longer keep Allsman with his troop on the move. It slowed down the movement of his troops in their retreat south. Allsman was offered

release but he did not want to be left alone while on his way back home for he feared that his civilian enemies would kill him. Instead he pleaded with Porter to keep him a prisoner of the troop. Porter again dismissed Allsman from the troop, but did agreed that Allsman could choose six of Porter's men to act as an escort to the nearest home of a Union sympathizer.

While enroute to return Allsman to a safe home, additional Confederate troops from the camp intercepted the Allsman escorts. These troops took charge of Allsman. They led him out into the woods and told him that he was going to pay for the deeds that he had done as an informant. Allsman was shot dead by three men and his body was covered with brush and leaves in the dense underbrush of the thicket. Allsman body was never found, nor were his executioners ever identified. Meanwhile, not knowing the whereabouts of Allsman, this order was published in Palmyra Courier on October 8:



*"PALMYRA, MO., October 8, 1862 To JOSEPH C. PORTER: SIR: Andrew Allsman, an aged citizen of Palmyra and a non-combatant having been carried from his home by a band of persons unlawfully arrayed against the peace and good order of the State of Missouri and which band was under your control, this is to notify you that unless said Andrew Allsmart is returned unharmed to his family within ten days from date ten men, who have belonged to your band and unlawfully sworn by you to carry arms against the Government of the United States and who are now in custody, will be shot, as a meet reward for their crimes, among which is the illegal restraining of said Allsman his liberty, and, if not returned, presumptively aiding in his murder. Your prompt attention to this will save much suffering. Yours, &c., W. R. STRACHAN, Provost-Marshal. General District Northeast Missouri , Per order of brigadier-general commanding McNeil's column. "* A supplementary notice was placed in the hands of the wife of Porter, at her residence in Lewis County, who it was thought was in frequent communication with her husband. Colonel Porter had been making his way southward before the threat was issued and was most probably not aware of General McNeil's demand.

The threat had been issued by the provost marshal of northeast Missouri, Union Captain William R. Strachan. When approached with a plea to revoke the order Strachan, who was more often than not intoxicated, stated that the ten men would be shot according to the order. Canadian born General John McNeil who authorized the order was asked by citizens of Union sympathies to rescind this order. His simple reply was, *"My will shall be done."* Union authorities had already killed Confederate Colonel McCollough and fifteen of his comrades in August in Kirksville, only seventy miles to the northwest. Union General Merrill had also executed ten prisoners who had refused to take an oath of allegiance to the United States.

The ninth day after Strachan's order had passed. It seemed evident to Strachan that Allsman was not going to be returned and they were not aware of Allsmans demise. McNeil ordered Strachan to go to the jail and select the *"worst rebels"* for

execution. He further directed that those who could not read nor write were to be left alone, taking instead those *"of the highest social position and influence."*

Strachan walked into the jail where twelve men waited to hear the verdict. Only five of those twelve would be selected while five more would be selected from the Hannibal jailhouse and brought to Palmyra for execution. One of the ten men selected, Willis Baker, was sixty years old and had never served in the Confederate army but had two sons who had. Mr. Baker had been charged with harboring them and their companions, and, when a Union man had turned up murdered in the area, he was charged with complicity in that crime. Willis Baker was not a religious man and the death threat did not quite him, as it surely had the nine other men. Baker stormed and swore that he had done nothing to deserve being shot like an animal, and that he would see *"old McNeil and Strachan miles in Hell"* before he would forgive them. The names of the other nine men selected were: Capt. Thomas A. Sidenor, from Monroe County, Thomas Humston, from Lewis County, Morgan Bixler, from Lewis County, John Y. McPheeters, from Lewis County, Herbert Hudson, from Ralls County, John M. Wade, from Ralls County, Francis W. Lear, from Ralls County, Eleazar Lake, from Scotland County, William T. Humphrey, from Lewis County. These nine men were most all family men and all of them were active in their churches. All of them had served in the Confederate army.

The first man that Strachan had put on the death list was that of William T. Humphrey. Upon learning of this, his wife, Mary Humphrey, with her two step-children and her two-week-old baby, fled to the provost marshal's office, begging for her husband's life. She was sent to General McNeil. General McNeil was grimly determined to kill her husband, but she succeeded in convincing him that her husband, though invited by Porter's men, refused to rejoin them, fearing that his parole would be revoked. Once assured of her statement, McNeil directed Strachan to choose another man to replace Humphrey. The alcoholic Strachan demanded sexual favors from the wife of the condemned prisoner as payment for sparing the man's life



Back at the jail, old Willis Baker was somewhat more calm than before, only occasionally calling down an imprecation upon the Yankees. He was seated in one corner of the jail, telling a young boy named Hiram Smith what to tell his family after he was gone. Tears streamed down young Hiram's face as he listened to the old man speaking in low, sad tones. How he dreaded relating all of this to the tortured faces of Willis Baker's wife and sons.

From the hallway came the jailer, who stepped near the cells and called in a loud voice, "Hiram T. Smith!" Brushing the tears from his eyes, young Smith walked to the cell door and looked through the bars. At that moment Provost Marshal Strachan appeared, asking "Is your name Hiram Smith?" "Yes sir," was the polite reply. "Well then, prepare yourself to be shot with the other men today at 1:00" Smith's fellow prisoners tried to comfort him, William Humphrey, reprieved but saddened at Strachan's diabolical choice of another youth who could neither read nor write, offered to write a letter to his family. His parents

were dead, so young Hiram Smith dictated a letter to his sister, written in detail by the man whose place he would take before the firing squad.

Only Hiram Smith and Thomas A. Sidenor had no wife nor children. Hiram Smith was twenty-two years of age. Sidenor had been a Captain in the Confederate army but his unit had been destroyed in battle and there after disbanded. He had then taken up the life of a civilian and was engaged to be married. Thomas Humston was only nineteen years old. Contrary to General McNeil's arbitrary stipulations, Humston could neither read nor write. He was in jail only because he had been picked up by a scouting party on routine duty.



On October 18, 1862, at 1:00 the ten men were loaded onto wagons, seated on newly made coffins, and taken to the Palmyra fairgrounds where they were to be executed. On reaching the fairgrounds, the men were placed in a row and seated on their coffins. A few feet away stood thirty United States soldiers. Behind those thirty

were an equal number of reserve troops. The order to fire was given. Only three men were killed instantly. One man was not even hit. The reserve troops were then called in. They took their pistols and went from man to man, shooting him until he stopped moaning. Mr. Bixler was the one who had not been shot. He had to sit and watch as the reserve troops shot his friends at point blank range until they came and shot him.

Here is how the event was covered by the Palmyra, Missouri Courier. *"Saturday last, the 18th instant, witnessed the performance of a tragedy in this once quiet and beautiful city of Palmyra, which, in ordinary and peaceful times, would have created a profound sensation throughout the entire country, but which now scarcely produces a distinct ripple upon the surface of our turbulent social tide.*

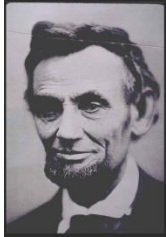
*A few minutes after 1 o'clock, Colonel Strachan, provost-marshal-general, and Reverend Rhodes shook hands with the prisoners, two of them accepting bandages for their eyes. All the rest refused. A hundred spectators had gathered around the amphitheater to witness the impressive scene. The stillness of death pervaded the place. The officer in command now stepped forward, and gave the word of command, "Ready, aim, fire." The discharges, however, were not made simultaneously, probably through want of a perfect previous understanding of the orders and of the time at which to fire.*



*Two of the rebels fell backward upon their coffins and died instantly. Captain Sidner sprang forward and fell with his head toward the soldiers, his face upward, his hands clasped upon his breast and the left leg drawn half way up. He did*

*not move again, but died immediately. He had requested the soldiers to aim at his heart, and they obeyed but too implicitly. The other seven were not killed outright, so the reserves were called in, who dispatched them with their revolvers.*

*It seems hard that ten men should die for one. Under ordinary circumstances it would hardly be justified; but severe diseases demand severe remedies. The safety of the people is the supreme law. It overrides all other considerations. The madness of rebellion has become so deep seated that ordinary methods of cure are inadequate. To take life for life would be little intimidation to men seeking the heart's blood of an obnoxious enemy. They could well afford to make even exchanges under many circumstances. It is only by striking the deepest terror in them, causing them to thoroughly respect the lives of loyal men, that they can be taught to observe the obligation of humanity and of law."*



President Lincoln promoted McNeil shortly after the Palmyra Massacre. He was just one of many Union officers who were promoted by Lincoln after committing atrocities such as the one at Palmyra, Missouri.

### Unit References and Resources:

"With Porter in North Missouri: A Chapter in the History of the War Between the States by Joseph A. Mudd

"The South Was Right" by James R. Kennedy and Walter D. Kennedy, Chapter 4

"The Lost Cause: The Standard Southern History of the War of the Confederates", by Edward A. Pollard, Chapter 9

"HORRIBLE FEDERAL OUTRAGE--TEN CONFEDERATES MURDERED--THE FULL PARTICULARS OF THE SCENE", Official Records (War of the Rebellion) -- SERIES I--VOLUME XXII/1 [S# 32] Correspondence, Orders, And Returns Relating To Operations In Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas, The Indian Territory, And Department Of The Northwest, From November 20, 1862, To December 31, 1862. UNION CORRESPONDENCE, ETC.--#2

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"The Treatment Of Prisoners During The War Between The States", Southern Historical Society Papers Vol. I Richmond, Virginia, April, 1876. No. 4

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Official Records (War of the Rebellion) -- SERIES I--VOLUME XIII [S# 19] CORRESPONDENCE, ORDERS, AND RETURNS RELATING SPECIALLY TO OPERATIONS IN MISSOURI, ARKANSAS, KANSAS, THE INDIAN TERRITORY, AND THE DEPARTMENT OF THE NORTHWEST FROM APRIL 10 TO NOVEMBER 20, 1862. UNION CORRESPONDENCE, ETC. -- #15

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**Kansas, The Indian Territory, And Department Of The Northwest, From November 20, 1862, To December 31, 1862. UNION CORRESPONDENCE, ETC.--#4**  
**Official Records (War of the Rebellion) -- SERIES I--VOLUME XXII/2 [S# 33]**  
**Correspondence, Orders, And Returns Relating To Operations In Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas, The Indian Territory, And Department Of The Northwest, From January 1 To December 31, 1863. CONFEDERATE CORRESPONDENCE, ETC.--#13**  
**"Early Events in Missouri, etc. GENERAL ORDERS No. 20", Official Records (War of the Rebellion) --SERIES II--VOLUME I [S# 114]**  
**"Trial of George M. Pulliam" Official Records (War of the Rebellion) --SERIES II--VOLUME I [S# 114]**  
**"Trial of John C. Tompkins", Official Records (War of the Rebellion) --SERIES II--VOLUME I [S# 114]**  
**"Trial of Richard B. Crowder", Official Records (War of the Rebellion) --SERIES II--VOLUME I [S# 114]**  
**"Trial of Thomas S. Foster", Official Records (War of the Rebellion) --SERIES II--VOLUME I [S# 114]**  
**"Union Methods of Dealing with Guerrillas", Official Records (War of the Rebellion) --SERIES II--VOLUME I [S# 114]**  
**Official Records (War of the Rebellion) --SERIES II--VOLUME V [S# 118] UNION CORRESPONDENCE, ORDERS, ETC., RELATING TO PRISONERS OF WAR AND STATE FROM DECEMBER 1, 1862, TO JUNE 10, 1863.--#4**

### **B. The Hanging of Sam Davis**



**Sam Davis (photo at left used with permission of Mike Minor) was a student at Western Military Institute, in Nashville, Tennessee, when the War For Southern Independence broke out. At the young age of 19, Sam returned home to Rutherford County, Tennessee and joined the Confederate army unit, the "Rutherford Rifles," which soon became Company I, 1st Tennessee Volunteer Infantry, CSA.**

**By April of 1862, Sam Davis had already served under four of the greatest leaders that the war would produce, Generals Albert Sidney Johnston, P.G.T. Beauregard, Robert E. Lee and Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson. Davis was making his mark in the Confederate army as a splendid soldier. Because of his reputation he was selected to be a member of an elite, close-knit group of men known as "Coleman's Scouts." In this unit he would operate behind enemy lines, collecting vital information for Braxton Bragg's army. Once, when Davis was in U.S. occupied Nashville, he was seated in the dining room of the St. Cloud Hotel as the same table as Union General William S. Rosecrans, listening to the plans of the unsuspecting Yankee general. Many times Coleman's Scouts proudly wore their Confederate gray trousers and their butternut jackets behind enemy lines, making their presence all the more dangerous.**

**In November of 1863, Davis slipped into his home, Rutherford County, which was deep into U.S. occupied territory. While there his mother gave him an old U.S. army overcoat**

that she had dyed with the only dye available at that time, butternut hulls. This would be the jacket that Davis was wearing when he was captured. After stealing a peek at the sleeping children in the house, Davis stole away from his home and family, for the last time.

Davis set out from Smyrna, Tennessee and went to Nashville, then traveled south, where he made a rendezvous with Coleman. It was there agreed that each man should go into north Alabama and then head east towards the Confederate line at Chattanooga, Tennessee, where they would give their scouting observations to General Bragg. It was also at this meeting that Coleman (in reality Captain Henry Shaw) gave Sam Davis the papers for General Bragg which were to cost young Davis his life within little more than a week.



On November 20, 1863, Davis was captured in Giles County, Tennessee and taken at once to Pulaski, eleven miles north of where he was captured. He was jailed and put under direct charge of Union General Grenville Dodge. General Dodge quickly became convinced that Davis knew the true identity of the elusive E. Coleman. He accused Davis of being a spy, threatening him with a U.S. court-martial and death by hanging if he didn't tell him who gave him the papers. Due to the accuracy of the papers that Davis held, General Dodge was laboring under the possibility that E. Coleman must be, in reality, someone on his own staff or very near it.

Davis refused to give any information, reportedly saying, *"I know that I will have to die, but I will not tell where I got the information, and there is no power on earth that can make me tell. You are doing your duty as a soldier, and I am doing mine. If I have to die, I will do so feeling that I am doing my duty to God and my country."*

The general held a hasty court-martial in which all of the soldiers in the arresting party testified that Davis was, indeed, dressed as a Confederate soldier when captured, conclusive evidence that he was not a spy. Regardless, the commission sentenced Sam Davis to be hung as a spy, and the date for hanging was to be Friday, November 27, 1863.

Davis repeatedly refused to divulge any information, amidst offers from U.S. officers to save his life if he would. Davis said that he would never betray the trust placed in him and that if Tennessee could not be restored to the Confederacy, he would prefer to die anyway.

On November 20, three other Scouts were rounded up and placed in the same jail as Davis. Joshua Brown and W.L. Moore were two of those placed in the jail, but the most ironic twist of all was that the third person arrested was none other than Captain Henry Shaw - alias E. Coleman. The man that General Dodge was looking for was there in his own jail, only, he did not know it.

It would have been so very easy for Sam Davis to point out Captain Shaw to save his own neck. But not for Davis. He would not sell out his country to save his own life. Many times, Shaw and the other men would watch as Davis responded to the offers for his life if he would only name his informants.



Many U.S. soldiers, noting Davis's firm resolve came to have admiration for him. They often visited him in his cell, begging him to save himself from such a useless death. Sam replied that life was, indeed, so sweet and that he did so much want to live, but that he could not betray a friend and would rather die a thousand deaths. The citizens of Giles County even visited him. Chaplain James Young, of the 81st Ohio Infantry, was so touched by the plight of this boy that he spent the final day and night with him. He prayed with him to the end. At Sam's request, on the night before the execution, the chaplain sang with him "On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand." He was there when he spoke his last words, refusing one last offer of freedom if he would betray his friends and country. Before he died, Davis gave the coat that his mother had dyed for him to his new friend, Chaplain Young. Sam also wrote one last letter to his parents that he committed to Chaplain Young for delivery to his mother and father.



On November 27, 1863, at 10:20am, Sam Davis was hanged. A soldier named John Randal - one of those who had helped capture Davis - said that never in all his life had he witnessed such a pathetic and heroic scene; that he sat on his horse with tears streaming down his face; that he saw many other Federal soldiers in tears.

Mr. and Mrs. Davis, hearing the story through the grapevine that their son had been hanged, asked a most trusted and able friend, Mr. John C. Kennedy, to go to Pulaski for them. There he was to obtain all of the details possible and, if it were Sam, to bring home the earthly remains of their boy.

Mr. Kennedy tells of the trip, in that when he reached Pulaski he went to the Provost Marshal and told him that he had come for the body of Sam Davis, that Sam's parents wanted it at home. The Provost Marshal immediately changed his manner of stubbornness and told Mr. Kennedy, "Tell them for me that he died the bravest of the brave, an honor to them, and with the respect of every man in this command." When he was asked, by Kennedy, if there would be any problems with him removing the body from the grave, he replied, "No sir. If you do, I will give you a company...yes, a regiment, if necessary." Mr. Kennedy exhumed Davis's body, verifying his identity after he was dug up. He then met Chaplain Young who gave him the keepsakes that Sam had asked him to see that his mother and father received.

The body was placed in a new casket and loaded onto Mr. Kennedy's wagon. Upon reaching Nashville, the body of Sam Davis was turned over to a Mr. Cornelius, an undertaker, with specific instructions about shrouding the body, as Mr. Davis had told Mr. Kennedy, "If you think it is best that Jane and I should not see him, do as you think best about the matter."

On the evening of the seventh day after leaving home, Mr. Kennedy, with the casket on his wagon, drove into the big gate of Sam Davis's home. Mr. and Mrs. Davis were watching, and when they saw the casket, Mrs. Davis threw her arms above her head and fell. All was sorrow in that home. Mr. Kennedy was going to go home, but Mr. Davis prevailed upon him to stay.



The next morning, while standing in the yard, Mr. Davis came to Mr. Kennedy. He hesitated, then catching his breath almost between each word, said, "*John, don't you think it's hard a father can't see the face of his own child?*" Mr. Kennedy replied that he thought it best that he and Mrs. Davis should remember him as they saw him last. Mr. Davis turned and left. Mr. Kennedy drove the carryall that afternoon, across the creek to the old family graveyard where he buried Sam Davis.



The Confederate Medal of Honor was authorized near the end of the war, but due to day to day situations across the South at that time, no one was ever bestowed with the honor. But, in 1976, at the Sons of Confederate Veterans' convention in Memphis, Tennessee, with great pride it was unanimously decided that Sam Davis would become the first to receive the honor. The medal is on display at the Sam Davis Home in Smyrna, Tennessee.

#### Unit References and Resources:

- "The South Was Right" by James R. Kennedy and Walter D. Kennedy, Chapter 4.
- "The Story of the Confederacy", by Robert S. Henry, Chapter 25.
- "The Morale of the Confederate Armies", Confederate Military History, Vol. 12
- "Sam Davis--A Southern Hero", Southern Historical Society Papers. Vol. XXV. Richmond, Va., January-December. 1897
- "Same Davis", From the Pulaski. Tenn., Citizen, January 6, 1898

#### C. Ivan Turchin, The Robber Colonel.

One Union officer who distinguished himself by savagery was Ivan Vasilevich Turchininov, better known as Colonel Ivan Turchin, a Russian who had come to the United States after serving in the Crimea, and had been made colonel of the Nineteenth Illinois. Insisting that war should be ruthless, he subsisted his men on the country by pillaging the Southern farms so freely that Southerners called him "The Robber Colonel." He gave notice that after he raided a community, if his force was ever attacked he would punish the citizens ruthlessly.



In 1861 the reputation of Turchin's regiment began reaching Union commanders. They ordered him to ease up on his thievery and violence against citizens as we see in this July 1861 correspondence: BRIGADE HEADQUARTERS, Quincy, July 16, 1861.

"Col. J. B. TURCHIN, Nineteenth [Illinois] Regiment. SIR: The Nineteenth have now an opportunity of establishing a reputation for orderly and soldier-

*like behavior. I have no fears for their reputation for courage and gallantry. I regret that I have reliable information that they violate private rights of property and of person. This must be stopped at once. I call your attention to the Articles of War, sections 32 and 54, and shall require implicit obedience. The regiment must not be permitted to make friends into enemies and injure the cause of the Nation while in its service by excesses and violence. Peaceable citizens must be protected; offenders against such must be punished. You will cause strict inquiry to be made and where damage has been done settle the amount and deduct from the offender's pay. In addition to this military punishment adequate to the offense will be inflicted even to the extent of ignominious discharge from the service. Prompt obedience and orderly behavior must be preserved. I send you in a private letter the facts which I require to be examined into and desire a report. If you are compelled by military necessity to take horses or transportation or any other private property let it be done by competent officers and reported to you, and let the cause of such taking, the property taken, the value and the owner's name be entered on the regimental books and proper vouchers given to the owners. Your regiment by careful and orderly conduct can make hosts of friends, and I trust that the high opinion which I have of the officers may not be lowered by their misconduct in any way. S. A. HURLBUT, Brigadier-General, Illinois Volunteer Militia"*

Early in 1862, Tennessee being in the possession of the Federals, the northern counties of Alabama were harassed by continuous raids. In April, Huntsville was occupied by Colonel Turchin. Indignities of all kinds were heaped upon the defenseless citizens. During one of his raids on Athens Alabama, a Union soldier became caught between the tender and the engine of a train when was destroyed at the Limestone Creek Bridge. He was burned alive in the presence of the citizens of Athens who were too terrified to act.



On May 3 1862 an infuriated, Turchin told the men in three regiments: *"I will close my eyes for one hour."* His troops looted stores and dwellings indiscriminately, destroyed civilian property in the most wanton manner, and insulted women. In that hour Turchin's men sacked the town, committing numerous atrocities and stole \$50,000 worth of silverware and jewelry. Reports of Turchin's activities eventually reach the

ears of his commanding general, Ormsby Mitchel. Mitchel responded with a memo to Secretary Stanton:



*"HEADQUARTERS THIRD DIVISION, Camp Taylor, May 19, 1862. Hon. E. M. STANTON, Secretary of War: My line of posts extend more than 400 miles. My own personal attention cannot be given to all the troops under my command. The most terrible outrages---robberies, rapes, arsons, and plundering--are being committed by lawless brigands and vagabonds connected with the army, and I desire authority to punish all*

*those found guilty of perpetrating these crimes with death by hanging. Wherever I am present in person all is quiet and orderly, but in some instances, in regiments remote from headquarters, I hear the most deplorable accounts of excesses committed by soldiers. I beg authority to control these plunderers by visiting upon their crimes the punishment of death. O. M. MITCHEL, Major-General."*

**Time and time again in May 1862 Turchin was ordered by his superiors to conform to more normal military decorum with the civilian population as is found in the Official Records:**

*"The utmost vigilance is required, and anything less than prudent foresight, rigid discipline, perfect order, and thorough soldiership will end in disaster. All public property captured must be placed at once in the hands of the quartermaster."*

*"I send you copies of printed orders, and my card to the citizens, dated May 2. No violence will be permitted nor property destroyed until the facts are reported to me and the destruction is ordered under my own hand. You will please scatter these papers as you have opportunity. "*

*"Your regimental and brigade reports must be sent to headquarters regularly, and rigid discipline must be enforced among your troops. You have the printed orders under which we are now acting, and you will be held responsible, together with your officers, for their execution."*

*"Again I say, be vigilant and repress pillaging. Shave the heads of the offenders, brand them thieves, and drive them out of camp."*

*"COLONEL: You will please report whether any, and, if any, what, excesses and depredations on private property were committed by the troops under your command in Athens and the vicinity after the late expulsion of the enemy from that region."*

*"I wish the troops that are quartered in town to be removed as early as possible. No private dwellings must be occupied by troops. The examination of soldiers' baggage ordered on yesterday must be thorough and rapid."*

*"See that your men do not pillage and plunder. They shall not steal horses or mules or enter private houses on any pretense whatever."*

*I would prefer to hear that you had fought a battle and been defeated in a fair fight than to learn that your soldiers have degenerated into robbers and plunderers. O. M. MITCHEL, Major-General. "*



**Union Major General Don Carlos Buell, a more humane and effective officer than Mitchel, stepped in and ordered Turchin to be court-martialed. That trail eventually led to the expulsion of Turchin from the**

**Union Army for his crimes. The Official Report General Orders No. 39 of the court-martial August 1862 lists some of these specific crimes:**

*"A party entered the dwelling of Milly Ann Clayton and opened all the trunks, drawers, and boxes of every descriptions, and taking out the contents thereof, consisting of wearing apparel and bed-clothes destroyed, spoiled, or carried away the same. They also insulted the said Milly Ann Clayton and threatened to shoot her, and then proceeding to the kitchen they there attempted an indecent outrage on the person of her servant girl.*

*A squad of soldiers went to the office of R. C. David and plundered it of about \$1,000 in money and of much wearing apparel, and destroyed a stock of books, among which was a lot of fine Bibles and Testaments, which were torn, defaced, and kicked about the floor and trampled under foot.*

*A party of this command entered a house occupied by two females, M. E. Malone and S. B. Malone, and ransacked it throughout, carrying off the money which they found, and also the jewelry, plate, and female ornaments of value and interest to the owners, and destroying and spoiling the furniture of said house without cause.*

*For six or eight hours that day squads of soldiers visited the dwelling-house of Thomas S. Malone, breaking open his desk and carrying off or destroying valuable papers, notes of hand, and other property, to the value of about \$4,500, more or less, acting rudely and violently toward the females of the family. This last was done chiefly by the men of Edgerton's battery. The plundering of saddles, bridles, blankets, &c., was by the Thirty-seventh Indiana Volunteers.*

*The same parties plundered the drug store of William D. Allen, destroying completely a set of surgical, obstetrical, and dental instruments, or carrying them away.*

*The store of Madison Thompson was broken open and plundered of a stock of goods worth about \$3,000, and his stable was entered, and corn, oats, and fodder taken by different parties, who on his application for receipts replied "that they gave receipts at other places, but intended that this place should support them," or words to that effect.*

*The office of J. F. Lowell was broken open and a fine microscope and many geological specimens, together with many surgical instruments and books, carried off or destroyed.*



*Squads of soldiers, with force of arms, entered the private residence of John F. Malone and forced open all the locks of the doors, broke open all the drawers to the bureaus, the secretary, sideboard, wardrobes, and trunks in the house, and rifled them of their contents, consisting of valuable clothing, silver-ware, silver-plate jewelry, a gold watch and chain, &c.,*



*and in the performing these outrages they used coarse, vulgar, and profane language to the females of the family. These squads came in large numbers and plundered the house thoroughly. They also broke open the law office of said Malone and destroyed his safe and damaged his books. A part of this brigade went to the plantation of the above-named Malone and quartered in the negro huts for weeks, debauching the females and roaming with the males over the surrounding country to plunder and pillage.*

*A mob of soldiers burst open the doors and windows of the business houses of Samuel Tanner, jr., and plundered them of their contents, consisting of sugar, coffee, boots and shoes, leather, and other merchandise.*

*Very soon after the command entered the town a party of soldiers broke into the silversmith shop and jewelry store owned by D. H. Friend, and plundered it of its contents and valuables to the amount of about \$3,000.*

*A party of this command entered the house of R. S. Irwin and ordered his wife to cook dinner for them, and while she and her servant were so engaged they made the most indecent and beastly propositions to the latter in the presence of the whole family, and when the girl went away they followed her in the same manner, notwithstanding her efforts to avoid them.*

*Mrs. Hollinsworth's house was entered and plundered of clothing and other property by several parties, and some of the men fired into the house and threatened to burn it, and used violent and insulting language toward the said Mrs. Hollinsworth. The alarm and excitement occasioned miscarriage and subsequently her death.*

*Several soldiers came to the house of Mrs. Charlotte Hine and committed rape on the person of a colored girl and then entered the house and plundered it of all the sugar, coffee, preserves, and the like which they could find. Before leaving they destroyed or carried off all the pictures and ornaments they could lay their hands on.*

*A mob of soldiers filled the house of J. A. Cox, broke open his iron safe, destroyed and carried off papers of value, plundering the house thoroughly, carrying off the clothes of his wife and children.*

*Some soldiers broke into the brick store of P. Tanner & Sons, and destroyed or carried off nearly the entire stock of goods contained there, and broke open the safe and took about \$2,000 in money and many valuable papers.*

*A party of soldiers, at the order of Captain Edgerton, broke into an office through the windows and doors and plundered it of its contents, consisting of bedding, furniture, and wearing apparel. Lieutenant Berwick was also with the party. This officer was on the ground.*



*The law office of William Richardson, which was in another part of the town, was rifled completely and many valuable papers, consisting*

*of bonds, bills, and notes of hand, lost or destroyed.*

*The house of J. H. Jones was entered by Colonel Mihalotzy, of the Twenty-fourth Illinois Volunteers, who behaved rudely and coarsely to the ladies of the family. He then quartered two companies of infantry in the house. About one hour after Captain Edgerton quartered his artillery company in the parlors, and these companies plundered the house of all provisions and clothing they could lay their hands on, and spoiled the furniture and carpets maliciously and without a shadow of reason, spoiling the parlor carpets by cutting bacon on them, and the piano by chopping joints on it with an axe, the beds by sleeping in them with their muddy boots on. The library of the house was destroyed, and the locks of the bureaus, secretaries, wardrobes, and trunks were all forced and their contents pillaged. The family plate was carried off, but some of the pieces have been recovered.*

*The store of George R. Peck was entered by a large crowd of soldiers and stripped of its contents, and the iron safe broken open and its contents plundered, consisting of \$940.90 and \$4,000 worth of notes.*

*John Turrentine's store was broken into by a party of soldiers on that day, and an iron safe cut open belonging to the same and about \$5,000 worth of notes of hand taken or destroyed. These men destroyed about \$200 worth of books found in said store, consisting of law books, religious books, and reading books generally.*

*Col. J. B. Turchin, Nineteenth Regiment Illinois Volunteers, commanding Eighth Brigade, did permit or did fail to make any reasonable and proper effort to prevent the disgraceful behavior of the troops under his command, set forth in the specification to the first charge. This at Athens, Ala., on or about the 2d day of May, 1862.*



*Disobedience of orders o wit, Peaceful citizens are not to be molested in their persons or property; any wrongs to either are to be promptly corrected, and the offenders brought to*

*punishment," did, on or about the 2d day of May, 1862, march his brigade into the town of Athens, in the State of Alabama, and having had the arms of the regiments stacked in the streets, did permit his men to disperse and leave the ranks and colors and molest peaceable citizens in their persons and property, as shown in the specification to charge 1, above, and did fail to correct these wrongs or bring the offenders to punishment."*

The Northern press raised a ruckus over the dismissal of Turchin.. They demanded that Turchin be reinstated in his rights. His Chicago admirers presented him with a sword, and although the South outlawed him and set a price on his head, many in the North regarded him as a hero. General Buell protested any consideration of reinstatement or advancement of rank to the Department of War. *"If, as I hear, the promotion of Colonel Turchin is contemplated I feel it my duty to inform you that he is entirely unfit for it. I placed him in command of a brigade, and I now find it necessary to relieve him from it in consequence of his utter failure to enforce discipline and render it efficient. D.C. BUELL"*

The appeal case was submitted directly to President Lincoln's attention. It took Lincoln little time to reward this criminal. He reinstated Turchin and made him Brigadier General.

#### Unit References and Resources:

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"Two Witnesses On The "Treatment Of Prisoners", Southern Historical Society Papers Vol. VI, Richmond, Va., October, 1878, No. 4

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"Transcript of the Buell Court of Inquiry March 27, 1863", Official Records (War of the Rebellion) -- SERIES I--VOLUME XVI/1 [S# 22]

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VOLUME XVI/2 [S# 23] CORRESPONDENCE, ORDERS, AND RETURNS RELATING  
TO OPERATIONS IN KENTUCKY, MIDDLE AND EAST TENNESSEE, NORTH  
ALABAMA, AND SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA FROM JUNE 10 TO OCTOBER 31, 1862.  
UNION CORRESPONDENCE, ETC.--#11**

**"conduct of the Enemy", Official Records (War of the Rebellion) --SERIES IV--VOLUME  
II [S# 128] Correspondence, Orders, Reports, And Returns Of The Confederate  
Authorities, July 1, 1862-December 31, 1863.--#41**



### Part 12 Questions:

**In short essay format support an opinion for these questions:**

- 1. How did the people of Palmyra see Andrew Allsman?**
- 2. Should McNeil and Strachan earned promotions or court-martials for their actions in Palmyra?**
- 3. What was the impression given of the firing squad execution in Palmyra when 100 spectators were allowed to be present?**
- 4. What was Sam Davis' crime and did it justify hanging?**
- 5. What evidence was presented to indicate that Sam Davis was not a spy?**
- 6. Why was Ivan Turchin known as "The Robbing Colonel"?**
- 7. Why did the citizens of Athens Alabama not offer aid to the Union soldier trapped on the burning train?**
- 8. What acts of war did Turchin presume that the citizens of Athens Alabama had presented, that would justify the raid on their town?**
- 9. Based on official reports and orders did Turchin deserve court-martial and dismissal from the Union Army?**
- 10. What motivation would Lincoln have to reinstate Turchin and promote him to general, when the court found him guilty on numerous charges?**



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<http://www.scv674.org/SH-12.htm>