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Ethnic Cleansing, American-Style

by

James Bovard

Excerpts from his *Freedom Daily* Essay

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The statements of Union officers in their official reports reveal attitudes far different from how the war is presented in American school textbooks.

The longer the American Civil War lasted, the more Union generals acted as if they were conducting a crusade to crush infidels. In a September 17, 1863, letter to Henry W. Halleck, the general-in-chief of the Union armies, Union Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman wrote:

The United States has the right, and ... the ... power, to penetrate to every part of the national domain.... *We will remove and destroy every obstacle - if need be, take every life, every acre of land, every particle of property, everything that to us seems proper.*

Halleck liked Sherman's letter so much that he passed it on to President Lincoln, who declared that it should be published. Sherman, in a follow-up to Halleck on October 10, 1863, declared:

I have your telegram saying the President had read my letter and thought it should be published.... I profess ... to fight for but one single purpose, viz, to sustain a Government capable of vindicating its just and rightful authority, independent of niggers, cotton, money, or any earthly interest.

On June 21, 1864, before his bloody March to the Sea, Sherman wrote to the secretary of war:

There is a class of people [in the South] ... men, women, and children, who must be killed or banished before you can hope for peace and order.

A few months later, Sherman informed one of his subordinate commanders:

I am satisfied ... that the problem of this war consists in the awful fact that the present class of men who rule the South must be killed outright rather than in the conquest of territory, so that hard, bull-dog fighting, and a great deal of it, yet remains to be done.... Therefore, I shall expect you on any and all occasions to make bloody results.

On September 27, 1864, Sherman wrote to Gen. John Hood, the Confederate commander of the Army of Tennessee, and announced,

I have deemed it to the interest of the United States that the citizens now residing in Atlanta should remove, those who prefer it to go south and the rest north.

On October 9, 1864, Sherman wrote to Gen. Ulysses S. Grant:

Until we can repopulate Georgia, it is useless to occupy it, but the utter destruction of its roads, houses, and people will cripple their military resources.... I can make the march, and make Georgia howl.

Sherman lived up to his boast - and left a swath of devastation and misery that helped plunge the South into decades of poverty.

Scorched-earth tactics were also used in the Shenandoah Valley in 1864-65. On September 28, 1864, Gen. Phil Sheridan ordered one of his commanders to "leave the valley a barren waste." General Grant ordered Union troops to

"make all the valleys south of the Baltimore and Ohio

railroad a desert as high up as possible ... eat out Virginia clear and clean ... so that crows flying over it for the balance of the season will have to carry their provender with them." Union Gen. Wesley Merritt proudly reported to Sheridan on December 3, 1864, that "the destruction in the valley, and in the mountains bounding it, was most complete."

Such tactics were typical towards the end of the war. On December 19, 1864, a Union colonel reported that he had followed orders "to desolate the country from the Arkansas River to Fort Scott, and burn every house on the route." In the same month, a major general with the Army of the Potomac noted the success of a Union expedition south of Petersburg, Virginia:

"Many houses were deserted ... contained only helpless women and children ... almost every house was set on fire."

Many Union officers were horrified at the wanton destruction their armies inflicted on the South. On March 8, 1865, Gen. Cyrus Bussey reported:

There are several thousand families within the limits of this command who are related to and dependent on the Arkansas soldiers in our service. These people have nearly all been robbed of everything they had by the troops of this command, and are now left destitute and compelled to leave their homes to avoid starvation.... In most instances everything has been taken and no receipts given, the people turned out to starve, and their effects loaded into trains and sent to Kansas.

The source of the preceding quotes is *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (128 volumes published by the Government Printing Office). Thomas Bland Keys compiled some of the most shocking comments in his excellent 1991 book, *Uncivil War: Union Army and Navy Excesses in the Official Records*, published by the Beauvoir Press in Biloxi, Mississippi. For a masterful

examination of the broad issues surrounding the war, check out Jeffrey Rogers Hummel's *Emancipating Slaves, Enslaving Free Men* (Chicago: Open Court, 1996).

Some Northern leaders claimed to be deeply concerned about the well-being of slaves liberated by the Northern armies. However, Union tactics intentionally devastated the economies of much of the South - leaving people to struggle for years to avert starvation. This destruction made the South's recovery far slower than it otherwise would have been - and greatly increased the misery of both white and black survivors.

The more ruthless the Northern armies acted, the more exalted federal power became. For many, the greatness and sanctity of the federal government was confirmed by the fact that the government possessed the power to burn Southern cities, destroy Southern crops, and starve Southern families.

The more the politicians used government power to destroy, the more government power itself was exalted as the greatest curative. Lord Acton, writing in England in 1862, observed of the American war: "Whether the Northern Government succeeds or fails, its character is altered, and its power permanently and enormously increased." An 1875 article in the *American Law Review* noted:

"The late war left the average American politician with a powerful desire to acquire property from other people without paying for it."

The tragic mistakes, blunders, and crimes of politicians led to a war that resulted in a vast expansion of the power of the political class.

Poison Vaccines and The LA Sugar House Incident

There are records of the Union army committing mass murder against whites & blacks that were on a massive scale. One such incident took place in the winter and spring of 1863 in St.

Mary parish, Louisiana.

In the archives of Louisiana, and in the book "The Conduct of Federal Troops in Louisiana ...", edited by David C. Edmonds, can be found first-hand reports of the Yankee army trying to "poison" innocent men, women, and children. The following is a letter written by one Dr. Sabatier for a report of the Yankee conduct; a report that was requested by the governor of Louisiana. (Pg. 91 - 92).

... when the small-pox broke out among the Federal troops, then occupying New Iberia, it was impossible in our vicinity to procure the smallest portion of vaccine matter... I used my best exertions to procure some vaccine from the Federal physicians in New Iberia, and through one of my confreres succeeded in getting a few points loaded with vaccine, which I immediately inoculated to my own children.

Dr. Sabatier goes on to say how his children suffered more from the vaccine than from small pox. In fact, he states,

A few days after the operation, one of my poor little baby's arms was horribly swollen and inflamed, and on the second day appeared a pustule which had nothing of the appearance of vaccine...

Unfortunately for Dr. Sabatier many children died including his own. I sent a copy of this report to several doctors at Ochsner Hospital in New Orleans, and their report back to me was that **this "vaccine" was made to kill**. The governor's report goes on to state that over "two thousand perished in six weeks." They died because of a poison passed off as a vaccine.

In the summer of 1863 another civilian doctor by the name of George Hill witnessed the Union army occupy what is today called Morgan City, at that time called Brasher. An event took place here, the likes of which would not be seen again until Hitler and the Nazis started their "final solution."

Dr. Hill was reported as being "a distinguished physician

and surgeon of Opelousas." But all his years as a doctor did not prepare him for what he saw.

"In the summer of 1863, Berwick's Bay and a portion of the Lafourche country were taken possession of by the Confederate army. I, with many others who had lost property by the raid which the Federal army made between the 20th of April and the 20th of May of this year, visited the Bay for the purpose of recovering our property. I was among the first to cross the bay; and having been informed on the night of my arrival by a gentleman named March that several of my lost Negroes were at the sugar house of Dr. Sanders (Henry Sanders), and that others were there in a dying condition, I [left] in the morning [for the] sugar house of Dr. S. and entered it by a door in the west end.

[Original sentence says: I, in the morning as soon as sugar house of Dr. S. and entered it by a door in the west end.] -ed

"The scene which then and there presented itself can never be effaced from my memory. On the right hand, female corpses in a state of nudity, and also in a far advanced stage of decomposition. Many others were lying all over the floor, many speechless and in a dying condition.

"All appeared to have died of the same disease : bloody flux. The floor was slippery with blood, mucus and feces. The dying, and all those unable to help themselves, were lying with their scanty garments rolled around their heads and breasts - the lower part of the body naked - and every time an involuntary discharge of blood and feces, combined with air, would pass, making a slight noise, clouds of flies, such as I never saw before, would immediately rise and settle down again on all the exposed parts of the dying. In passing through the house a cold chill shook my frame, from which I did not recover for several months, and, indeed, it came near costing my life.

"As I passed from the house I met with a Negro man of my own, who informed me that he had lost his

wife and two children. I asked him if his friends - the Yankees - had not furnished him with medicine. He said, 'No, and if they had, I would not have given it to my family as all who took their medicine died in twelve hours from the time of its being given.'

This "deposition" ends with the remark that it was shown to Dr. Sanders, who was then a member of the Louisiana House of Representatives. Dr. Sanders knew of the incident and was recorded as saying,

"Before the arrival of Dr. Hill, he had caused many decomposed bodies that filled the coolers to be removed and interred... A hundred others would, if necessary, add their testimony to that of these gentlemen."

This event has become known as the Sugar House Incident, or the Sugar House Murders and the house in which it occurred has been located by myself and a few others. Our next step is to have the area scanned by infrared imaging to locate the mass graves that should be in the area.

Excerpts from... Black History and the War Between the States: Setting the Record Straight.....By Brian E. Orger, 2/21/01

PREAMBLE TO HOUSE RESOLUTION #97

.... also known as the Retaliatory Orders

THE NORTH'S RETALIATION OF REBEL POWs

"Rebel prisoners in our hands are to be subjected to a treatment finding its parallels only in the conduct of savage tribes and resulting in the death of multitudes by the slow but designed process of starvation and by mortal diseases occasioned by insufficient and unhealthy food and wanton exposure of their persons to the inclemency of the weather." ...passed by both houses, January 1865.

Dr. John A. Wyeth in his book, "With Saber and Scalpel" gives an account of the suffering of Confederate prisoners under the *retaliatory orders*. The Confederate government, having no medicines for the sick, offered as a free gift 15,000 of the emaciated federal soldiers in Andersonville Prison as an act of charity, to save life, not to destroy it. Federal ships in November, 1864, came to Ft. Pulaski and took away the 15,000 federal prisoners, bringing, however, not a single old Reb to his home. The rations, already limited, were cut to starving proportions.

O those hard *retaliatory measures* ordered by popular demand, under misapprehension, how many fell victims to those measures! What a fatal gift was our 15,000 emaciated! We did it to save life. Fifteen thousand Confederates fell victims to this fatal gift. We did it to save life; the retaliatory orders were issued to destroy life.Confederate Veteran, Dec. 1916.

"I would like", said Senator Lane, "to live long enough to see every white man in South Carolina in hell, and the negroes inheriting their territory. (Loud applause) It would not any day wound my feelings to find the dead bodies of every rebel sympathizer pierced with bullet holes, in every street and alley in Washington City. (Applause) Yes; I would regret the waste of powder and lead. I would rather have these Copperheads hung and the ropes saved for future use. (Loud Applause) I would like to see them dangle until their stinking bodies would rot and fall to the ground piece by piece."...(Applause with laughter)....1863, in the Washington speech by Jim Lane, Republican Senator from Kansas.

Pvt. Howard Malcolm Blewett was a prisoner at Pt. Lookout Prison Camp for Confederates from 1863 to 1865. After taking the Oath of Allegiance on April 14 th 1865, he was transported to Chimbrazo Hospital in Richmond, Virginia. There, it took him SIX months to recover from severe malnutrition.

Pvt. Robert George Smith, Pt.Lookout Prisoner stated:

Run down and half starved as the prisoners were, scurvy set in and a squad of men was kept busy

digging graves just outside the enclosure every day. Acres were covered with the graves of former prisoners.

A sick soldier who was suffering from extreme thirst crept out to a well near his tent. "Halt!" came a gruff command from a burly negro guard. The man pled pitifully, explaining that he was almost dying for water. "Damn you!" came the answer, "I told you to get back!" Instantly the report of a pistol shocked the listeners. The bullet missed its target but killed a sleeping man in a tent close by.

As early as Decoration Day 1868, the U.S. government, as caretaker of the nation's premier military cemetery, began turning away families and UDC members who tried to bring flowers to the graves of 377 Confederates who had died in Washington hospitals and were buried here. Major General John A. Logan, whose corps had burned Columbia, South Carolina, in 1865 and who was now commander of the leading Union veterans organization, the Grand Army of the Republic, specifically ordered that the ladies be turned away and the Confederate graves left bare. Angered Southern families began to remove their relatives from Arlington.

...Civil War Times, *Arlington's Forgotten Monument* by Clint Johnson

Reference Books

Three Hundred Days In A Yankee Prison by John H. King ...1904

In recounting the horrific details of his imprisonment at Camp Chase, OH in 1863, the author discloses the yankee policy of deliberate "starve the Rebels into the submission of death." King also strips away the layers of propaganda surrounding the "horrors of Andersonville," and lays the blame for the many northern soldiers who died there at the feet of the northern army itself, whose "scorched earth" policy devastated the crops and other resources of the South.

Prison Life During the War of 1861 by Fritz Fuzzlebug ...1869

Learn of the suffering endured by the Immortal Six Hundred captured Confederate officers as they were starved, beaten and used as human shields.

These books can be ordered from Crown Rights Book Company.

Below are excerpts from a Pt. Lookout/Elmira POW, Walter D. Addison Stewart's Horse Artillery, Co. A

Pvt. Addison was punished in prison for writing the truth about prisoner treatment.

"...During my entire confinement at Point Lookout we were under guard of Negro soldiers whose conduct and treatment of the prisoners was infamously cruel and in many instances they conducted themselves in a savage manner. I have witnessed them fire their muskets indiscriminately into crowded masses of prisoners, shooting two or three men at a single shot and such outrages were tolerated by their white officers, and they never were punished nor their cases investigated. This repeatedly happened at Point Lookout, and I never heard that one was even reprimanded.

Stringent orders were given to the guard to fire upon any prisoners who were seen out of their quarters after eight o'clock at night. Many prisoners were unaware of the orders and incautiously ventured out for the performance of nature calls, when they were ruthlessly shot down. Several cases of the kind occurred. All these outrages were perpetrated by Negroes as there were none others on guard.

When drinking from the water barrels...The audacious Negro was always at hand, and seemed to delight in immersing the head of the drinker, and then gloat over the fun.

Transfers of prisoners from Pt. Lookout to Elmira: The

first installment from Pt. Lookout was dispatched by sea via New York City in the month of July upon a miserable old government transport only fitted to carry cattle. About 1200 men were crowded upon this old tub between decks with only the hatches open and there they remained crowded together like sheep for many days, only allowing one or two at a time on the main deck for a few minutes, when they were ordered into their horrible quarters below. The sight of these holes was sickening in the extreme, and the condition and sufferings of the prisoners therein confined was indeed horrible, and a large number of the men being already sick when placed on board, their wretched condition upon the voyage can be imagined better than described.

Our rations consisted of fat pork and a loaf of bread. No beds nor straw lie upon, only a blanket spread beneath us on the filth covered hard boards only comparable with hog or cattle pen. Never upon the whole voyage was there any attempt made to sweep or clean the floors. There was scarcely an inch of space where there could be a step between the crowded mass of human freight. The insufficient ventilation of the ship's hold rendered the stench and the foul air unbearable, and many death were the result.

Some were already dead when the ship reached NY, and I feel certain that many died afterward from the affects of that horrible voyage. It reminded me of only one other scene I witnessed when passengers upon a ship at sea, which was converging at market nearly 2000 huge densely crowded together upon deck, the animals having been fed upon raw potatoes just before starting. The sea affects them as it does a human being. Those swine were accommodated better than we, they being upon the upper decks in the fresh air, whilst we were between decks almost poisoned by the foul air, which was intensely polluted by human excrement.

We were marched from the prison to the depot in Elmira through about two feet of snow, the weather intensely cold, in Feb. 1865. Upon reaching the depot wet and cold we were crowded into cattle cars wherein

was a little dirty straw scattered over the floor, and not a particle of fire.

At Baltimore we were marched a long distance through a blinding sleet and snow storm to the steamboat upon the wharf from noon till night, when we were placed upon a dilapidated government cattle transport and landed at City Point below Richmond. A violent storm of wind, sleet, and snow raged the entire night of our passage down the bay, and unprotected as we were upon the hurricane deck with only a blanket the night was a hard one. Many of the sick of which there were a large number were placed below decks in the stalls formerly for cattle, and but slightly protected from the weather, and but little more comfortable than there on the hurricane deck.

There can be no doubt that it was the grossest indifference on the part of the government in thus permitting sick prisoners to be conveyed in such an inhuman and cruel manner. I do not believe that in any instance during the war when northern prisoners suffered as much, if as, it was for lack of provisions and the refusal on the part of the north to exchange prisoners, it seeming their intention to let the latter die rather than refrain from their endeavor to eat out the substance of the South.

The conduct of many of the physicians in charge of the hospitals herein named deserves especial notice, and the strongest condemnation. If they had been dumb brutes, instead of human beings as they were supposed to be, they could not have exhibited greater brutality. I was ward master in one of the hospital barracks at Elmira which contained from 85-90 patients crowded, as they sometimes were 2-3 in a bunk. The physician, a Dr. VanNess made his visits once and sometimes twice every 24 hrs. For the many different diseases incidental to such places, nearly every patient received opium pills. That being the favorite prescription no matter what the nature of the disease. On one occasion, three persons so being treated were visible shaking, the surgeon-in-chief, a Dr. Sanger, was called in. He directed Dr. VanNess to

write four or five drops of Fowler's solution of ARSENIC! He wrote 45 and the patients in a very short time breathed their last breath! NO investigation ensued. No reprimand. Dr. VanNess continued in his position. Hundreds of our prisoners died. I can truthfully say not 20% of those in the hospital left it alive.

This is no exaggeration of what I believe was a terrible crime growing out of, to put it mildly, the deplorable ignorance of the medical men in charge, if not willful murder. They had our poor helpless soldiers at their mercy. Often have I heard them, when gathered together in the dispensary discussing their experiences of the day, exult over the numbers of the Rebs they had put through, i.e. killed and expressing their desire to, in this way, get rid of the whole number of the Confederates there, thus avoiding an exchange. All in authority at Elmira seemed to be of this opinion.

I have known persons to be frost bitten, and when some of them provided for themselves little mud chimneys to their tents, gathering chips and other small fuel, the yankee officers would send a guard to ruthlessly destroy them and Mjr. Beall, who was then in command, would go to the rounds himself, in the middle of the night and deprive them of the extra blankets which were their own personal property, leaving the soldier to freeze to death. No coffee, no tea, no vegetables but a few beans to make tasteless watery soup consisting of the liquid in which the pork had been boiled.

After many months the old soldier barracks - barns- were used as hospitals. Hundreds were wedged in, and crowded together like packed sardines. Two and frequently three in a bunk. They had no opportunity to cleanse themselves of vermin there first found, therefore who can wonder at the fearful numbers of deaths, arising from ignorant medical supervision, and total lack of proper ventilation.

THERE IS NO DOUBT IN MY MIND AS TO THE INTENTION OF OUR ENEMIES TO RID

THEMSELVES OF AS MANY OF OUR PRISONERS AS WAS POSSIBLE, NO MATTER WHAT THE MEANS TO WHICH THEY RESORTED.

I recollect, in one instance at Elmira hundreds of deaths were the result of small-pox introduced by patients from Blackwell's Island, NY. Up to that time not a case of the disease had been known there. In a few days it manifested itself in one of the new importations. Instead of being isolated, he was placed immediately adjoining one of the wards used as a hospital, and there remained for days. Other cases rapidly developed, and soon broke out in a virulent form. Tents were then placed inside the stockade where hundreds were confined, and immediately upon their convalescence were again distributed amongst the well prisoners, even occupying the same beds, thus spreading the disease to an appalling degree. No comfortable buildings were provided for the wretched victims, even when the temperature fell 20 deg. below zero. Very few small-pox patients survived. When discharging small-pox cases they were led to a pump, and there stripped and washed in the coldest weather, and then assigned new quarters for a brief time, when they were returned to the hospital to meet their deaths. Their sufferings were laughed at. Considering their ill usage, premeditated torture, insufficient food, and the prevailing lack of any show of humanity it seems a miracle that one again reached his home. I repeatedly heard it said by federal officers that the mortality at Elmira far exceeded that at Andersonville.

The outrageous manner in which men were vaccinated excelled anything I have ever witnessed even surpassing the acts of savages. The modus operandi was to assemble the man first in long lines with coats off and arms bared; then the butchering began by illiterate and irresponsible men. They would take hold of a thick piece of flesh, dip a lancet into the diluted virus, and then thrust it entirely through the pinched up flesh. The spurious virus soon produced such fearfully disastrous results that it became necessary to construct gangrene hospitals, from which arose a dreadful stench. Scores

died from the effects; others losing arms. I have there seen the sickening effects of their villainous vaccination. There are many who can verify the above.

The torturous sweat box: For trivial offenses our men were therein confined for hours, in the scorching suns of July and August, without food and water, and removed in many cases only when the victim was more dead than alive. I vividly recollect when one man dropped with rigid limbs swollen and almost paralyzed, and died in a few days from the effects. This instrument of torture consisted of a narrow upright box, about 7 ft. high and wide enough to fit an ordinary sized man. It stood in a perpendicular position with its victim without ventilation, and the poor victim was left to sweat to death.

The dreaded barrel shirt: What was known by that name was a very heavy barrel with one head out, and the other containing a hole large enough to admit the head of a man through it. All offenders, twice a day, for two hours, had to wear it. They were drawn up to form a circle, the barrel adjusted over the head the inside of the barrel resting upon the shoulders and the parade commenced. This death dealing instrument would have been a burning shame amongst savages. This afforded the Negro guard amusement everyday, and also seemed to gratify their beastly officers.

Rats, dogs, cats or any other animal would not long exist amongst that hungry throng of prisoners. Catching rats and selling them for food became quite a business, and they pursued the avocation with quite a profit, the demand being steady. Would men eat dogs and rats unless suffering from extreme hunger? Many died from insufficient and improper food. I have seen men, almost starved, fish scraps from barrels containing hospital refuse and devouring it ravenously, although in so doing were poisoning themselves with the putrid filth they were swallowing.

Can it be imagined that human beings imagined that human beings - officers- could witness such sights and

then return to their sumptuous meals without a thought of the terrible suffering of the starving Confederates. The customary prison diet consisted of 3 or 4 crackers, and a small slice of fat pork in the morning. In the afternoon a half pint of water in which the pork was boiled, and a piece of bread - nothing else.

No vegetables, tea nor coffee were ever seen. It was repeatedly said, in my presence, that the reason we were denied vegetables, was in retaliation for the refusal of tobacco to their prisoners in the South. On many occasions vegetables sent by friends outside were denied to the prisoners. This occurred oftener at Pt. Lookout than at Elmira. At the later prison, clothes sent to me they refused to deliver, also boots and shoes. In case they did deliver a coat it was not until the tail had been cut off and the tops of boots were similarly curtailed. At Elmira I was one day notified that there was a box at headquarters for me. Upon reporting there for it was opened in my presence by the order of Mjr. Colt who was in command. The articles of clothing therein were of a valuable character. They were refused me. After pleading some time for the new coat, Mjr. Colt consented to having it exchanged in town for another, he said of more suitable color, and detailed. Sent Mjr. Rudd to attend to it. The overcoat was a very handsome and costly one; in return, after charging me \$5.00 for his trouble, he delivered to me a miserable shoddy one almost worthless.

I could relate dozens of other outrages equally disgraceful, but enough is said to illustrate what was the condition of thousands of our Confederates confined in the Northern prison pens!"

Fort Delaware Prisoners Write

Ft. DE prisoners wrote.....

of the cuisine of Ft. DE, there is not much to be said in praise. Two meals are served to us daily. Occasionally a mixture designated by our

persecutors as soup and containing an ample sufficiency of maggots is doled out to us in pots.

Dinner was the big meal of the two. It consisted of precisely the same quantity of meat and bread with the addition of half a tin cup of slop which no man had the right to dignify with the name of soup. To the best of our judgment the ingredients were rotten water, rice hulls, white worms half an inch long, grit, nails, and hair, with now and then a grain of corn.

"Recollections: A True Story About (57th VA) Families During the CW" by Terry Wright

Camp Chase Prisoner Writes

As to our rations: there was just enough to keep us ravenously hungry all the time; one half loaf of bakers bread eight inches long divided between eight men, one inch to the man twice a day; with that one tablespoonful of navy beans with a piece of pickled beef or salt pork about the size of a person's forefinger. We had a kitchen sergeant who had the cooking done for his barracks. When ready it was handed to us through a window in a tin cup, with the liquor it was cooked in. The guards would throw down apple cores and peelings and enjoy seeing our poor starving boys scuffle for them. The hospital was just outside the prison wall. There was a ditch four feet wide and three feet deep. It was planked up side and bottom and from the hospital it passed through our prison, and in it all the filth of the prison was deposited, including the scraps from the hospital, such as scraps of meat, bakers bread, onions and beef bones, etc. At the head of the ditch was a large tank. It was pumped full of water every day by a detail of prisoners. We all knew when the flood gates would be raised and the water turned loose. It would come sweeping down, bringing the garbage with other filth deposited in it during the day. Our boys would be strung along the sides of the ditch and as it

came floating by they would grab it and eat it like hungry dogs. Beef bones was a choice morsel. We would take them and pound them up and place them in tin cups and boil them until the marrow was boiled out. When cold there would be a thin cake of tallow on top. We would spread it on our bread like butter. Had Lazarus been laid out at (our) gate he would not have gotten a crumb. A little snowbird would have starved to death at our feet. I now, after fifty years, recall some of the fitful scenes of the starved, emaciated young men. Those once proud Southerners who had been victorious in many a battle kicked and cuffed, starving and sick at heart, and in despair with no hope sitting waiting for the scraps from the hospital to be washed to their feet with the garbage and excrement all clumped in the same ditch together. **There are no words adequate to depict the outrageous cruelties and barbarities perpetrated upon helpless prisoners by some of those who had them in charge.** The small pox was raging all the time but we cared nothing for that. We did not have vitality enough to produce a scab. I used the blanket of one of my comrades that was carried to the pest house and was glad to get it. The scurvy was also terrible, eating the gums away and the teeth falling out, leaving the victim a perfect wreck, all for the want of proper food. There was another species of suffering that befell the tobacco users. It was pitiful to see them following those who were lucky enough to have a little money to buy tobacco, watching until they threw it out of their mouths to pick it up off the ground and put it in their own mouths or take it to their quarters and dry and smoke it.... Milton Asbury Ryan , Camp Chase POW

CSA Alabama Veteran Writes

Female College Huntsville, Ala., Tuesday, June 18, 1867 To the Editor of the New York Times:

My attention has been called to an article in your paper of 31st ult., in which, replying to some remarks of the Richmond Enquirer in regard to the treatment of prisoners, it said: "Nobody on either side ever

pretended for a moment that rebel prisoners ever died in our hands or even seriously suffered for lack of food or clothing or shelter. No such charge has been made."

Will you then permit such charges to be made through your columns? I was captured in October, 1863, and spent six months in Camp Morton. In March, 1864, I was removed to Fort Delaware, where I remained until June, 1865. The winter of 1863-4 is well known to have been intensely severe.

Many rebel prisoners, to my own knowledge, spent that winter without a blanket, and the scant and ragged summer clothing worn when captured. The barracks were the old cattle sheds used when the prison was a fair ground, and open enough for the winter winds to sweep through freely. Scores of the men in the dead of winter slept in these sheds, upon the bare ground without covering, huddling together like hogs to keep from freezing.

It is well known to hundreds now living that several died, actually frozen to death, while large numbers were so badly frostbitten as to be lamed for life.

During the larger portion of the time the hospital arrangements were shamefully deficient, and by many of the surgeons and attendants the sick were not only grossly neglected but most inhumanly treated.

Men barely able to crawl through weariness from insufficient food and disease consequent upon exposure, were forced, in the severest winter weather, to stand at roll call for two and often three or more hours in line, like soldiers on dress parade, and cursed like brutes or beaten over the heads with sabres or clubs, and sometimes shot at for moving a little to keep from freezing.

In several instances prisoners were shot on most the frivolous pretexts. A quiet orderly man, an Englishman named Coats, belonging to my division was murdered in cold blood by a private of the Invalid Corps named Baker, who was a guard.

Instead of being tried and punished, Baker, though a private, was sent next morning to take charge, as Sergeant, of our division, in which position he heaped upon the defenseless men every indignity that so inhuman a wretch could devise.

At the very time that such a outcry was raised about the mortality among Northern soldiers in Southern prisons, the inmates of Camp Morton knew the mortality then in proportion to the number of men to be several percent greater. At Fort Delaware our barracks were more comfortable, but the rations were miserably insufficient, and prisoners who could not obtain money from friends with which to procure extra supplies from the suttlers suffered the pangs of hunger day and night, and reduced to skeletons, and eaten up by scurvy from scanty and unwholesome food fell ready victims to disease, and died by the hundreds.

At the close of the war, of about seven thousand men in one pen, fully one-half, if not three-fourths, were but walking skeletons, hundreds of them ruined for life with scurvy.

It was a daily occurrence for large numbers of men to be beaten over the head with bludgeons, or kept for hours tied up by the thumbs in the most agonizing torture. A Dutch Lieutenant, Deitz, in charge of our pen, was for weeks, in the habit of coming in with a large cowhide whip and lashing the men most unmerciful -- in one instance cutting a gash in the face of an Alabamian named Pardue, in which your finger could have been laid.

It was no uncommon thing for the guards, upon the slightest pretext to fire into the quarters in which were 300 or 400 men, and several prisoners were needlessly and recklessly killed by them.

The above, and the half has not been told are plain, unexaggerated facts, which can be substantiated by most unquestionable testimony, and for the truth of which I pledge my character and reputation as a minister of the gospel. I request the insertion of this as

an act of justice.

– J. G. Wilson President of Huntsville Female College

This statement so plain, so pointed and so full of authority compelled the editor to the Times to remark:

"This letter comes from a source so respectable and responsible and its statements are so specific, that we have no hesitation in publishing it. Our Government has no excuse for inhumanity to the prisoners it captured during the war, and its honor is involved in punishing with just severity of all instances of such cruelty on the part of its agents as are specified above."

END