

Chapter 22 Prison Camp, Tyler Texas, Camp Ford

As the crow flies, Tyler, Texas is 91 miles from Shreveport and 183 miles from Alexandria. [The prisoners may have been moved by boat up to Shreveport and then marched from there to Tyler, Tx.]

Captured and taken to Camp Ford near Tyler TX

<p>Field and Staff Phillip Kuhn, Principal Musician William W. Reinoehl, Commissary Sgt Mahlon Rouch, Sgt Major</p> <p>Company A [15 listed] John H. Batdorf Solon Boydston Christopher Cowell Luther Finley Jacob Lehman, Sgt John D. Mackey Sergt Major, escaped John R. McKinney John McQuigg, Corp. George Metzler Wm E. Montgomery, 1st Sgt Emanuel Shreve William Shreve Samuel Smedley William H. Sponsler William R. Taggart</p>	<p>Company B [12 captured] John W. Baughman James Channel Henry H. Culler Lewis L. Hoopes Anthony W. Miller Frederick S. Moffit John H. Mowers Mathias Mowry, Sgt William Parker, died at Tyler Benjamin Pressler, Corp. Joseph P. Rummel, Capt, escaped, recaptured Andrew J. Stichler, Corp.</p>
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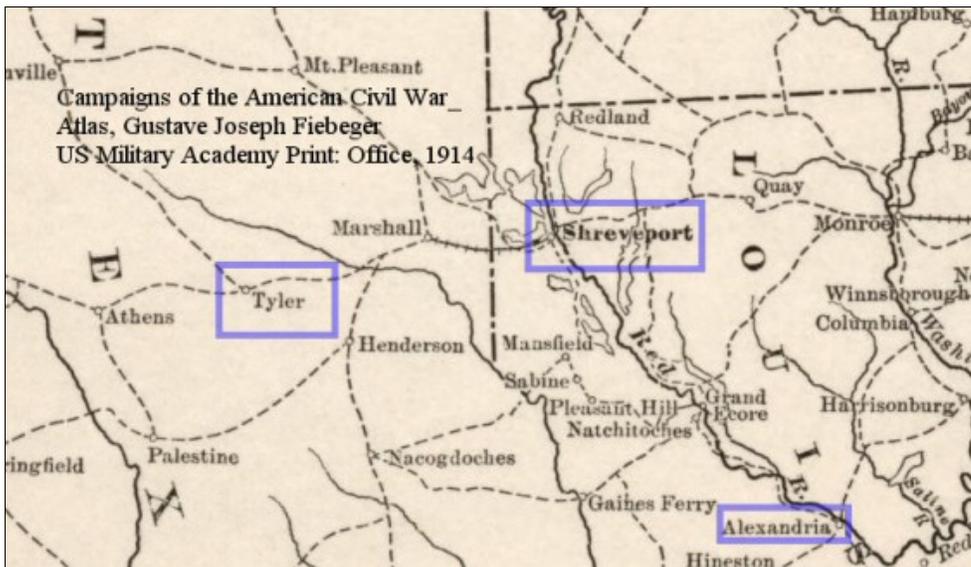
<p>Company C [15 captured] Gibson Craig Amos M. Eby Harrison Fisher, Corporal John Fronce John Gray, Sergt. William Hannan, escaped John S. Hawkins John a. Henney David Hurst, Sergt. James Jarvis William M. McCreary, Corporal Archibald Marshall, Corporal Edward Otto Alonzo Shambaugh Samuel E. Strine</p>	<p>Company D [22 captured] John S. Fortney [alias Alexander Anderson] John Baker Cornelius Bender James W. Christy, Sergt. John T. Clark Robert C. Crow, Sergt. Peter Eckard, paroled 17 Jun 1864 at Red River Landing, LA Hiram G. Elson James R. Hanna Henry Hartman Adam Keister, Corporal Elijah Keister Franklin W. Martz, died 29 July '64 Tyler TX Benjamin F. Miller, Captain [escaped and recaptured] John W. Plum Dallas Reaser Joseph A. Shively, Sergt. Albert Smyser Marcus L. Stophlet</p>
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	John Swinehart Amos Thompson Joseph Woolf
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Company E [13 captured] Esli S. Bonewitz John J. Bonewitz Henry Grunder Franklin Holmes, Corporal Augustus Hushouer Cyrus McConnell John W. McCrery John M. Marrietta George D. Palmer Harmon B. Pershin William G. Spencer, Sergt. John H. Weltmer Samuel L. Whonsettler	Company F [13 captured] Richard Biggs William W. Brown Franklin Emery Elias Fraunfelter, Captain Jonathan Holmes Amos B. Kepner, died 30 Sept 1864 at Tyler James S. McClain, Corporal John W. Millington Adam Mish George W. Saltzman George Shriner Richard Smily, Sergt. Isaac Yearick
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Company G [27 captured] James Berridge Benton Burkhimer David Burn Henry A. Cooper Henry F. Cooper, Sergt. William Cuddy, escaped 20 Aug 1864 Gabriel C. Dague [weighed only 80 lbs upon his release] George Detrick James Eaton William Eaton Jefferson Etling Harvey H. Galehouse, Sergt., escaped 20 Aug 1864 John Gochenhour Thomas Golden John Harney Peter M. Harvey John Harbaugh, Corporal William A. Jameson Benjamin T. Jones Franklin Kissinger Samuel Ludwick Enoch Medsker Martin Noonan, Corporal John Rigdon	Company H [24 captured] John Baer John A. Baker John Beveridge Henry Brubaker Jacob Farmer Joseph Farmer George Fetzer, Corporal John J. A. Foss Lewis Hoover Isaac N. Keiffer Jacob Krauter George W. Lightfoot Davidson Long Joseph Myers, Sergt. Menno Myers Tobias B. Myers Benjamin N. Norris, Sergt. John Sexton Francis F. Shellman Samuel A. Smith Andrew J. Stake Henry Stauffer, Sergt. John R. Weaver Cyrus Willford [See story and photo below]
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Elias Seig
 John Smith
 Enoch H. Wilford



Company I [27 captured]
 William Buck
 James Bussing, Corporal
 Alfred S. Church
 James Coleman
 Samuel Cook
 Alfred J. Creigh
 Samuel Etwiler, Pvt., [Hardesty's states that Samuel Etwiler of Co. I was wounded at the time of the capture of the City Belle, but was able to march to the prison. His weight while in prison went from 175 pounds down to 97 pounds.]
 Abraham D. Eyeler
 James Ferguson, wagoner., paroled at mouth of the Red River, 27 May 1865.
 William Higgins, Pvt., [Hardesty's states that William was severely wounded in the wrist as he fended off a blow from the sword of a Confederate captain as he attempted to escape at Snaggy Point.]
 Thomas S. Hill
 Peter Hyer
 Philip Kuhn
 Israel Lindly
 John C. McIlvain, Sergt.
 Josiah R. Martin
 John S. B. Matson, Sergt.
 William B. Milliken, 1st Lieut.
 Matthew A. Morrow, Corporal
 William R. Morrow

Company K [20 captured]
 Harvey Applegate, 1st Lieut.
 William Carmichael
 William Cockburn, Sergt.
 Thomas V. Craig
 William F. Craig
 Christian Eschbaugh
 Salthiel Fast
 Cyrus Gurwell
 John H. Hyman
 Milford Johnson
 John Leylander, Sergt.
 August Longey/Longe. He was a photographer after the war.
 Henry Louthan
 C. Lurwell [Not on the list of Camp Ford at time of their release]
 William Metzger
 Philip Miller
 Jacob Morfoot
 Joseph Snyder
 Alexander J. Swanger [Not on Camp Ford list]
 Frederick Tanner

 Aron Z. Sinsheimer, Joseph Speigel and Lewis Burger were sutlers who were also captured and

Daniel Oyster Milton Parks Jacob S. Reed, died 24 Aug 1864 at Tyler Joseph H. Richie, Sergt. Levi Ritter Martin V. Taggart Charles Wallace, Musician	taken to Tyler prison camp.
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List received from Tyler, TX, contains 185 names connected with the 120th who were captured at Snaggy Point and who were present there at the time of release when the war ended. That included 3 sutlers. But I have 200 names here who were captured and taken to Camp Ford.

Those **wounded and captured** at Snaggy Point went to Cheneyville, LA.

Company A

Isaac Huntsberger [Not at Camp Ford]

Company C

William Hannan [Escaped from Camp ford]

Company D

John A. Willower [Not at Camp Ford]

Company H

John Null, gun shot wound rt hand, paroled 16 June 1864 [Not at Camp Ford]

Company I

John H. Morton, wounded [Not at Camp Ford]

"List of Casualties [sic]...while on board [sic] the Steamer 'City Belle' near 'Snaggy Point' La, May 3d 1864...." Private Wm. CUDDY, missing, condition not known.

[From the records of the Ohio Adjutant General, available at the Ohio Historical Society, Columbus, OH.

NOTE: According to *Grandpa's Gone...The Adventures of Daniel Buchwalter in the Western Army, 1862-1865*, by Jerry Frey, p. 101, Sergeant Harvey H. Galehouse and Pvt. William F. Cuddy escaped from Camp Ford, Tyler, Texas, on 20 Aug 1864 and made it back to Union lines. Contributed by Kerry Kimberly]

[\[Exchange of Prisoners of War, Headquarters Department of the Gulf, New Orleans, August 4, 1864, "General Orders No. 107"\]](#) Google Books

The following named Officers, Non-commissioned Officers, and privates, being of the number of prisoners of war **delivered on parole at Red River Landing, La., June 17, 1864**, and being an equivalent for one hundred and ten (110) privates, are hereby declared duly exchanged, in accordance with an agreement entered into July 22d, 1864, between Colonel Charles C. Dwight, United States Commissioner of Exchange for the Military Division of the West Mississippi, and Major Jg. Szymanski, Confederate States Commissioner of Exchange for the Trans-Mississippi Department

[\[Published in Daily True Delta \[New Orleans, LA\], 10 Aug 1864, page 2.](#) At Google News." included **Peter ECKARD, Pvt, Co D 120th OH Volunteers; Jacob S. FISHER, Pvt, Co F 120th OH Volunteers; David PAINTER, Pvt, Co E 120th OH Volunteers** "Officers and enlisted men above enumerated will join their respective commands without delay. By Command of Major Gen. BANKS. George B. Drake, A. A. General."

[Jacob Fisher and David Painter...captured where??? Were they captured after they escaped from Snaggy Point? Peter Eckard's obituary says he was captured at Snaggy Point, 3 May 1864.]

Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia, New York, H. H. Hardesty & Co, 1885, for Wayne Co OH. Page 506: Henry Hartman, Private Co D.

"The ingenuity displayed by some of the men was truly wonderful. With only two axes, the winter quarters of this entire company were constructed. One of the men made a lathe, and from clay found within the borders of the prison, made different articles of pottery. Another formed a 'gigsaw' from an old hoop

skirt and began the manufacture of combs. Another engaged in making sweet potato pies, which were sold to the Confederates. As they had neither sugar or salt, and were limited in all their resources, it is hard to imagine how these pies were made."

Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia, New York, H. H. Hardesty & Co, 1885, for Richland Co OH [*Richland County OH version*]...original available at the Ohio Historical Society. There is also a version of the soldier's biographies extracted from the above Hardesty's that has been published by the Richland County Genealogical Society, 1998 called Richland County, Ohio Civil War Veterans. From the account of Pvt. **Alexander J. Swanger** of Company K: "the prison....they were without shelter of any kind the first six months of their stay. In the fall these prisoners were taken out under guard and allowed to cut the logs, from which they constructed rude pens, which were their only shelter during the winter.

Some few made their escape by lying in the bottom of the dust wagon and having the filth thrown on them; the wagon was driven by a negro man; this was soon discovered, and negro and wagon alike disappeared. A tunnel was dug and had every prospect of success, when a notice was posted upon the gate that anyone who would disclose plans for escape among the prisoners should be released. One was a traitor and revealed their plan. Poor unhappy fellow, after wandering about a week or two, he came back one night to visit his friends. The next morning there was a new-made grave within the stockades of the prison, the traitor was gone."

Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia, New York, H. H. Hardesty & Co, 1885, for Richland Co OH: From the account of Pvt. **William Higgins** of Company I, relating the account of the march from the City Belle capture to the prison at Tyler, TX: "They were nearly rescued on the following day by General Smith's cavalry corps."

[From Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia, New York, H. H. Hardesty & Co, 1885, for Wayne Co OH page 470]

Camp Ford, or Camp Tyler

"This stockade was situated a few miles from Tyler, the county seat of Tyler county, Texas, and was at first an enclosure two hundred feet across the end by five hundred on the side, with no shelter from the weather. It was later enlarged so as to enclose about five acres, and five thousand prisoners were confined here at one time."

"They were subjected to the tyranny of a vicious, cowardly lieutenant, McEcheu, whose favorite recreation was "tying up by the thumbs: those who incurred his special displeasure. There were several commandants in the two years the stockade was used, 1863 and 1864, among them Colonels Allen, Stewart and Borden, but McEcheu, who was given full powers, was most like Winder and Wirz in discipline. [*Winder and Wirz were the officers in charge of Andersonville.*] The dead-line was established fifteen feet from the stockade, and a furrow was run to mark it. This was soon obliterated by the rain, after which the guards used their own discretion as to when a man had crossed the imaginary line, and prisoners were frequently shot when fifty feet from the stockade. Officers and men of the rank and file were confined together here, and were subjected to the same treatment. There was a supply of good water, the prisoners digging wells for themselves with old case-knives, half canteens, etc. No shelter was provided, but the prisoners were permitted to construct cabins, sheds and caves for themselves with logs, brush and dirt. There was much suffering for food, and a favorite punishment was the stopping of rations for the whole camp on account of an offense given by one or a few. Frequently the prisoners were without food two days, sometimes three. Rations were withheld for an alleged mistake in the count, and as they were as poor accountants here as the men occupying similar positions all through the South, this was often the case. A pint of meal, with a small quantity of fresh beef, constituted a day's ration. No conveniences were furnished for cooking, and the prisoners had to exercise their ingenuity in preparing their food, which was after all eaten in a half cooked state, and bowel diseases resulted. Scurvy also raged, for want of vegetables, which were plentiful., and could be bought by those whose money had not all been stolen.

Dessicated [sic] vegetables from our government were sent to this prison, and distributed to the prisoners, relieving the scurvy a good deal."

"Bucking and gagging, and standing on stumps in the hot sun, were common punishments. Prisoners were frequently tied up by the thumbs with their toes just touching the ground, with sharp pegs driven in the ground, just touching their heels. On becoming unconscious they would be taken down, and when recovered strung up again. They were ironed and clubbed for slight offenses, the dogs were used to hunt them down if they attempted to escape, and many were torn by them, some so severely that death ensued. If the dogs did not finish a recaptured man, tying up by the thumbs was his punishment. One Captain Reid, of the third Missouri Cavalry, was stood on a barrel in the sun from July 3d for ten days. His hat was taken away, and his only clothing was a shirt and pair of drawers. He was refused water hours at a time. Standing on stumps in the sun was a common punishment."

"When colonel Allen was relieved of command he made the prisoners a short speech, in which he said he hoped every Yankee _____ would stay in the stockade till he entered a Southern grave. Three or four times, when it was feared our raiding forces would reach the stockade, the prisoners were paroled and marched away ostensibly for the purpose of exchange, and after a few days hard marching brought back to the same place. The most of them marched barefoot, whether on hot sand or snow, and if any could not keep up from weakness they were murdered. One old man, on a forced march back to prison in April, 1864, gave out, and was tied to the saddle of an officer and dragged until he died. The weak and sick were commonly prodded with bayonets to increase their speed, and those who fell by the way were shot. As the stockade became crowded, the sanitary condition grew worse. The food was poorer, filth increased, vermin swarmed, and great numbers of the prisoners sickened and died. There was no hospital accommodation adequate to the need, and men would just drop anywhere and die where they fell; they had no medical attendance. Attempts to escape multiplied under such circumstances, and on July 1, 1864, the following order was issued: **Hereafter any Federal prisoner being detected in trying to make his escape from this prison, either in the act or after his escape, will be shot by the one capturing him.**

By order of Lieutenant-Colonel J.P. Borden, commanding.
B.W. McEachau, Lieutenant and Acting Adjutant."

"The condition of the prisoners then was such that this order did not deter many from trying to get away,

and it is estimated that in 1864 out of one hundred and fifty who escaped from the stockade one hundred reached our lines. When those whom death had not sent to the grave Colonel Allen wished for them, were finally paroled for exchange, not one man was fit for any place but a hospital."

[Note: National Park Service: There was a First Lieutenant/Captain B. W. McEachern in Border's Regiment Texas Cavalry (Anderson's), Companies A and K, CSA]

David Bunn, Private, Co G

[History of Summit County, by Perrin, pp669-670] [My personal copy]

David Bunn "was captured at Snaggy Point, Red River, and imprisoned at Camp Ford for thirteen months; was at one time sentenced to be shot by the rebels and taken out for that purpose, but was not executed for some cause [reason]. After being inhumanly treated, rendering him an invalid for five years, he was, in 1865, paroled at Camp Ford."

Pension records: Cyrus Willford, Private, Company H [photo from pension]



"...during his long confinement in said prison owing to barbarous treatment therein received by reason of flagrant exposure to heat, cold and rain, deprivation of food and medical treatment with the wretched sanitary surroundings, his physical system was completely wrecked and never has revived, the effect being a general prostration of the nervous system with affection of the lungs."

He was a prisoner of war at the time he was taken sick with the scurvy about October 1864 in the Confederate prison Camp Ford Texas. There being no surgeon or medicine in the prison he received no treatment except at the hands of his comrades with such herbs as they knew to be of service in the treatment of scurvy. "After my return from prison to our line all the treatment I received was pickled cabbage with plenty of cayenne pepper."

"During my suffering from May to Dec. 1st 1864 my shelter was a brush shed to keep off the hot sunshine by day and dews by night. For our bed one government blanket for three of us. In time of rain this same blanket stretched over a pole made our shelter. During the summer rain and vermin were the only two things plentiful with the prisoners."

"The first treatment I received by any physician was the Confederate Post Surgeon at Camp Ford Texas. He treated me for the cough that I contracted while there in the months of November and December. He gave me medicine for the relief of my cough but received but little benefit there from."

[Joseph MYERS testified for Cyrus in the pension papers. Myers was the ranking officer of Co H to be at Camp Ford.]

"In October 1864 Cyrus took sick while assisting in preparing material for shelter. He took sick with what I supposed was scurvy. His nose bled frequently especially from coughing. His gums became swollen and bled frequently. His legs were swollen and his skin had a chalky white appearance. These conditions continued with varying degree until spring. We had a ring in which we walked for exercise during the winter. The stronger ones of us assisted Cyrus frequently in taking this exercise. In the spring about March 1865 we gathered young and tender shoots of such plants as we knew were not poisonous which we cooked into 'greens' for him and other sick men." [Photo was included in his pension file which was sent to me by Debbie Ferdetta.]

Pension Record: Letter written by Pvt. **George Saltzman**, Co F [Spelling unchanged]

"Dear Sir

I think every prisoner ought to have a pension. We suffered every thing. Death would of been exceptiable. They starved us for too or three days at a time and then they would give us some fat meat and beans. We could skim the worms of[f] them and half enough. They took our shoes. Our feet was bleeding. I was so sick with the chronic dir [diarrhea] and had the rheumatism so bad I would give up and lye down. This was when they took us prisoners and marched us on duble quick for too days and never gave us one bite to eat. If we would give out they would come at us with the baynot [bayonet] and swair and curs at us. We had to get or be ????. While we was in prison we ware most naked with out shelter. The sun so hot it curled our hair. They would call us up very often and tell us that they would shot every yankey, shoot one or too and send us back to our quarters. I never called? a doctor or went to the hospital. I thought I would die sure if I went there. If there is a man ever diserved of pension it is me. I wish you would look up my case. I am a year. I hope you will try to get me a pension. I was not at home when your papers came. This is just a ??? comesnsoon??? of what I could tell you of my suffering in prison.

Yours respectfully

George W. Saltzman [Co F]
Maryville Nodaway Co, MO"

[Contributed by Tom Cooper of the Cooper family]

Henry Cooper, Sergeant, Co G, 120th OVI, application for pension was denied and he replied:

"November 1883 Dalton Ohio

Mr. Dudley

If you think with the Government that I am not entitled to a pension, why do you not grant - if you think that a boy can be penned up 12 months and 24 days and come out a sound man - I have not more to say

- and the Rebs must have been kind, their prisons a heaven.

yours

Henry F. Cooper"

[The Photographic History of the Civil War in The Volumes: Vol. Seven - Prisons and Hospitals

by Robert Sampson Lanier, 1912 The Review of Reviews Co. , NY

Editor Holland Thompson, Ph. D. available at books.google.com]

Many of the captives were forced to burrow into the sides of the hill. The supply of wood became scanty. Meat grew scarcer until at last corn-meal was the staple article of diet. Clothes wore out and were not replaced." In this book are photos of groups of men from the 19th Iowa after their release.

Article referencing the Iowa soldiers talked about in the book above:

Daily Ohio Statesman (Columbus, Ohio), 3 Aug 1864, page 3 at Chronicling America.

"Cairo [IL], Aug. 2 - Nearly one thousand exchanged Union prisoners from the Red river country, arrived at New Orleans on the 25th ult., the majority of them belonging to Iowa and Indiana, the 26th Indiana and 19th Iowa, being largely represented. - The true Delta says they present a most pitiable appearance, being hatless, shoeless, and many of them without sufficient clothing to cover their nakedness. **They are animated skeletons, whose feet left blood marks in their tracks.** Many of them have been twelve and sixteen months in captivity. They are the first installment from the prison pen in Tyler, Texas, where from four to six thousand are confined in a stockade fort, at the rate of a thousand to the acre of land.

Their treatment was cruel and shameful beyond description. Many officers remaining there are in irons and all suffering for food, medicine and clothing. Two hundred of these prisoners have been vaccinated for the prevention fo small pox with unhealthy virus, which has inoculated them with the most loathsome diseases.

Colonel Kimball, by direction of Governor Morton, made four attempts to send relief to the camp at Tyler, without success; but Kirby Smith now expresses a willingness to permit them to be supplied, and agents of the different States and Sanitary Commissions will immediately ship liberal supplies of food, hospital stores and healthy vaccine matter."

[Contributed by Robin Biddle

HISTORY OF WASHINGTON COUNTY, OHIO, 1881 - pg 596-597] Available at HathiTrust.

Lloyd Biddle was born in this township in 1844, and was married in 1867 to Sarah Mitchell, born in Monroe county in 1844. To them were born six children—Eva, Abbie, and Jessie now living. He enlisted in 1861 in **company C, Seventy-seventh regiment, Ohio volunteer infantry**, and was mustered out in 1866—after having served during the entire war. He was in the battles of [page 597] Pittsburgh Landing, Little Rock, and Mark's Mills, where he was captured with about fifteen thousand others, and was **confined in the rebel prisons at Tyler, Texas, for ten months.** [Note: Mark's Mills was 25 Ap 1864 at Cleveland Co AR] When captured they were stripped of their clothing, except shirt and drawers, confined in an open stockade without shelter except what they themselves provided by digging caves in the earth, and were compelled to subsist on one pint of meal and three-fourths of a pound of beef, per day, and that issued irregularly. Many died from the severe treatment, and naturally every means was sought to escape from the prison. At one time a New York prisoner was detailed to haul dirt from the prison with a dump-cart and mule, and as many as three hundred of the prisoners escaped, one by one concealing themselves in the load of dirt and were dumped into the garbage holes outside the prison, but just before Mr. Biddle's time came the guards discovered the trick, and, as a precautionary measure, would prod the loads of dirt with their bayonets as they passed out. One very extensive tunnel was worked entirely beyond the guards, requiring from June to October to complete it, but the anxiety of the prisoners to escape overcame their

precaution, and the tunnel was opened at the wrong time and discovered by the guards in time to prevent any escapes. Punishment for such offences was ten days' standing on a stump."

Available at Google books: [The War of the Rebellion 1899, Series I, Vol. VI](#)

page 484: Major Thomas Tucker, Commanding the Camp to Maj. E. P. Turner, Asst. Adj. General
7 Nov 1863

"I have now at this camp over 500 prisoners, most of whom are perfectly destitute of clothing or shoes. I have made several attempts to procure lumber to build barracks for them from the post quartermaster, but have so far failed. The prisoners are now lying out, without any blankets, in the open air. The guard I have is insufficient for the number of prisoners, it only being one company of militia, numbering...seventy-one men for duty. Not being furnished with wood sufficient, I am bound to make details to guard the prisoners when they are cutting their own wood."

[Published in New Orleans Times, 28 Jan 1865, page 1, available at [GenealogyBank](#)]

delivered at Red River Landing, La., Sept. 13, 1864, by Col. Charles C. Dwight, U. S. Agent of Exchange for the Military Division West Mississippi, to Major Ig. Szymanski, supplies sent by the US.

[Daily Ohio Statesman (Columbus, OH) Vol 12, Issue 1, page 3

Published Saturday, 19 Aug 1865 Available at [Chronicling America](#)]

"New York, August 18 -- The Tribune's Tyler, Texas, correspondent describes Camp Ford, near that place, as a prison pen second only to Andersonville, in the barbarism and atrocities inflicted upon Union prisoners for two years. The correspondent says that, scourged, beaten and frozen, these prisoners were too far off and too closely guarded for their groans to be heard by those in the outside world. Their sad story only became known from their own lips after they had been exchanged. It is a stockaded inclosure [sic] of, I judge, eight or ten acres. This estimate includes all adjuncts of the prison. It is situated on the side of a sandy slope, at the lower edge of which and just within the stockade, is a spring that supplied water to the prisoners. The inclosure [sic], which seems to have been enlarged at different times to meet the requirements of rebel captures, is filled with huts and shanties of almost every imaginable shape, and constructed of every available material. Two barrels, one on top of the other, form the chimney of a hut made of bushes, the limbs of which have been pressed together and plastered with mud. Near the point at which we entered there is a number of grave-like mounds scattered in a place of about one acre. I at once thought they were graves, but on examining I found that they were excavations in the ground, which had been covered first with bushes and then with dirt. They had been made by those of our men who had been captured last and for whom there was no room in the huts above ground. Everywhere were blackened spots which show where fires had formerly been, by which those who had shelter at all cooked their daily mite of meat. Fragments of kettles and stoves, old cast-off pans and flat rocks, the cooking utensils which they had used, are strewn about, as I noticed in one of the huts piled up with care to await further use. Toward the upper side of the inclosure [sic], where there seems to have been a prison for the confinement of offenders, are several stumps, on the tops of which those who violated any of the prison rules were made to stand and mark time for perhaps a whole day, while the guard had imperative orders to shoot any one that stopped or fell off from exhaustion. The whole scene, with its associations, is a horrid illustration of the inhumanity that originated and carried on the rebellion until its overthrow. Perhaps I am raking a hurtful coal from dead ashes. I will stop."

Pension Record: **Alfred Creigh**, Private, Company I, claimed in his pension record, "In March and April 1865, I was escaping from prison at Camp Ford, Tyler, Texas, and was in the savanahs, woods and water for thirty three days and nights, and from this exposure I contracted the rheumatism..." He must have

been recaptured because he was at Camp Ford on May 22 when they wrote the record of the men who were released.

[\[History of Richland County, Ohio, from 1808 to 1908: Also Biographical Sketches of Prominent Citizens of the County, Vol 2, S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1908.\]](#) Available at archive.org

Page 1003-1004: **William B. Millikin 1st Lieut. Company I**

"[page 1004] Mr. Millikin did not complain of his one year's incarceration, for he said that the conditions at Tyler were far superior to those at Andersonville, or Libby: that they had plenty of good [page 1005] water and a reasonable allowance of corn, which was ground just as nature left it --husk, cob and kernel-- and then converted into food. While in prison Mr. Milliken was engaged most of the time making coffins.

On one occasion he was in possession of a three bladed knife which he had in some manner concealed from the guards. This he sold for twelve dollars in gold, while engaged upon negotiations whereby he could secure a better knife for ten dollars. The soldiers used many devices wherewith to while away the time, but the hours doubtless at times seemed very long when, in forced inactivity, they awaited the result of the efforts of their brother soldiers on the battlefield."

Hardesty's Historical and Geographical Encyclopedia [Wayne county Ohio version] page 495, Franklin Township section Available at Wayne County Library, Wooster.

Pvt. George Metzler of Co A, 120th OVI: "He was one of the party who set up a lathe, turned themselves arrows, and headed them with old hoop iron, in a desperate determination to escape, which was discovered and stopped before reaching a head."

[\[The Christian Cynosure, 14 May 1891, Vol. XXIII, No 35 page 8\]](#) Available at archive.org

Milford Johnson, Co K

"A Grand Army paper, published at Sturgis, Mich., in its April issue said: 'Milford Johnston, Co K, 120th O. V. I., of Grand Ledge, was a Mason and got the privilege of going and coming while prisoner at Camp Ford, Tyler, Tex., and thereby helped comrades and himself to many comforts.' "

Newspaper at Camp Ford

[Note: This newspaper was only published in February and March of 1864, with 3 issues. So the 120th was not there for this particular newspaper. You can see this newspaper at:

<http://archive.org/details/oldflagserial00newy> The paper was published by Captain William H. May, 23rd Connecticut Inf. Capt. May smuggled the copies out when he was paroled in July 1864.] [See also: <http://handwrittennews.com/2011/07/16/the-old-flag-tx-1864/>]

" 'The Old Flag.' It was a War Newspaper Printed with a Pen."

[Published Sunday 15 Mar 1896 St. Louis Republic, Vol 88 Issue 261 Section Part Four Page 34]

"Cheering News and Bright Gossip Compiled in Prison."

"It tells of the Doings of the Men at Camp Ford, Texas"

"Written for the Republic."

"If a collection was made of unique prison relics, there is at least one war-time newspaper that ought to be given first place among them. A copy of this odd paper called 'The Old Flag,' which was printed with pen and ink in a Confederate prison, is in the possession of Mr. J. L. Day of Chicago, who was one of the prisoners who issued the paper."

"It was one of the most remarkable war prisons of the war period. In spite of deprivation, disease and hunger there sprang up between the captured and their guard a feeling of fellowship which ripened into that sort of thing that makes men kin."

"There had to be some diversion in such a place, and one of them was the 'publication' by the prisoners of the Old Flag. It was written with a pen, and only one number of an issue was gotten out. This was read to squads and passed about. It had advertisements and 'telegraph news' and poetry and gossip about events in the prison. When the prisoners at Camp Ford went out, after the surrender, the editor of the paper,

Captain William H. May, of the Twenty-third Indiana Cavalry, took the copies with him and had them photographed. A copy of each issue was sent to every man who was a prisoner in that camp. It is curious and interesting, and throws a white light on one of the darkest clouds that ever shadowed any land." "A facsimile [sic] of the Old Flag, lately published by a Chicago newspaper, shows it to have been a work of real ingenuity and patience, as well as much originality and humor. An ante George Washington's birthday celebration announcement reads as follows, showing that the writers and printers of the Old Flag still had courage enough left in their hearts to be patriots: " 'With the violin lately purchased from one of the guards for \$100, Confederate money (equal to \$10 in greenbacks here), and the banjo Messrs. Mars and Co. are making, and Captain Thompson's excellent flute we are in hopes to have quite a band by the 22d of February. Now, with the addition of a singing club we certainly do not lack music for a celebration on the birthday of Washington. We have excellent public speakers and therefore hope such a celebration will come off.' "

"There is always something pathetic in the reviewing the little crumbs of comfort such as this paper must have been to the prisoners who wrote it, but these reminders of war-time days seem only to bind those closer who shared in the making of them."

[Wooster Republican, 1 Sep 1864, page 3] Available at Wayne County Library, Wooster OH

"We are kindly permitted by John A. Lawrence, Esq., of Plain Twp to publish the following letter from his son, who is a member of the 120th Regt., now at Morganza Bend, LA. The letter will be deeply interesting to the friends of the unfortunate men who were captured some months ago as the regiment was going up Red River to Alexandria:

Morganza Bend, LA, Aug 8, 1864

Father, no doubt the folks of old Wayne, and every body that has relatives in our unfortunate regiment, would like to hear from those who are near and dear to them by the ties of nature. Therefore, I take this opportunity of transmitting to you the first reliable information we have yet received from our Company. We have heard from them by exchanged prisoners, who were from the same camp our boys are in. I saw one man of the prisoners who had got acquainted with A. Smyser [Pvt. Albert, co D], he said he was well, also John R. McKinney [Pvt, Co A]. I talked to a Lieutenant who had all the names of our officers, except Mahlon Rouch [2nd Lieut, Co A], and he is passing off as a Sergeant. He had the names of Capt. B. F. Miller [Co D], B. F. Jones [Sgt. Major], Rummel [Capt. Co A] and Frownfelter [Adjutant Fraunfelter], also Lieuts. Wm. Milligan and Applegate. This is all of the officers taken. Our boys sent letters with them to our camp. I could hear nothing of John McQuigg [Corp, Co A, prisoner], others say they heard he is a prisoner. I will here copy verbatim the letter I. N. Shreve, (of our company) received from Emanuel Shreve, his brother.

Camp Ford, Smith Co., Texas

July 7th, 1864

Respected Brother [Israel Shreve, Co A],

Supposing you to be among the living, I avail myself of the present opportunity of informing you, that I am enjoying moderate good health, and have been since we reached

here, which was the 21st of May. Wm. A.[William A. Shreve, Co A] is here and in good health. Company "A" has 16 men here, and the 120th Regt. has 178 privates and non-commissioned officers here. Please write as soon as this comes to hand and let people know the particulars. No more at present.

Yours Truly

Your brother

E. Shreve [Emanuel Shreve, Co A]

[more from John Lawrence]

Wm A. Shreve [Pvt Co A] is a cousin of the other boys, E. [Emanuel] and I. N. Shreve [Israel, Pvt, Co A]. Sixteen is all that is missing of our company, (A) so there can be none at all killed. Peter Sparr, [Pvt, Co A] is back to the regiment, he has the bloody flux very bad, he appears a little better this morning.

Yours as ever, from your son,

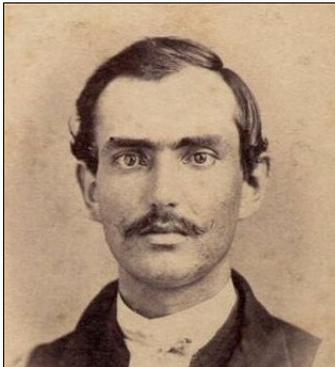
John F. Lawrence. [Pvt. Co A]

Later. August 14th, 1864.

The health of the regiment is bad. Old Sergt. Van Dorsen [1st Sgt Cornelius Van Dorsten, Co E, about age 28] died. Peter Sparr is better, and out of danger. I give him all the attention I possibly can.

Yours Truly,

John F. Lawrence



[Letter from Fraunfelter [prisoner] to J. P. Van Nest, 25 Sep 1864 published in the [Ashland Union, 16 Nov 1864, page 3](#)] Available at [Chronicling America](#).

Photo of J. P. Van Nest contributed by Nina Bledsoe Rippee
Camp Ford Prison, Tyler, Texas, September 25th, 1864.

Orderly J. P. Van Nest - Dear Sir: --Your kind note of August 13th is before me, and I am very glad to hear that the boys are getting along finely. It is the first I have heard from the Company since my capture. The following members of Company F are with me: Sergt. Richard Smilie, Corp. J. S. McClain, privates Briggs, Brown, Emery, Kepner, Mish, Millington, Shriner, Saltzman, Yearick and Holmes. We are all in the enjoyment of good health,

except Kepner, who has been complaining for some time. Keith was left at Shreveport, in the Hospital, and has no doubt since died. In comparing your list and mine I find Klinger missing. [Note: Pvt Andrew Klinger died at Snaggy Point.] I cannot account for him. You will please let the friends of the prisoners know where and how they are. Give my kind regards to all the members of Company F, and tell them I hope to be with them soon. Regards to Hughes, Slocum, Petty, &c.

I have the honor to subscribe myself, Yours truly, E. Frownfelter, Captain, P. W.[Prisoner of War]

P. S. from Van Nest

Since receiving the above letter I have heard from reliable sources, that Keith [Note: Pvt Andrew B Keith] is not dead as the Captain supposes, but is exchanged and on his way to the Regiment. J. P. V. [Van Nest]

[Wooster Republican, 27 Oct 1864, page 3][A letter from Wm. P. Myers to his father in Green Twp, Wayne Co OH.] Available at [Wayne County Library, Wooster, OH](#).

"News from the prisoners of the 120th...."

St Charles, Ark., **Sept 30th, 1864**

Dear Father - I take the earliest opportunity to give you further information from our prisoners. Yesterday evening, Sergeant Harvey Galehouse and Frank Cuddy of Co G, prisoners at Tyler, Texas, arrived here. They made their escape by bribing the guard and left Tyler on the 20th of August. They had a hard time coming through and lived 20 days on raw corn. Joe Menno, Ben Norris, Lewis Hoone [probably Hoover] and the rest of our neighbor boys, were all well when they left. Joe had been pretty sick since they were there, but Galehouse says he was perfectly well when they left. Menno had not been sick at all. - Young Matz, a new recruit died of sickness since they were there. This is the only death that had occurred from our Regiment. We had four deaths in the regiment at Morganzia, so I think they are as healthy as we are. Galehouse says their treatment is rather rough, but the boys generally manage to keep lively and in good spirits. Their chances of escape are very poor. There are frequently some get out but are mostly caught and brought back again and are then severely punished. The Rebs use hounds to catch them and men are sometimes brought back much torn and bitten by the dogs. They have no shelter in their stockade except such as they make themselves out of brush, etc., some of them have made caves in which they live. J They get one pint of corn meal and little beef per day, and about a spoon of salt every ten days.

Galehouse says a person that has plenty of money, can live well there, but that the boys have not got any nor can it be sent to them. No letters had been received by any of our Regiment, since they were there. *[Now Myers begins to tell about being in Arkansas.]* There is nothing new from this place. We had a terrible storm and rain night before last, nearly all the tents in camp were blown down, everybody got wet and nobody got hurt. There is some prospect of us going to the Department of the Gulf again. We would rather spend the winter in Louisiana, than in Arkansas. We are all well, and hope this will find you the same.

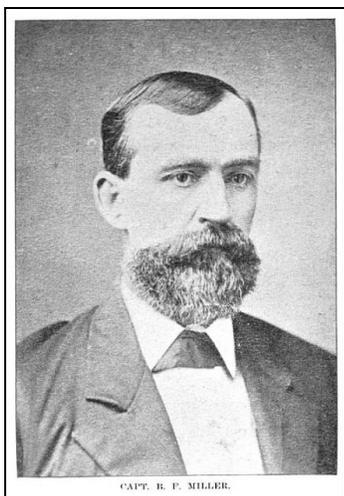
Respectfully your Son,
Wm. P. Myers

[William P. Myers was in Company H. So I think he is referring to Menno Myers, Ben Norris and Lewis Hoover, all also in Company H and living in Green Twp, Wayne Co OH. Harvey Galehouse was in Company G and lived in Chippewa Twp. David Matz, who joined in February 1864, was in Company D and was from Berks co PA but working as an apprentice carpenter in Wayne Co OH in 1860.]

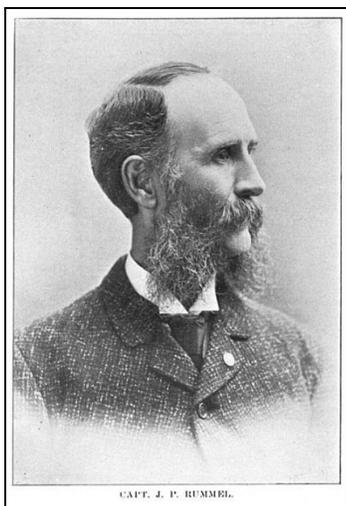
John Gochenhour, Co G

[Hardesty's Encyclopedia, Wayne County, page 497] Available at Wayne County Library, Wooster, OH He with a companion laid out a plan for escape, to bribe the guards, get a start and make for Mexico, as the boys trying to make their way north were about all recaptured. But the prisoners were removed for parole, and returned to God's country. *[Ohio]*

Another escape follows...



Benjamin Miller



Joseph Rummel

[The Bright Side of Prison Life: experiences, in prison and out, of an involuntary sojourner in rebeldom](#) by Samuel A. Swiggett, Press of Fleet, McGinley, 1897. The whole book can be read at [archive.org](#) and is well worth the read.

Escaped from Camp Ford, TX, Capt. Samuel (Seth) A. Swiggett Company B 36th Iowa, Capt. Benjamin Miller, Co D 120th Ohio, and Capt Joseph Rummel, Co B 120th Ohio. Civil War record: Samuel A. Swiggett, 1st Lieut. and Captain, Co B 36th Iowa Infantry. [Swiggett in 1860 census: Wapelo Co IA, 1860, a tailor, married with two children.]

[Swiggett had been captured 25 Apr 1864. The men of the 120th followed on 3 May. They were taken to Tyler, TX.]

Page 44: "The Stockade...was about four miles distant from the town of Tyler, in a northeast direction, and on the side of the main road to Marshall. The stockade was called Camp Ford, and was situated in the midst of a section thickly covered with a growth of pine timber, the enclosure consisting of about six or seven acres in a comparatively open space, where the trees had been cut off. The trunks of from one foot to eighteen inches in diameter had been split in two, and cut so that they were about nine feet long. These had been sunk in the ground about three feet and one-half to make the fence around the prison, and the tops of these slabs were about the height of an ordinary man's eyes from the ground.

The enclosure had been recently enlarged and there were no buildings in it except in the old portion, and these now stood in the northwest corner, where there was a beautiful spring, which gave an abundance of clear and good water.

The stockade had two gates, the main entrance being on the north side and the other through the eastern fence or wall. The guardhouse was opposite the main gate, the headquarters of the rebels in a house over 100 yards down the road toward Tyler, and the hospital about 300 yards beyond."

[Swiggett had escaped but was recaptured and returned to Camp Ford and began to form a new plan.]

Page 115

"When I explained the plan to some of my former companions in escape they tried to discourage the idea of escape altogether, saying that we would soon be exchanged, and that another failure would keep us from exchange when the time came. I had no hope of release before the end of the war, and so I sought other companionship, believing that the guard could be induced to help more than one of us.

Capt. J. B. Rummel, of the 120th Ohio, had impressed me as a man of the right sort, and I approached him on the subject. He was ready [page 116] and willing to try an escape, but he confirmed my own impression about the risk of trying it with horses, and we finally concluded to devise a scheme and try it on foot. He suggested that we take Capt. B. F. Miller, of the same regiment, and we decided to do so, after finding that Miller was anxious to go as we were to have him do so."

Page 117

"Miller, being a turner, manufactured a rude lathe and made numerous articles likely to be purchased, chessmen being the principal of these, being the most salable. We realized some cash from the demand for just such novelties."

[They used the cash to buy supplies. Swiggett forged passes to the hospital which was outside the stockade. They escaped 23 December 1864.]

At the Sabine river:

Page 122: "Miller could not swim, and was afraid to trust to our support; so that means of crossing was out of the question."

[They could see a canoe on the other side of the river.]

Page 123: "Rummel and I drew lots to see who should swim over and borrow it."

"We drew the boat along the bank to a low place, where Rummel and I seated ourselves carefully in the canoe, instructing Miller how to enter and sit down without upsetting our calculations and ourselves, but he was too painstaking and careful. He got both feet into the canoe, but that was all. In being exceedingly careful to place his feet in the proper place he forgot about the perpendicular necessities of the case,

and about the time his second foot touched the bottom of the boat his head struck the water."

page 126: Swiggett found a good place to ford the river.

"Rummel undressed and started, carrying his clothes and mine above his head, and Miller followed when he saw that he was to be left behind."

Page 127: "Captain Miller was in many respects one of the finest characters I ever knew, and I liked him more as I knew more of him, but he was the most apprehensive individual imaginable. He was more afraid of a river than of the whole confederate army, and was continually imagining all sorts of possible contingencies, trying to decide in advance what was to be done in each case, and losing sight of the fact that we could not foresee any of the surrounding conditions of a probable contingency, and hence could not meet the emergency until it and all its phases could be clearly seen."

[After a long, difficult trip, and told at times in an amusing way, they were caught "275 miles from Tyler, Texas, and fifty miles from Little Rock [Arkansas]-- "]

[Page 173] "...we walked right into a picket post of nine men, or, rather, right into plain view of them, they being fifty yards distant."

[That was the beginning of the end of their journey.]

[Page 176] "After our hosts had finished their supper we started for Arkadelphia [in Arkansas]....."

"This was our twenty-first night out since leaving the stockade, and we were not 275 miles from Tyler, Texas, and fifty miles from Little Rock-----'so near and yet so far.' "

[They were eventually discovered to be Federals after a valiant effort to lie their way out of it, and were made prisoners. They were then taken down to Washington, AR, then to Magnolia AR, and then to Shreveport, LA. They were kept at Four Miles Springs for six weeks.

[Page 207] Swiggett was then sent back to Tyler, Texas, but Rummel was not sent with him because he was ill. [Page 237]" Rummel "was taken sick at Shreveport, LA., after being recaptured, and remained there until the close of the war, being finally discharged from the army on June 29, 1865." Swiggett does not mention Miller at this point. But, Miller was sent back to Camp Ford and was released with the other prisoners.]

End of Swiggett's book.

[Note: The prisoners at Camp Ford were held until 22 May 1865. See later chapter for the story.]

[\[The National Tribune, 14 Dec 1882, page 6 at Chronicling America, Library of Congress\]](#)

Wanted - A history of Tyler Prison

The the Editor National Tribune:

I have read all the sketches that have been written for the Tribune by ex-prisoners of war, and I have been deeply interested in them. I was a prisoner myself for over one year at Tyler, Texas, and judging from the reports of Free Lance and others, the treatment was about the same in all. Much has been said about Andersonville and other Eastern prisons in the Tribune, but I have not seen anything about Tyler prison. Could not some comrade of the Seventy-seventh and One Hundred and Thirty-sixth Iowa furnish a sketch of it? I was captured in the spring of 1864, when I was but seventeen years old, and was one of the last to sign the parole at Tyler in May, 1865. What a joyful time we had that night. I never shall forget it. I was at Tyler when the first tunnel and the last was dug. A traitor in the prison 'gave us away' to the rebels. Every man intended to go out through the last one, and would have done so had it not been for him. However, he got his just dues all the same. I was there, too. When the boys escaped in the dirt cart. A friend of mine escaped in that cart. Two of the boys would

lie down in the cart and the rest would cover them with filth from the prison. The darkey driver, with his mule, would then take them out and dump the cart and come back after others. I would like to hear from some of the boys through the Tribune. Who can give the history of Tyler? I have a sketch of the prison, drawn just before the prisoners were liberated, which is very natural. One word for the Tribune: I have taken it ever since it was born. It is the best paper we soldiers can take. Enclosed please find post-office order for \$15 for that many new subscribers. Yours, fraternally,
A. J. Swanger,
Late of Co. K, 120th O. V.

[[The National Tribune: Washington, D. C., Thursday, February 21, 1895. page 3 Col 1 & 2](#)]

Available at chroniclingamerica.loc.gov

"Way Down in Texas. A Visit to the Camp Ford Prison by One who Suffered There Thirty Years Ago. Editor National Tribune: Inclosed [sic] you will find an account of a visit to the Camp Ford Prison-grounds, near Tyler, Tex., on Christmas day, 1894, by Comrade A. J. Swanger, Co. K, 120th Ohio. He visited the old prison for the purpose of securing a correct survey of the premises and surroundings for his forthcoming history of the prison. We invite any of the former inmates to send him sketches or reminiscences of their experiences while there. - John A. Bering, Major, 48th Ohio, Lynchburg, O.

The desire after the lapse of many years to revisit the scene of either a great joy or a great sorrow is almost universal. It actuated me on Dec. 18, 1894, when I procured a ticket from my home in northern Ohio to Tyler, Tex., for the purpose of visiting the spot that had been so memorable to me.

On the evening of the 22d I arrived at Tyler. The city is four miles from Camp Ford. The next morning a party volunteered to take me to the old prison-site. Although living within this short distance of its historic grounds, they had never yet seen the place, and did not know just where it was.

The next morning a coach was driven to the hotel where I was stopping, and away we went northward four miles. Finally I called a halt; I was once more on familiar ground. Ah, there is the old spring, God bless! It and with tears falling from my eyes I picked up an old gourd and drank deep of the pure cool water that was verily as the water of life to us poor fellows 30 years ago.

I did the honors of the occasion, and invited my friends all up to take a drink out of the old spring. The water appeared to taste just as it did in olden times. A great gully has washed out near where the stockade stood, along the west side.

I soon found the southwest corner, near the spring, and looking east along the spring run, came upon the guard-beat and bottom of the old stockade on the south side, where it had been rotted off at the ground. The ditch that was dug at the end of the run to the corner, along the east side, is plainly seen. This was eight or 10 feet deep, constructed to prevent us from tunneling underneath.

I found a few of the old post-bottoms along the east side, and followed along upon the hill. The ground had been planted in corn, and the fertility of the soil at that point indicated the northeast corner. Then I went west to the road, thence running south along the road about 200 feet; then down along the front side, and found one of the main gate-posts. I went to the south-west corner, and sighted north in line with the old gate to the road at the northwest corner; I took a correct measurement with a tape-line, and no one can get a more correct measurement than I did.

About two-thirds of the grounds are farmed in corn; the south part is grown up in small pines and willows. A large persimmon-tree has grown up near the center, in front of the main gate. It had been quite full of fruit, but the opossums had gathered most of it. I picked up a handful of seeds to bring home with me.

In surveying the peaceful scene, it was difficult for me to realize that 30 years ago I was one of the most remarkable examples of 'man's inhumanity to man' that modern history has any record of, and which during those dark days 'made countless thousands mourn.'

I found many pieces of our old Dutch ovens, which I retained as relics. I picked up a pocket-knife, spoon, and thimble near where were the quarters of the 48th Ohio; a brass letter of Co. H; a gold-plated eagle button; pieces of pipes; concave bullets the size of minie-balls, and many more little relics.

I located many places where the different regiments were quartered during imprisonment. I found many of the bony reminders of our scanty rations of beef scattered around. The red clay or dirt still shows every dugout constructed by us. The old chimney still remains as a monument of the rebel Headquarters near the hospital; but the dog-kennel in which the hounds were kept, and the pine-trees which stood near it, are things of the past, though the oak-trees still remain.

The location of the old graveyard is still plainly visible, but the bodies have all been removed to the National Cemetery at Alexandria, La. The situation of each grave can still be easily traced. I found a few of the whitened bones of these martyrs to patriotism still lying unburied, and gathered them up tenderly, resolving that they should find a resting-place far from the scene of their suffering.

I had a very interesting conversation with a man who had the pleasure of guarding me during the last three months of my stay in prison. He had afterwards helped to remove the dead bodies and haul them to Marshall, Tex., to the railroad, 70 miles.

He informed me that it was difficult work, as they were compelled to use shovels to gather up the remains and place them in small boxes, furnished by our Government. In removing the bodies two of the coffins or boxes were found to contain nothing but logs of wood. He remarked that it had always been a mystery to him why those logs had been interred instead of bodies, and asked me if I could explain it.

Fortunately I was in full possession of the information required, and soon satisfied his curiosity. I presume many of the survivors of the old prison will remember, with me, why we buried those logs, while the corpses they represented were making a lively effort to reach God's country and the shelter of the Stars and Stripes.

In walking over the burial grounds on Christmas Day I found a large watermelon in one of the excavations where a grave had been. It was in a state of good preservation, owing to the leaves having blown over it, and I brought it home as an interesting memento of the time and place.

I found a little nursery of young, thrifty fruit trees on the very spot where our garden grounds used to be, where, by hitching up 12 of us Yanks, we plowed the seven acres and planted it in vegetables for the sick in the hospitals.

I brought six of the young trees home with me for my children, and thinking perhaps some of my comrades would like to possess a tree from the old prison grounds, I made arrangements to supply them to all who may wish to secure a memento of this kind.

About 20 rods from the main gate a house has been built. I put up with the family there during my three days' stay, and took my Christmas dinner not 30 rods from where I took it 30 years ago. It was a regular old Southern dinner, fit to tempt an epicure, while the other dinner - well, perhaps, the less said about it the better. The boys who were there will remember it and appreciate my feelings as I endeavored to eat this dinner and keep back many recollections lest the tears should fall. I was treated very kindly, and met many of the old prison guards who assisted in keeping me in due subjection during my Summer visit among them. I found the old south gate-post still in the ground. I got a piece of it, and made arrangements with my Johnny friends to take it up and keep it until I sent for it. It is in the ground five or six feet, and appears to be sound. It was cut off years ago, and is the only post left in front of the prison.

Christmas afternoon I accompanied some friends to Tyler to witness a sham battle between the North and South; and, true to history, the Yankees came out best. It was a grand sight!

Before leaving, I went back to the old spring and took my last drink of its waters, and, looking over to the hill-side, the old memories came thronging back - memories of love and friendship that was closer than a brother; memories of heroic sacrifice and unselfishness and undying loyalty; of starvation and suffering and death of the many who entered only to recruit the grand army of dead heroes and patriots, toward whose ranks the Grand Army of living are ever hastening. Feeling as if I never wanted to gaze upon it again, I left it realizing that in one respect the experience of 30 years ago and the experience of to-day

are alike, for then as now the song of my heart is 'Home, sweet home.' - A. J. Swanger, 120th Ohio, Shiloh, O."

[Note: The [papers of A. J. Swanger](#) are at the Ohio Historical Society in Columbus, OH.]

There is another reference to this hitching up of the Yanks to pull a plow.

[History of the 77th Illinois, Sept. 2, 1862 - July 10, 1865 by by Lieut W. \[William\] H. Bentley, published in 1883 by E. Hine, printer in Peoria, Ill.](#) Available at archive.org]

He wrote page 298-299: "Scurvy had been making fearful ravages among the men, and it became worse as the spring advanced. The hospital was full to overflowing, and had to be enlarged. There were no sanitary supplies, and very little medicine. Under this state of things, Col. Jamison [*Lieut. Col. J. C. Jamison*] allowed large parties to go out each day, on parole of honor, to gather greens and secure vegetables. Permission was also given to a party from the 77th, one from the 130th Illinois, and one from the 120th Ohio, to fence and cultivate a garden in a field near the stockade. These parties carried rails and fenced about six acres of ground. The Commandant furnished the seed. but they had no team to plow the ground. As a substitute, about a dozen Yankees were hitched to the plow, and thus prepared the ground, independent of horses or mules."

That only lasted as long as it took for the commandant to realize that men were escaping while out in the garden. On **30 April 1865** he issued this order: "Hereafter no Federal prisoners at Camp ford, neither officer nor soldier, will be paroled or allowed to leave the stockade for any purpose whatever, except by authority from this office. Wood parties will be sent out under strong guard." The crackdown also included a requirement for all to be in their shanties at sunset without lights after 8 o'clock and prisoners violating the orders would be shot.

END CHAPTER 22

Research by Susie Holderfield, 2001-2019

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