

Chapter 1 : The Horrors of Andersonville Rebel Prison

The horrors of Andersonville Prison rival anything seen at the Nazi death camps. But this happened here in America, at the hands of Americans. When they came to Wirz with the offer, he refused them.

But this happened here in America, at the hands of Americans. When they came to Wirz with the offer, he refused them. He was not a man to play games. He had already told them he knew nothing that would implicate President Jefferson Davis in the calamity that was Andersonville, but they kept pressing him, thinking he would crack, thinking he would bear false witness in order to save his own skin. Wirz was hanged on November 10th, The crowd of cheered at first but grew somber as the grisly ordeal played out, the clock ticking. It was like Andersonville itself, needless suffering that seemed to drag on and on. At last his body shuddered and went limp. Here, in and , 45, Union soldiers were imprisoned in deplorable conditions to rival anything seen in the Nazi extermination camps. In fifteen months 13, died of disease, starvation, and exposure. They were buried in mass graves. Their commandant was Captain Henry Wirz. The foot stockade wall was the extent of the construction at Andersonville. Barracks were never built. Prisoners remained penned up like cattle. The foot tall stockade wall was meant to be a temporary holding pen while officials built wooden barracks for the prisoners transferred here from other POW sites across the south, but the reason for the transfer was the same reason the barracks never got built. By the Confederacy was collapsing, Union troops were closing in. To prevent their liberation, prisoners were hastily transferred here to the deepest part of the deep south while every available Confederate soldier was sent north to confront the enemy. Little remained in the way of men and material to build barracks for enemy prisoners. So the prisoners remained penned up like cattle, living in canvas tents, at the mercy of the elements and suffering the conditions. Up Against the Deadline This stunning image from shows the overcrowding. This was still early. A year later even more prisoners had arrived and most were starving. The only source of water at Andersonville was a torpid stretch of Sweetwater Creek that ran through the prison yard. From this the prisoners took their drinking water and deposited their waste. Prisoners were forced to bathe in the foul sink. Many died of dysentery. As the war dragged on, more and more prisoners arrived until, by the end of June , the prison held 26, men crowded together in an area designed to hold 10, At its peak the prison housed 33, men, making it the fifth largest city in the Confederacy. They were virtually on top of one another. The close quarters and desperate conditions led to theft and violence. Gangs formed, chief among them the Andersonville Raiders, a marauding group who attacked their fellow prisoners with clubs and knives to steal their food and clothing. Here the grave diggers pause to be photographed. Any prisoner caught stepping across the deadline was shot from one of the guard towers lining the wall. But the worst hardship imposed on prisoners at Andersonville was the lack of food. Many starved to death. When finally liberated, the survivors wore the ghostly, emaciated looks of holocaust survivors. These were Americans brutally mistreated by other Americans, chief among them Henry Wirz. He was charged with conspiring to impair the lives of Union soldiers, a nice way of saying that he was accused of killing the prisoners in his charge. He vehemently rejected the charge, and not without justification. Captain Henry Wirz was one of only two people accused and convicted of war crimes in the Civil War. Rightly or wrongly, he was held responsible for the debacle at Andersonville. Part of the Union war strategy in the latter months of the conflict was to starve the Confederacy into submission. This meant Union armies destroyed farms and factories, ripped up railroads, blockaded ports, and blew up bridges in an effort to prevent the movement of food and medicine to confederate troops. The South itself was slowly starving to death, so it is not surprising that the last people on the long list of those waiting to be fed were Union prisoners of war. The only hope for those suffering at Andersonville was a prisoner exchange, a not uncommon occurrence in the early years of the war, but something increasingly rare as the North gained the upper hand. The war of attrition being prosecuted by the North was designed to deplete the enemy of manpower. So they were not inclined to give any prisoners back. His request was denied. The Endless Procession of Victims This image was taken only moments after Wirz dropped through the gallows door. His death was as gruesome and sobering as the events that had brought it about. It heard the testimony of former inmates, officers and townspeople. Wirz was

depicted as a cruel martinet, threatening to personally shoot any prisoner who tried to escape, quick to clamp any prisoners who displeased him into balls and chains. Having suffered a long war brought on by Southern intransigence and unwillingness to compromise, the people of the North were looking for revenge and Wirz was a handy target. Still, he might have escaped the gallows if not for the testimony of one man, a mysterious individual named Felix de la Baume, who claimed to be a direct descendent of the Marquis de Lafayette, a hero of the Revolutionary War, a true American. An aerial illustration of Andersonville prison in So strong was the public outcry against the conditions there, someone had to pay. A few weeks later the tribunal returned its verdict and Wirz was condemned. The night before his execution, federal officials came to him in secret and made their offer. They would stay the execution if Wirz would agree to implicate Jefferson Davis in the horrors of the camp. Wearying, perhaps, of the long procession of victims, Wirz refused. After his death it emerged that Felix de la Baume was a fraud. His testimony had been cooked up to rouse Northern passions. Wirz had become a victim of Andersonville as well. Today, the strong belief that Wirz had been made a scapegoat for the atrocities at Andersonville has led some in the region to erect a memorial in his honor. Each year they march there, asking the government for a congressional pardon for Wirz. Nearly years later, the pardon has still not been granted. Site of Andersonville prison today. This site also includes the National Prisoner of War Museum, a memorial to all American prisoners of war. A Sobering Experience In general, prisoners of war are victims of the cruelest fate. For if their country enjoys success, their own suffering will almost certainly increase. The closer they get to liberation, the closer they get to extermination. The thing most to be hoped for is often the thing most to be feared. Using art, photography and video, the museum highlights the grim experiences of prisoners of war throughout American history. It is a sobering experience. Few experiences are as grindingly depressing as that of being a prisoner of war. The self-contempt that comes with the question of why you survived while others perished is amplified by the POW experience. Humiliation, cruelty and dehumanization are common. The act of survival becomes less a matter of self-preservation than an act of defiance against those who would be relieved by your demise. Having lived, you become dead. The cemetery at Andersonville. Fortunately, most of the victims were identified, their names etched on the tombstones. As I stood there, looking out at the 13, gravestones that flowed out and over the surrounding countryside, I felt a tug in my heart for the thousands who had died, not in the glory of the fight but in the miseries of slow death, and the soul killing experience of being a prisoner of war. When we honor our war heroes with shiny medals and brass bands, we would do well to remember the bleak underside of that martial display, the tens of thousands gutted and discarded by the experience of having been prisoners, the long procession of victims in the dark camps of war.

Chapter 2 : Andersonville by Edward M. Erdelac

The Confederate prison known as Andersonville existed for only the last fourteen months of the Civil War - but its well-documented legacy of horror has lived on in the diaries of its prisoners and the transcripts of the trial of its commandant.

Ransom The prison, which opened in February , [5] originally covered about In June , it was enlarged to There were two entrances on the west side of the stockade, known as "north entrance" and "south entrance". Kellogg, sergeant major in the 16th Regiment Connecticut Volunteers , described his entry as a prisoner into the prison camp, May 2, As we entered the place, a spectacle met our eyes that almost froze our blood with horror, and made our hearts fail within us. Before us were forms that had once been active and erect;â€”stalwart men, now nothing but mere walking skeletons, covered with filth and vermin. Many of our men, in the heat and intensity of their feeling, exclaimed with earnestness. In the center of the whole was a swamp, occupying about three or four acres of the narrowed limits, and a part of this marshy place had been used by the prisoners as a sink, and excrement covered the ground, the scent arising from which was suffocating. The ground allotted to our ninety was near the edge of this plague-spot, and how we were to live through the warm summer weather in the midst of such fearful surroundings, was more than we cared to think of just then. Chadwick and his regimental mates were taken to the Andersonville Prison, arriving on April 30, Ransom of his time as a prisoner at Andersonville. The Dead Line[edit] At Andersonville, a light fence known as "the dead line" was erected approximately 19 feet 5. Health problems[edit] Andersonville prisoners and tents, southwest view showing the dead-line, August 17, At this stage of the war, Andersonville Prison was frequently undersupplied with food. By , not only civilians living within the Confederacy but also the soldiers of the Confederate Army itself were struggling to obtain sufficient quantities of food. The shortage of fare was suffered by prisoners and Confederate personnel alike within the fort, but the prisoners received less than the guards, who unlike their captives did not become severely emaciated or suffer from scurvy a consequence of vitamin C deficiency due to a lack of fresh fruits and vegetables in their diet. Even when sufficient quantities of supplies were available, they were of poor quality and inadequately prepared. There were no new outfits given to prisoners, whose own clothing was often falling to pieces. In some cases, garments were taken from the dead. John McElroy, a prisoner at Andersonville, recalled "Before one was fairly cold his clothes would be appropriated and divided, and I have seen many sharp fights between contesting claimants. This, along with the lack of utensils, made it almost impossible for the prisoners to cook the meagre food rations they received, which consisted of poorly milled cornflour. During the summer of , Union prisoners suffered greatly from hunger, exposure and disease. Within seven months, about a third had died from dysentery and scurvy; they were buried in mass graves, the standard practice for Confederate prison authorities at Andersonville. In , the Confederate Surgeon General asked Joseph Jones, an expert on infectious disease, to investigate the high mortality rate at the camp. He concluded that it was due to "scorbutic dysentery" bloody diarrhea caused by vitamin C deficiency. In , the historian Drisdelle said that hookworm disease, a condition not recognized or known during the Civil War, was the major cause of much of the fatalities amongst the prisoners. Part of the creek was used as a sink, and the men were forced to wash themselves in the creek. Survival and social networks[edit] At the time of the Civil War, the concept of a prisoner of war camp was still new. It was as late as when President Lincoln demanded a code of conduct be instituted to guarantee prisoners of war the entitlement to food and medical treatment and to protect them from enslavement, torture, and murder. Andersonville did not provide its occupants with these guarantees; therefore, the prisoners at Andersonville, without any sort of law enforcement or protections, functioned more closely to a primitive society than a civil one. A prisoner with friends inside Andersonville was more likely to survive than a lonesome prisoner. Social networks provided prisoners with food, clothes, shelter, moral support, trading opportunities, and protection against other prisoners. One study found that a prisoner having a strong social network within Andersonville "had a statistically significant positive effect on survival probabilities, and that the closer the ties between friends as measured by such identifiers as ethnicity, kinship,

and the same hometown, the bigger the effect. A group of prisoners, calling themselves the Andersonville Raiders , attacked their fellow inmates to steal food, jewelry, money and clothing. They were armed mostly with clubs and killed to get what they wanted. Another group rose up, organized by Peter "Big Pete" Aubrey, to stop the larceny , calling themselves "Regulators". This jury, upon finding the Raiders guilty, set punishment that included running the gauntlet , being sent to the stocks , ball and chain , and in six cases, hanging. That request was denied. The Union soldiers, who had sworn to do so, returned to report this to their comrades. In the autumn of , after the capture of Atlanta , all the prisoners who were well enough to be moved were sent to Millen, Georgia , and Florence, South Carolina. At Millen, better arrangements prevailed. After General William Tecumseh Sherman began his march to the sea , the prisoners were returned to Andersonville. During the war, 45, prisoners were received at Andersonville prison; of these nearly 13, died.

Chapter 3 : The Dark Camps of War: Revisiting the Horrors of Andersonville | My American Odyssey

The Confederate prison known as Andersonville existed for only the last fourteen months of the Civil War—but its well-documented legacy of horror has lived on in the diaries of its prisoners and the transcripts of the trial of its commandant. The diaries describe appalling conditions in which.

Because so much occurred there, it certainly filled the book with a different side of the Civil War, one in which men taken prisoner were subjected to more atrocities than they might have been subjected to if they had never been captured by Confederates. Many men were taken from two other prisons to the newly constructed Andersonville. This camp quickly devolved, under the direction of Wirz, into a disease-infested mess where men were routinely starving, suffering from lice, scurvy and gangrene, and constantly in fear of being shot at if they went outside the bounds. Men tried to escape by digging tunnels, but were usually caught by the next day with dogs. It is a little too text heavy for our younger readers today. The book would be a great addition to a Civil War unit, however, even if only using some of the primary sources quoted in the book. The story of Andersonville is a sad, sad story. The book illustrates the terrible conditions found in the prison: There is no doubt that they were treated poorly. The prison was designed to house 10, Yankee prisoners, but ended up housing 32, during August of That figure alone is an indication of the impossibility of meeting the needs of so many men. After the war ended, the North wanted to blame someone. The one singled out for blame was Henry Wirz, who was put in charge of the prison in Although he pleaded for help for the prisoners many times, there was no help provided. Circumstances of the war in the South left little in the way of help to provide, so Wirz paid the price by being convicted and hanged. Again, a sad, sad story that will enlighten students on this period of history. Many know of the battles that took place, but one rarely hears of the the POW prisons during this difficult and chaotic period in history. Gourley does a fantastic job of recreating Andersonville and what the conditions were like at the prison. She has taken the time to research the various accounts from officers, prisoners, doctors, and townfolk of th Gourley has compiled the facts and seperated them from the fiction in this wonderful book about the horrors of prison camps during the Civil War. What separates this non-fiction book about Andersonville from others, is that she ask various questions regarding the outcome.

Chapter 4 : Los Angeles Times - We are currently unavailable in your region

Her latest work, The Horrors of Andersonville: Life and Death Inside a Civil War Prison, will appeal not only to youth, but also to any Civil War buff looking for a good overview of the infamous Confederate-operated prison camp at Andersonville, Georgia.

It was a horrific Confederate prisoner of war camp during the last months of the American Civil War. There were 45, Union prisoners held at the camp while it was open; almost 13, never made it out. First Impressions The prison opened in the early months of At first, it was on an about acre plot of land, surrounded by foot-tall barriers. After several months, the prison was enlarged to almost 27 acres. In the center was a few acres of swamp, and the marsh was used by prisoners as a toilet. However, the rising fumes off the marsh were suspected of spreading diseases from the human waste left there. Almost immediately the prison began to develop a reputation for its grotesque mistreatment. Around the entirety of the camp, there was a lightweight fence that nearly any prisoner could have climbed over, about 19 feet away from the actual fence that kept prisoners inside. It was an effective way of keeping prisoners from escaping. A drawing of Andersonville prison, hardly showing the horrors within. Any who did escape were typically easily recaptured. The Union had reports of 32 escapees from Andersonville, while the Confederacy had reports of escapees, including those who were recaptured, meaning a very small number actually succeeded in their efforts. However, some escapees that were not recaptured and that did not make it back to the Union forces, either died on their journey or quietly reentered civilian life without notifying the government. The guards at the prison camp received small rations, but the prisoners received hardly anything, causing widespread emaciation and scurvy. The interior of Andersonville, showing both the inner fencing and the outer fencing, and the dead line in between. Scurvy and diarrhea were actually the two main causes of death within the camp along with hookworm disease , with the latter being caused by the bacteria spread from the marsh mentioned above, and the necessity to drink from the same bodies of water where men were relieving themselves. When food was given to the prisoners, it was oftentimes not pre-prepared, and the prisoners had no real way to cook the food. Though there was wood in abundance, they were not allowed to build fires, and were not given any utensils or cookware. As one would assume, this made cooking anything edible with the foodstuffs they were given, such as flour, nearly impossible. There was one group in particular called the Andersonville Raiders, who would plan attacks against their fellow prisoners. They would then steal whatever it was that they wanted, from personal items to clothing to whatever meager food was available. They would use clubs and brute force in these attacks. In response to this gang, another was created, calling themselves the Regulators. Then, they would put the Raiders on trial in a makeshift courtroom, with one Regulator acting as judge and the jury made up of random and unbiased prisoners pulled from whatever group of new soldiers had just arrived. The Regulators would set their own punishments, which were by no means gentle. They gave many sentences of the stocks or the ball and chain, and even sentenced a handful to death by hanging. Requested Release Even the Confederacy realized at one point that the prison was far too overcrowded. The head, Captain Wirz, sent five of the prisoners to Union forces, asking for a prisoner exchange. However, the request was denied. Bravely, the Union soldiers who had been sent to ask for the exchange, returned to imprisonment. The Confederacy even sent some of the latest prisoners who were in good condition to port towns, where they could be retrieved. However, once General Sherman started marching through Georgia, the prisoners were returned to Andersonville. Atwater was a young man charged with the task of recording the deaths that occurred at the prison. He had something else up his sleeve, though. He started making his own list among the papers, and, when released, the list was published by the New York Tribune, as Atwater wanted to prove that the Confederacy was trying to ensure that Union prisoners would at least be unable to fight if they actually survived their stint in the camp. Dorence Atwater, a survivor of the Andersonville prison camp. Burch was also a recorder of sorts, and he kept a diary of his time at the prison. He was the longest-held Union prisoner of the entire war, surviving days and being transferred between several prisons. After the War After the end of the war, the prison was liberated. The head commander, Henry Wirz, received a military trial for war crimes.

DOWNLOAD PDF THE HORRORS OF ANDERSONVILLE

He was testified against by many former prisoners, though many did lie about his actions, as there were several conflicting stories that would have required Wirz to be in two places at once. One of the most damning pieces of evidence, however, was a statement by a confederate surgeon, who toured the camp and caught influenza and vomited twice while there. When stating his case, Wirz said that he had attempted to get more food for the prisoners, but he was sentenced to death by hanging.

Chapter 5 : Andersonville National Historic Site - Wikipedia

The Confederate prison known as Andersonville existed for only the last fourteen months of the Civil War—but its well-documented legacy of horror has lived on in the diaries of its prisoners and the transcripts of the trial of its commandant.

Chapter 6 : Andersonville National Historic Site (U.S. National Park Service)

Tells the story of Andersonville, a Civil War prison camp in Georgia where thousands of Union prisoners died in the last fourteen months of the war, drawing from a variety of documents to consider whether the prison's commandant, Captain Henry Wirz, was justifiably convicted and hanged.

Chapter 7 : Andersonville, The Notorious Confederate PoW Camp In The Civil War

The Horrors Of Andersonville: Life And Death Inside A Civil War Prison (Exceptional Social Studies Titles For Upper Grades) Library Download Book (PDF and DOC) The Horrors Of Andersonville: Life And Death Inside A Civil.

Chapter 8 : Andersonville Prison, February - April

Very much has been written and much more embodied in the partial reports and ex parte investigations of the so-called "Horrors of Andersonville" and the "inhuman treatment" of the prisoners of the Federal armies by the prison officials, and the agents of the Confederate States War Department.

Chapter 9 : The horrors of Andersonville : life and death inside a civil war prison (Book,) [calendrierdelasci

The Confederate prison known as Andersonville existed for only the last fourteen months of the Civil War—but its well-documented legacy of horror has lived on in the diaries of its prisoners and the transcripts of the trial of its commandant.