

Southern Prisons (Andersonville) Series II, Vol III, p. 986

Headquarters Post and U.S. Military Prisons, Richmond, October 14, 1864

General Braxton Bragg, commanding armies of the Confederate States;

General: In obedience to your wishes expressed in conversation this morning I have the honor to give you the following information concerning the military prisons under my charge. I inclose a copy of the order putting me in command, that you may see the extent of my authority?

In Richmond there are at present but a few hundred prisoners of war, the captures of the last four or five days and some few awaiting exchange by direction of Commissioner Ould.

At Lynchburg there is a receiving and forwarding depot for Early's army and West Virginia.

At Danville there are 2,400

At Salisbury, 3,300; 7,500 of these are prisoners of war sent there last week from this place. The balance are soldiers undergoing sentence of court-martial, citizens, negroes etc.

Columbia, S.C.---there are 298 federal officers confined in the Richmond Jail at this place, and in a camp about five miles from the city are 1,300 other officers recently sent from Charleston by Maj. Gen. Sam Jones without my knowledge or consent, and placed by him in charge of Capt. E.A. Semple, whom I had sent there for another purpose, viz to superintend the construction of a very large prison, which I am directed by the Secretary of War to have built. Captain Semple represents that these officers were thrown suddenly on his hands, giving him no time for preparation, and that he is in want of almost everything necessary for their accommodation.

Florence, S.C.---I have heard unofficially that there is a large number of prisoners at this place, but they have never been reported to me

I do not know by whose order they were sent or anything about them.

I suppose they are some of the prisoners recently confined at Andersonville, Ga. and are sent to

Florence by Gen. Winder. I have sent a copy of the inclosed order to the officer in charge with instructions to report at once.

At Charleston there have been confined about 1,600 prisoners, mostly officers, 1,300 of them are now at Columbia, as above mentioned. The balance were naval and marine prisoners who have been very recently exchanged. I have never been able to get any reports from this place, though the blank forms, accompanied by written orders and instructions were delivered by one of my staff officers in person when I first took command. A written explanation of his non-compliance with the order has been demanded of the prison commandant, but that too is unanswered. There have been several changes made in prison commandants there within the last two months, which may account for it and I do not know who is the officer in charge there now, if there is any at all since General Jones broke up my establishment, but I have recently heard unofficially that some of General Winder's prisoners are there also.

.. W.M. Gardner, brigadier-general

Prisoners: Johnson's Island

[P 1021]

War of Rebellion, Series VI, Vol. VII

Johnson's Island, Ohio, October 22, 1864

Col. Charles W. Hill, commanding forces, Johnson's Island, Ohio

Colonel: We the undersigned, chiefs of messes, at the urgent request of the prisoners, would respectfully request you to increase the ration now issued to us.

It is well known fact that the ration now issued to us is not sufficiently large for men in good health. The majority of the prisoners have been compelled to subsist on two meals per day, but the present issue is not sufficient to make two meals which will satisfy for twenty-four hours.

The ration issued to us last winter, which as larger than the one now given, together with what we were permitted to receive ~~and~~ from friends and purchase from the sutler, was ample, but it must be apparent to you that the recent order of Colonel Hoffman, cutting off both express and sutler and a portion of the ration, leaves the present issue an insufficiency.

We will, in conclusion, respectfully urge you to increase our ration, by an issue of anything eatable that you may see fit and which will make what is now given sufficient to satisfy our hunger.

Your most etc.

John A. Fite

Colonel Seventh Tennessee Infantry Chief of First Division

J. F. Kent, second lieutenant, 16th Louisiana Infy, chief of second division

B. F. Pearce, Block 8, Mess 2, and thirty one others.

(Supplies in prisoner's rooms: Wash basins, spittons, tin cups, pails, tubs, washboards, mops, blacking and brushes, leather, pegs, etc. for repairing shoes, buttons and paper collars.

Johnson's Island (denied--likened to Andersonville)

War of Rebellion, Series II, Vol VII, p 1156

Wytheville, Nov. 22, 1864

Col. R.H. Chilton, assistant adjutant and inspector general, Richmond

Colonel: I am surprised to see that Capt. Wirz, commanding prison at Andersonville, Ga. in his report of the 27th of September makes me responsible for the following: "Major Hall remarked that it, the prison at Andersonville, was about on a par with the Federal prison at Johnson's Island." I did not express any such opinion nor did I ever use any language, which the utmost ingenuity, could permit into such a misrepresentation of my conviction.....

.....W. Carvel Hall

Major and assistant adjutant general.

[II, VII p.1212]

Johnson's Island:

December 11, 1864

The raid upon the tables in the mess halls is receiving proper attention from the superintendent of the prison. I concur in the purpose of allowing to the prisoners the full prison ration. If this is impracticable I think they should be allowed to purchase potatoes and onions from the prison sutler.

For much of the time during the 8th, 9th, 11th and 12th the weather has been cold and severe, ~~an~~ almost without precedent for this ~~an~~ time of the year, and yet the prisoners have been pretty comfortable except in their mess halls; they are very cold. Respectfully referred to the commissary General of Prisoners Chas. W. Hill, Colonel 128th Ohio Volunteer Infantry Commanding Post.

[II, VII, p. 1231]

Prisoners: Libby: Situation retaliation, Johnson's Island

Cell in Libby Prison, Richmond, Va, December 16, 1864

Hon Edwin M. Stanton, secretary of war

Sir: I am confined in a cell under Libby Prison in retaliation for the confinement in irons of four privates of the Southern Armies in Johnson's Island.

I am informed by C.S. authorities that my treatment will be in accordance with that said privates receive, and that when they are released and sent South I shall be sent North. The following copy of a document I have received will give you all the official information on the subject:

Office C.S. Military Prisons, Richmond, Va. December 12, 1864

Captain Bliss, Lieutenants Pavey, Towle and Markbreit:

Gentlemen: This is to inform you that you are held in close confinement in retaliation for the treatment received by Privates George P. Simms, W.S. Burgess, John Matt and Thomas M. Campbell. These men are now held in close confinement and irons by the order of your Government at Johnson's Island. T.P. Turner, major commanding.
P.S. You can inform your government and friends T.P.T.

My health is already impaired by wounds and long confinement, so that I am ill prepared to endure the hardships of my present dismal life. With the hope that you will give this your personal attention and speedily restore me to the protection of the flag under which I have faithfully served for three years.

George N. Bliss

Captain, Troop C, First Rhode Island
Cavalry.

Officer Commissary General of Prisoners, Washington, D.C. January
21, 1865

Respectfully returned to the Secretary of War: All prisoners held
22022-22000

in close confinement or in irons for prisoners held in like manner have been ordered to be released and sent to Lieutenant-Colonel Mulford for exchange, by direction of the Secretary of War

H.W. Wessells

Brig. Gen U.S. Vols Inspector and Com. Gen of Prisoners.

Johnson's Island

(Total of Prisoners by late 1864

War of Rebellion, Series II, Vol. VII

Hdqrs. U.S. Forces, Johnson's Island and Sandusky

Johnson's Island, Ohio, December 17, 1864

Brig. Gen. H.W. Wessells

Inspector and Com. Gen of Prisoners, Washington D.C.

General: In reply to your communication of the 10th instant I have the honor to report that the result of a careful examination of the official records on file in the office of the superintendent of prison rolls and correspondence shows that up to the present date 7,377 prisoners of war have been received at this depot, among whom 198 deaths have occurred, the prevailing diseases being pneumonia, typhoid and camp fevers, and chronic dysentery, about 90 per cent of the whole number of deaths being attributed to these causes, and in the majority of cases the disease had been contracted before the imprisonment.

Very respectfully etc.

Chas. W. Hill, colonel, commanding.

[II VII, p. 1241]

Johnson's Island: Prisoner killed

Johnson's Island, Ohio, December 18, 1864

Col. C.W. Hill, 128th Ohio Vol. Inftry Comdg. U.S. Force,
Johnson's Island and Sandusky.

..., remarks Whole number of prisoners 2,885; number in hospital
54; number deaths since last report 4; one of which number was killed
by the guard in an attempt to escape

Very etc. F.A. Scovill

Lieut. Col. 128th Ohio Vol. Infantry and Inspecting Officer
(Inforcement)

The investigations which I was making in person and by the aid of
the acting assistant inspector-general at this post, for whose report
as to the condition of the prison and prisoners I was waiting,
and the incidents of the outbreak which resulted in the killing of
Lieut. John B. Bowles, the prisoner mentioned by the superintendent
of the prison as having been killed by the guard with several other
causes of unavoidable interruption of the usual routine, have
unexpectedly delayed the intended comments upon and forwarding
of this report... I shall have to take still further time to make
my report upon the outbreak in the prison on the 13th instant.
etc. Chas. W. Hill, Colonel 128th Ohio Volunteer Infantry,
Commanding Post.

December 19, 1864 (War Dept)

Col. Charles W. Hill, 128th Ohio Volunteers Johnson's Island, Sandusky,
Ohio: The President assigns you to the command of Johnson's Island,
although you may be junior as colonel to Wisewell. Acknowledge
receipt. E.D. Townsend, assistant adjutant-general.

Ship Island Situation

War of Rebellion, Series II, Vol VII p 1246

Headquarters Ship Island, December 19, 1864

Brig. Gen. H.W. Wessells, , Commissary-General of Prisoners

Sir: I have the honor to report the shooting of Private J.C. Dunelin, of Lockhart's battalion, prisoner of war at this post, by a sentinel, Private George Rice, Company K. Seventy fourth U.S. Colored Troops on the 15th of December, 1864. A thorough and immediate investigation was ordered as soon as the case was reported to these headquarters.

The cooks for the prisoners of war have repeatedly complained about being unable to attend to their duties if not protected from the annoyance of other prisoners of war, who crowded about the cook-houses in violation of existing orders.

On the 15th day of December, 1864, Private J.C. Dunelin, aforesaid, being one of a party who persisted in cooking some victuals for himself at the cook's stove in spite of repeated warnings from the sentinel whose duty was to prevent it, the corporal of the guard Robert Perkins of Company K, Seventy-fourth U.S. Colored Troops, was called and for the time caused the annoying parties to leave the stove; but they soon returned, and sentinel Private George Rice left his post and told him he would "waste no more time in telling them to leave," and returned to his post, from where he again ordered them to leave, but Private J.C. Dunelin (cq Dunclin) of Lockhart's battalion obstinately persisted to disobey, when Private George Rice of Company K. Raised his gun and shot him dead. As much as I regret the occurrence of this affair, I can attach no blame to Private George Rice, who only carried out the orders of his superiors in not allowing any resistance to the performance of his duties. George Rice, of Company K, Seventy-fourth U.S. Colored Troops, is a trustworthy soldier and the

effect on the surviving undisciplined crew

Very Respectfully

Ernest W. Holmstedt

Colonel, Commanding Post

Mosby: Situation: Negroes

[II]

Series XII, Vol VII

Confederate States of America War Department,
Richmond, Va, December 11 1864

S.T. Dicknson, present:

Sir: I have received your note of this date inquiring if there is a law granting to the officers and enlisted men of Mosby's command 25 per centum on the value of slaves captured by them from the enemy. In reply you are informed that there is no law authorizing such a charge, nor any other charge, except such awards as may be given by the laws of the States or the capture of runaway slaves.

Respectfully

James A. Seddon,
Secretary of War

[II, VII, p. 1257]

U.S. Christian Commission, Central Office
11 Bank Street, Philadelphia, December 21, 1864

George W. Stuart, chairman U.S. Christian Commission.

Letter to Col S.D. Townsend, "Assistant Adjutant-General," Washington
D.C.

Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your favor of
the 7th of December in answer to the request of the U.S. Christian
Commission to send their delegates with stores and publications to our
soldiers in Southern prisons. Allow me to thank you for the favor
with which that request has been entertained and for the kind terms
in which you reply.

Also I would submit the inclosed form of a letter which it is
proposed to send (not yet forwarded) to Jefferson Davis
containing the terms of our proposition and our approval.

Form of letter:

Sir: The U.S. Christian Commission is very desirous of extending
its benefits to our prisoners in Southern prisons. The commission is
probably known to you by reports of relief given to your own wounded
in our hands on many battle fields and prisoners in many prisons. It is
a voluntary agency--Christian, not political; evangelical, not denominational
--and sends earnest Christian men as delegates to minister in person to
the spiritual and physical relief and benefit of the army and navy,
and furnishes stores and good reading matter for distribution by its
delegates.

The U.S. authorities at our earnest request have consented to permit
us to send a suitable number of unexceptionable Christian men as
delegates with stores and publications, to the various Southern

military prisons. They also allow us to assure you that if you will assent to our proposition it will be reciprocated fully, if you desire it, by permission for a like number of ~~xxxxx~~ unexceptionable Christian men from the South to come North and minister to your soldiers in the U.S. military prisons.

We propose therefore to send the gentlemen named below to be assigned with your approbation to duty severally where they may render greatest service amongst the various Southern military prisons, with the assurance on their part and ours that they will confine themselves sacredly to their appropriate and legitimate work among the prisoners. And we now urgently request your assent to this our proposition.

Headquarters District of the Gulf,
Mobile, Ala. December 22, 1864

General G. Granger:

General: I have the honor to inform you that I am ready to transfer the 1,000 bales of cotton which, by agreement between our respective Governments is to be sold for the benefit of the prisoners of war of the Confederate States held by the United States.

Please give such instruction to the commander of the fleet lying off the obstructions at Mobile as will insure the prompt and safe return of the steamer which will transmit the cotton to the ship in the lower bay, which is to take it to New York.

I have to request that the usual courtesies of a flag of truce be extended to the officer bearing this communication.

I am, etc.

Dabney H. Maury,
Major General, Commanding.

Johnson's Island

Headquarters Supt. of Prison, Johnson's Island, Ohio, Dec. 25, 1864
Col. Charles W. Hill, 128th Ohio Vol. Infy., Comdg. U.S. Forces,
Johnson's Island and Sandusky

Sir: I have the honor to submit the following inspection report of the
~~xxx~~ condition of the prisoners of war at this station for the week
ending December 25, 1864.

No dust--good. Cleanliness, good. Clothing, comfortable, more
blankets are required. Bedding, poor, more straw required. State of
quarters, ten blocks clean and two not clean. State of mess houses,
Nos. 1, 2 and 4, fair: 3 dirty. State of kitchen, not clean. More
stoves required. ~~Six~~ Good quantity of , prisoner's rations. Water-
lake. Pinks, fair. Police of grounds, fair. The weather is unfavorable
for policing. Drainage, good. Police of hospital, good. Attendance of
sick, good. Hospital diet, good. General health of prisoner's good.
Vigilance of guard, good.

Remarks and suggestions- Whole number of prisoners, 3,204; number
in hospital, 47; number of deaths since last report, 2: Capt.

Robert McKibben, Thirty-first Georgia Infantry, could not be
found at roll-call this morning and is supposed to have escaped. Yours
etc. Thos. H. Linnell,

Major 128th Ohio Volunteer Infantry and Inspection Officer.

Johnson's Island: Battle prisoners received

Office Commissary-General of Prisoners, ~~Wm~~ Nashville, Tenn.,
December 27, 1864

Hon E.M. Stanton, secretary of war, Washington D.C.

Sir: I have the honor to ~~xx~~ report that the number of prisoners captured by the army of General Thomas in the recent battles in front of this city, including the battle of Franklin, amounts to something over 8,000. Of these, 439 officers have been sent to Johnson's Island and 3,651 enlisted men to Camp Douglas.

There are now ready for shipment to Camp Chase 19 officers and 2,400 enlisted men, who will be forwarded on Friday and Saturday next, by which time the railroad bridge near Sonora which was burned by guerrillas on the 24th instant will be repaired...

W. Hoffman,

Commissary-General of Prisoners West of the Miss.

[p. 1291]

Johnson's Island

War of Rebellion, Series II, Vol VII.

Washington, D.C. December 28, 1864

Col. C.W. Hill, commanding, Johnson's Island near Sandusky City:

Colonel:

By direction of the Secretary of War all rebel generals held as prisoners of war at Johnson's Island will ~~maxmax~~ be at once transferred to Fort Warren, Boston Harbor.

A discreet officer furnished with a guard sufficient to prevent the possibility of escape, and with written instructions will be charged with the execution of this order. Report by letter your action in this matter.

Very respectfully etc.

H.W. Wessells

Brig. Gen. U.S. Vols. Inspector and Com. Gen of Prisoners.

p. 1298

Special Orders 49 Office Com. General of Prisoners, Washington, D.C., December 30, 1864

X. By authority of the Secretary of War all rebel officers now confined at Johnson's Island ~~who~~ who were captured at Helena, Ark. July 4, 1863 by the forces of Major-General Steele in the Department of Arkansas prior to July 28, 1864, and all officers captured at Fort Butler, Donaldsonville, La. in June, 1863, will be transferred under charge of proper ~~xxx~~ officers and guard to New Orleans via Cairo or Saint Louis, as may be expedient, to be delivered for exchange to Major-General Candy, commanding military division of West Mississippi, or to such officer as he may designate to receive them.

None who desire to take the oath of allegiance will be sent. Duplicate parole rolls will accompany the prisoners and an ordinary roll will be forwarded to this office. A roll of those, if any, who desire to take the oath of allegiance, will also be forwarded to this office.

Previous instructions from this office with regard to the character of transportation to be furnished will be observed.

Col. C. T. Hill, commanding Johnson's Island, is charged with the execution of this order and will report the departure of the prisoners by telegram.

...

W. T. Hartz,

Captain and Assistant Adjutant-General