

"Six Hundred Confederate Officers"

"How They Were Exposed to Confederate Cannon"

A Retaliatory Measure

The following story comes from J. L. Lemon of Acworth, Ga., who says he thinks the story has never been published:

"Doubtless you will offer your columns as a medium for recording interesting historical incidents connected with the war. My experience while a prisoner was thrilling and tragic in many respects, and varied as the winds.

"I was in Gen. Longstreet's command in his movement to take Knoxville, in November, 1863, and was severely wounded and taken prisoner. Some time later I was removed to the penitentiary at Nashville, then to Camp Chase, and from there to Fort Delaware. We passed through Columbus, Ohio, where I had a view of the Ohio pen-itenitiary.

"In the summer of 1864, six hundred of the officers were taken from the pen at Fort Delaware and put aboard the steamer 'Crescent' and carried to Morris Island, victims of retaliation for some alleged wrong to the federal prisoners at the hands of Confederate authorities. On the way we planned an escape, the crew in charge of us being Confederate sympathizers. We were to land at Georgetown, overpower our guards and the guards of the town, and escape. The steamer, on nearing the shore, struck a bar and prevented its possibility.

"When we were awaiting to be taken upon the island we were without water, and suffered tortures from the heat in our crowded condition. We were taken in charge on the island by a negro regiment, who were instructed to take all U.S. blankets, clothing, canteens, and all other trinkets marked U.S., which they did, leaving some of our men nearly bare. We were kept under range of the Confederate batteries on Sullivan and James Islands and battery wagons for forty-two days. We obtained the water we drank while on the island by digging holes in the sand for the water in August! Our negro guards treated us roughly for awhile. Issuing our scanty rations to us most extravagant prices for our horn, bone, and wood rings, and other trinkets fashioned in our leisure.

"We were removed to Fort Pulaski and Hilton Head. Some parties had escaped from Andersonville, and said they were fed on sour sorghum and corn bread; in retaliation we were given pickles and refuse corn meal, the re-sult of which had almost completely broken down our six hundred, none of whom were scarcely able to drag themselves along.

"This awful affair has never been printed before, so far as I know.

I am very respectfully,

Joseph L. Lemon

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