

Comrades, & Ladies of the Relief Corps. Before leaving
Jefferson I am glad to give you a short paper on my life
in Rebel Prisons. It is impossible to describe the horrors &
sufferings consequent to such a life but I will relate to you
some of my own experiences. In Andersonville & other Southern
sickening & deadly places, where Union soldiers were
confined by the Rebels during the civil war, & left to
eat out a miserable existence or perish from exposure
filthiness & starvation. The company to which I belonged
was engaged in the Battle of the Wilderness which
was fought on the 5 & 6 of May 1864. We had in our
company when the engagement commenced 42. able
bodied men and was fully officered. In two days
our company was reduced to 5 men & one Lieut.
the balance having been killed wounded or taken
prisoners. I was captured about sundown of the
second day of this battle & with others was marched
some two miles & corraled for the night in an open
field. From there the next day we were marched to
Orange Court House. on that march we had Southern
home guards to do duty as guards. They were often
very cruel one case I remember a poor sick prisner
got out of line & sat down by the road side saying
he could go no further but the Rebel bayonet raised
him several times until at last he gave up & said
he could not nor would not go. & the guard pierced
him through with his bayonet. This was my first
experience of hard hearted cruelty. but as we got nearer
the center of the Confederacy we found our guards less
educated & more cruel if such a thing could be.

2 On the Morning of May 8 we were put in cattle
cars. With barley rooms to stand & headed we knew
for some rebel prison but hoping & praying it might
not be Bell Island or Andersonville. For the horrors of these
Prisons were known to every Union soldier.
We passed by Thomas Jeffersons plantations near Char-
lottesville a beautiful place & well cared for. Here the Engine
gave out & we had to go into camp. Not camps like the
ones Uncle Sam furnished for we had no rations &
a more sorrowful looking set of men I had never
seen at that time. The next morning we were
ordered into cars just as we ship cattle all day
we were wondering, where we were going & when
we were to get any rations. In the afternoon we
arrived at Lynchburg & went into ^{camp}. Here we lay 4 days.
& drew our first rations from Jeff Davis Confederacy.
They consisted of a piece of corn Bread 4 in long 3 in wide
& one inch thick This was one days rations & the only
one we had in 4 days. Our next stop was at Danville.
& 460 of us were put into an old filthy Tobacco house,
with only one door. where we were kept for 5 days.
Our rations here were very poor one day $\frac{1}{2}$ pt Mush
The next a pint of cooked rice. our next stop was at
Columbia South Carolina where the Rebels issued us one
half pint of shelled corn for 3 days rations and we rece-
ived no more until the 25th we left Columbia on the
evening of the 22. and went through Augusta & Milled
Georgia a distance of over 200 miles. and landed at
Andersonville. on the afternoon of May 24. and were
put in the prison or stockade. A better definition ^{than} rather
would be Earths Hell. There were 11 of us from the same
Regiment. and we wanted to remain as close together
as we could.

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so we struck out to find a place large enough
for us all to lay down together after a search through the
Prison we could find no place large enough, only by filling
up a sink hole this we did and this remained our home
during our stay there. The stockade at this time contained
nine acres of land and was made out of pine logs,
16 feet long and standing on end, one end being in the ground
6 feet. These logs were set close together and on the outside
of the logs about every eighty feet were placed sentry
Boxes, and in each box was a rebel guard. Inside of the
stockade and about 30 feet from it was what was called
the dead line when a yankee stepped over this line he was
shot at once by the guard. I have seen a number of men
March over that line ^{to be killed} with as much deliberation as you
have come here this evening ~~as if for a purpose to be killed~~ their
sufferings had become more than they could bear.
Through the center of the prison there was a running stream
and swamp. Taking the stream & swamp out of the ²⁰ acres.
there would be perhaps ¹⁵ six acres left upon which Eighteen
thousand yankee Prisoners made their home on May 30th
1864. Forty three years ago next decoration day we drew
one third of a loaf of corn bread. so passed the time until
July 4. when we drew one pint of mush. This with cooked
rice was our common diet on July 11. there were 6 men
hung in the prison they were taken out of the prison
some days previous and tried for murder by 12 yankees
taken from prison as jurors. They heard the evidence
and returned their verdict of guilty and the penalty
death. They were from New York city and were called
the New York raiders. They would kill any one they found
in possession of money or other valuables. and often
for the small sum of twenty five cents

Old warty brought in the 6 doomed men he was
riding the white horse so familiar to us seen every
morning going around the prison with his blood
hounds to find the track of some escaped Yankee and he
said to us that he had brought back the prisoners in as good
condition as they were when he received them
and that they had been convicted by a jury of our own
men and that we should do as we pleased with them
We all shouted hang them. he had not forgotten to bring
along a gallows and 6 Ropes and in less time than
I have been telling it they were all in eternity the only
good act I ever knew warty to do.
and now I must tell you how we got our rations
in the forenoon a ~~loaded~~ ^{very heavily} wagon heavily guarded would
drive into the stockade filled with either Pork or Mush
or cooked rice which was sent out first to detachments
of one thousand then to companies of one hundred
then to squads of twenty and we would in that way
each get his share. when the wagon was empty it was
used as a hearse to remove the Yankees who had died
the night before and been prepared for burial by
removing all their clothing as those who were living needed
clothing worse than the dead. ~~they were then~~ ^{they were then}
thrown into the wagon ^{just} as we would throw
in dead dogs and taken out and put in a long trench
dug for that purpose and the wagon returned with
another load of grub. This was repeated from day
to day showing mans inhumanity to man.
~~at this time~~ ^{in the} there were sixty deaths per day and in August
there were one hundred per day during my stay the
least number of deaths per day was 50 and the greatest
number one hundred & fifty;

on the 10. day of september some of us were taken
out with great Expectations of being exchanged and
were told that they would take us to Charleston for Exchange
but on the 14. we were unloaded. at Florence S. C. this being
fifty miles from Charleston. and guarded in an open
field until the Darkies of that country built a stockade
when we left Andersonville we drew one Pound for each
and we drew no more rations until the 18. and some
really died of starvation. we had lived 7. days on
what we got at Andersonville for 3 days rations.
we then drew one quart of cooked rice. what a change
in the countenance of all of us. Oct 2, we were moved
into the new stockade. and I think all the Boys and
old men of south carolina with their Blood hounds
were there to guard us poor yankees who could hardly
walk let alone run. so the time passed until Nov.
when the rebels undertook to make what we called
galvanized rebel soldiers of us to explain these
galvanized rebel soldiers were yankees whom the rebels
got to take the oath of allegiance to the southern confederacy
and offered as inducement that we would have
plenty to eat and clothing to wear and they got a good
many poor starved and almost naked yankees to
take the oath in hopes of living to see gods country
as they called their northern home. one incident will
relate too German Boys who stayed near us and were
reduced to poverty as well as being mere skeletons
were asked to take the oath. one of them said to me
that he believed he would do it in hopes of saving
his life and he did the other said the rebels may starve
and freeze me but they never can make me take
an oath to support their Hellish confederacy
that might he freeze to death.

and by the way the following will show
the Political feeling of the prisoners. we were allowed
to vote for president on the 8. day of Nov. 1864.
and the Rebs were sure that we would vote for
Mcblellan. so they gave us more privileges than common
we used Beans as ballots. red beans represented
Abraham Lincoln. and white beans. Mcblellan. and
when the Beans were counted old Abe had over
twelve thousand. and Mcblellan. six hundred & forty.
we had in prison card playing, Preaching,
singing, Prayer Meetings, coursing ^{on Dec 11. P} stealing, dying,
and the dead always with us. at last we were
taken to Charleston & exchanged and this was the happiest
day I had ever seen up to that time I have seen
men much stranger & was so excited that they cheered
on until they passed into eternity simply overjoyed
by being under the old stars and stripes once more.
on Jan 14-1865; I arrived at my Father's home
in Ohio. Comrad. It is utterly impossible for
any man however well Educated to either write
or describe the horrors. of Andersonville so that you
can understand them as they really were.