

Quartermaster -General's Office, Washington, July 12, 1861

Hon. Simon Cameron, Secretary of War:

Sir: As in the conflict now commenced it is to be expected that the United States will have to take care of large numbers of prisoners of war I respectfully call to your attention to the propriety of making some arrangements in time.

At present persons arrested on suspicion of disloyalty are kept in in the common jail at Washington. I am endeavoring to procure some building here more suitable for their temporary safe-keeping. Prisoners of war are entitled to proper accommodations to courteous and respectful treatment, to one ration a day and to consideration according to rank. Heretofore when the government has had prisoners to care for a commissary of prisoners has been appointed. He keeps the muster list of prisoners, negotiates exchanges according to the cartel, sends funds to the commissary of the enemy for use of our friends in their power, and should be an accomplished gentleman, as his office is of high power and importance.

General John Mason of Virginia, father of the ex-United States Senator was commissary of prisoners for the United States during the last year. Mr Barclay, father of Mr. Harry Barclay, and the British consul at New York was the British commissary of prisoners.

The provost-marshal is the chief superintendent keeper of prisoners, but in rank and position the commissary of prisoners is much higher than the provost marshal. Large sums of money may pass through the hands of the commissary of prisoners. The negotiation of exchange of prisoners is important. A lieutenant-colonel has been exchanged for a captain and ten privates; a general for a certain number of other officers. Knowledge of military law and custom is needed in order not to offend by errors of ignorance in treating these delicate questions.

I respectfully recommend that some person be designated as commissioner of prisoners, and charged with the care of the prisoners now in our hands and preparations for those likely to fall into our possession. I also recommend that one of the islands off Sandusky, known as the Put-In-Bay Islands of Lake Erie, be rented as a depot and place of confinement for prisoners of war. Arrangements should be at once made for their accommodation to avoid great embarrassment when they begin to come in.

I remain sir, very respectfully, your obedient servant

M.C. Meigs, quartermaster general

(Preliminary to Johnson's island)

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Prisoners: (Pegram)

War of the Rebellion Series II, Vol. III, Prisoners of War (shaken book)
Beverly, Va. July 13, 1861 Col E.D. Townsend:

Have received from Pegram proposition for surrender with his officers and remnant of his command, say 600 men. Have accepted surrender agreeing to treat them with the kindness due prisoners of war, but stating that it was not in my power to relieve them from any liability incurred by taking arms against the United States. They are said to be extremely penitent and determined never again to take arms against the General Government. I shall have nearly 900 or 1,000 prisoners to take care of when Pegram comes in.

The question is an embarrassing one. Please give me immediate instructions by telegraph as to the disposition to be made of officers and men taken prisoners of war. I recommend that course as many instances calculated to produce an excellent effect upon the deluded masses of the rebels. The latest accounts make the loss of the rebels in killed some 150.

G.B. McClellan, major-general, U.S. Army

Prisoners (Oath on discharge) War of Rebellion, Series II, Vol III

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Washington, July 14, 1861

Major General McClellan, U.S. Army, Beverly Va.

You have the applause of all who are high in authority here.

Discharge all your prisoners of war under the grade of commissioned officers who shall willingly take and subscribe a general oath in these terms:

" I swear (or affirm) that I will not take up arms against the United States or serve in any military capacity whatsoever against them until regularly discharged according to the usages of war from this obligation."

As to officers among your prisoners permit all to return to their homes who willingly sign a written general parole in these words:

"We and each of us for himself severally pledge our words of honor as officers and gentlemen that we will not again take up arms against the United States nor serve in any military capacity whatsoever against them until regularly discharged according to the usages of war from this obligation."

But you will except from this privilege all officers among your prisoners who have recently been officers of the U.S. Army or Navy and who may have reason to believe left either with the intent of bearing arms against the United States. The captured officers of this description you will send to Fort McHenry.

Winfield Scott.

Quartermaster-general's office, Washington, October 3, 1861

Hon. Simon Cameron, secretary of war: Sir: I have to acknowledge the instructions of the Department to prepare a project for establishing a depot of prisoners upon one of the islands at the west end of Lake Erie and having consulted with yourself and the adjutant-general I respectfully recommend that Lieut. Col. William Hoffman, of the Eighth Infantry, an officer of rank and experience whose misfortune in having been placed in parole renders it impossible for him to take the field, be appointed commissary of prisoners and charged with the details necessary for establishing the depot.

It will be necessary for the commissary of prisoners to visit the islands and quarters, and to ascertain whether any of them of suitable size and location can be obtained on reasonable terms. If disappointed in this he should examine some other site, perhaps Madison Barracks, the barracks near Buffalo, and other points.

A guard which can perhaps be detached from the troops on parole with proper officers and an assistant quartermaster can be detailed after the site is fixed on definitely. I am etc.

M. C. Meigs, quartermaster-general.

Prisoners: Johnson's Island, War of Rebellion Series II' Vol III p 49

Quartermaster General's Office , Washington, Oct. 7, 1861

Lieut. Col. William Hoffman, Eighth Infantry, New York.

Colonel: Having been appointed (Special Orders No. 284, Oct. 23, p 121)

commissionary of prisoners and having reported to this office for instructions by order of the Secretary of War I have the honor to request you to proceed to the group of islands known as the Put-in-Bay , and Kelley's Island, off Sandusky, in Lake Erie, and to examine them with reference to the lease of the ground upon some of them for a depot for prisoners of war. You will report which of the islands affords on the whole the greatest advantage for the location of such a depot, the price at which a suitable tract of land can be leased during the war and such other matters as may be of importance. Should other localities in that vicinity appear to you to be better fitted for the purpose you are authorized to visit them also.

You will complete this duty as soon as practicable , and returning to this city report in writing the result of your examination, making a report, also upon the steps necessary to establish a depot and prepare it for the reception and safe detention of prisoners. The locality selected should not be in a higher latitude than that of the west end of Lake Erie in order to avoid too rigorous a ~~xxxx~~ climate,

M.C. Meigs, quartermaster-general .

Washington, Oct. 22, 1861, General M.C. Meigs, quartermaster general
U.S. Army Washington

General: I have the honor to report that immediately on the receipt of your instructions of the 7th instant I proceeded to the Put-in-Bay Islands, in Lake Erie, with the view of selecting one of them for a depot of prisoners of war, and the following is the result of my examination:

On the steamer Island Queen which is engaged in the trade of those islands I passed around the outer ones known as the North and Middle Bass, and passed the night at Put-in-Bay on South Bass island

North Bass is about a mile across in any direction; has upon it sufficient cleared ground for a depot owned by different persons who are engaged in cultivating the soil and fishing, who as I am informed would not be willing to give up their farms. The boat did not stop long enough for me to consult them. But the position of the island is such as to preclude its occupation ~~for~~ as a depot. It is only four or five miles from the nearest of the Canada islands, the boundary lines being midway between them, which would afford a too inviting opportunity for their friends to attempt their rescue. Besides being so remote from the mainland and being almost entirely cut off from communication with it for weeks or even months at a time during the winter, it would be necessary to confine the prisoners within secure walls or the guard would have to be confined within a very defensible work to insure that the prisoners could at no time overcome them and make their escape into Canada. Further the island is so distant from Sandusky, the nearest port, that it would not be possible before the navigation closes to erect the necessary quarters, hospital, store houses etc. which the depot would require.

Middle Pass, which is a mile within the outer island has all the objections to it which apply to North Pass, besides having no suitable cleared land upon it. I remained in Put-In-Bay till the next morning and visited the only ground which seemed available for the purpose.

On the northwest point which forms the bay there is space which by including some timbered land about ten acres may be cut off by a fence. ... The point is cold, bleak in winter, exposed to all prevailing winds... The rest of the island, families planted vineyards which yield at the rate of \$200 to \$400 a year and they could not be induced to rent their farms. ...

Put in Bay is twenty-four miles from Sandusky, too far distant....

On the following morning I proceeded to Kelley's Island where I remained a day. This island is the largest of the group and is extensively cultivated in grapes being occupied by about 100 families. There are only two locations on the island which seem adapted to the purpose... this land could be obtained for \$250 a year including the use of the wood for fuel (from downed trees)

There is another tract on the southwest point of the island of thirty to forty acres very suitable, except that it would have to be inclosed on three sides. A greater difficulty is that it is adjoining large vineyards and a wine and brandy establishment which I fear would be too great a temptation to the guard to be overcome by any sense of right or fear of punishment. This ground can be had for \$5 per acre.

The people who live on this island are very willing to do all in their power to serve the Government at this time, even at some sacrifice to themselves, but I would be very reluctant to advise them to receive even well disciplined troops on their island with such powerful and convenient inducements. This island is twelve miles from Sandusky and the

though there may be enough of the season left to give time for the erection of the buildings and getting out a supply of stores for the winter it is very doubtful matter--barely possible. During the winter months the mail is carried over generally twice a week by a man much experienced in such matters who is most of the time obliged to use a boat which he hauls over the ice when it is strong enough and in which he crosses the open places.

I cannot advise therefore that an attempt be made to establish a depot on any one of the Put-In-Bay islands this winter, and there are serious objections to their being occupied for this purpose, at any time. Kelley's Island, which may be considered one of the group, is only four or five miles from the nearest British Island called the East Sister.

I examined also an island in Sandusky Bay opposite the city. It is two and three quarters miles from the city and on the other side it is a full mile from the mainland. It contains about 300 acres one half of ~~the~~ which with the privilege of using the fallen timber as fuel can be leased for \$500 a year with the entire control of the remainder of the island, so that no person would be permitted to land on it except by permission. There are some forty acres of cleared land affording a good site for the buildings fronting on the water toward the city. Its nearness to the city gives great facilities for building and furnishing supplies and it is accessible at all seasons of the year.

The only objection to it is that it is too little isolated, but this may be remedied by so inclosing the ground occupied by the prisoners as to confine them there except when they go out by permission.

The cost of such a work would be much less than for any similar work on any of the outer islands and is of very little greater extent.

The proximity of the city would prevent any possibility of a rising upon the guard, and if any were to escape the neighborhood, would be ~~put~~ ~~put~~ put on the lookout for them by the discharging of a cannon and their recapture would be almost certain. I recommend this island--Johnson's Island--as decidedly the best location for a depot that I have seen.

I visited Toledo also but it offers no desirable situation, and thinking that Dearborn Arsenal might be made available for the winter I visited it also; but it is too limited in its extent and is too closely surrounded by private land to be a suitable place.

A convenient tract of land may be obtained near Cleveland at \$6 per acre and the buildings can be erected at perhaps a less cost than at Sandusky, but the location is objectionable on account of being inland and too easy of access to visitors.

In order to form an estimate of the cost and time necessary to establish a depot I have assumed that one-story wooden buildings framed covered with shingles, ceiled overhead, and for officers all around, with upright weatherboarding battened would be most suitable and economical. A building 105 feet long, 24 ~~xx~~ feet broad with 9-foot walls, divided into three rooms, heated by two stoves in each room, would accommodate 180 men and would cost \$800. A building 112 feet long 29 feet wide contains 12 rooms 14 x 16 divided into groups of four rooms by halls, would quarter 48 officers and could cost \$1,100. It would lessen the cost somewhat to put up two or three buildings of these dimensions together and if they could be built two stories high, it would still more diminish the cost. With these estimates as the guide the cost of all the buildings can be approximated. A hospital, store-houses and kitchen will be required and probably mess-rooms as there will be scant room for eating in the quarters. The vicinity of Sandusky of Johnson's

Island would render it unnecessary to have large store-houses on the island. On the outer island stores for three months would have to be kept on hand for the winter.

For a depot on Johnson's Island I would suggest a substantial plank fence to inclose the ground on three sides, a high open picketing closing the fourth toward the water for security in winter time. A gate at one of the angles with a blockhouse sufficiently large for the guard. A small blockhouse also at the angle near the water to guard that front. Sentinels should be posted at suitable points around the inclosure on elevated platforms so ~~thax~~ that they could overlook the inside grounds. The quarters for the troops in charge should be outside.

Sandusky is a cheap and abundant market for lumber, and I have consulted with an experienced builder there who will give any required security to put up seventeen buildings of ~~the~~ the kind I have described by the 10th of December and at the cost I have named, adding the cost of delivering the lumber on the island.

The guard for the depot should consist of 100 to 150 men. One officer and about thirty men would be required daily for guard service, and the duty should be performed in the strictest manner. Both blockhouses should be armed with a small howitzer on a suitable carriage and canister ammunition. A guard-boat would be required at all times when the bay is free of ice.

The prevalence of stormy weather at this season of the year along the lake shore would greatly retard the work, and I doubt if the necessary buildings could be erected before the 1st of January. Though I propose to heat the rooms with stoves, yet brick chimneys would be required for them, and brick furnaces or fireplaces would be needed in the kitchen. I am etc. W. Hoffman, Lieut Col. Eighth Infantry, Commissary General of prisoners.

(First Endorsement)

Quartermaster-General's Office, Oct. 23, 1861 Respectfully referred to the Secretary of War. It is recommended that Johnson's Island, Sandusky Bay, be rented and buildings for the accommodations of 1,000 prisoners be erected immediately, and that First Lieut E. W. H. Read, Eighth Infantry, now on parole, be detailed as acting assistant quartermaster and commissary of subsistence for the depot.

M.C. Meigs, quartermaster general.

(Second Indorsement)

Adjutant-General's Office Oct. 26, 1861

Respectfully returned to the quartermaster-general with information that the Secretary of War approve of the recommendations in the within report and directs him to take such measures as may be necessary for having them carried into execution. L. Thomas,

Adjutant-General

(Third Indorsement)

Respectfully returned to the Adjutant-General with request to order Lieutenant Read, Eighth Infantry, to report to Colonel Hoffman as acting assistant quartermaster and commissary of the depot. Colonel Hoffman is now in New York.

M.C. Meigs qm general

(inclosures)

Estimate for depot buildings at Johnson's Island, Sandusky Bay

Quarters for eight officers \$1,800

5 cooking stoves for officers 150

12 common stoves 140

4 two story buildings, to quarter 1,000 men (1,080 men) at \$1,500 apiece, each building to accommodate 270 men with sleeping and mess room. \$6,000
\$5,600

12 cooking stoves at \$500	\$600
36 common stoves at \$12	432
hospital	1,100
1 cooking stove	50
6 common stoves	72
quarters for guards	1,000
2 cooking stoves	100
6 common stoves	72
Blockhouse for daily guard	\$500
Store house	1,000
Fencing	400
Small blockhouse	200
Outhouses	500
Work on fencing etc	500
Miscellaneous	5,000

19,216

W. Hoffman, lieutenant colonel eighth infantry,
 commissary general of prisoners

Add to the above

Quarters for 200 officer prisoners	\$5,000
Mess rooms and kitchens for officer prisoners	1,000
10 cooking stoves	300
60 common stoves	720
	226,266 WH.

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Adjutant-General's Office

Washington, October 29th 1861

Lieut. Col. William Hoffman, Eighth Infantry U.S. Army No. 30 Clinton Place, N.Y.

Colonel: In reply to your letter of the 26th instant I am directed to say that a requisition has been made on the Governor of Ohio for a select company of volunteers for service as a guard for the depot of prisoners of war near Sandusky, and that he has been requested to confer with you in regard to the appointment of officers and the selection of men for this important trust. In accordance with your request authority is granted to you to provide such clothing and bedding as may be absolutely necessary for the comfort and health of the prisoners.

I am colonel etc.

L. Thomas, adjutant general.

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Executive Department, Columbus, Ohio, Nov. 1, 1861

Hon Simon Cameron, Secretary of War, Wash D.C.

Dear Sir: I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 29th ultimo in reply beg to say that I will cheerfully comply with your request to raise for service of the United States a select company of volunteers for duty as a guard for the depot for the prisoners of war about to be established near Sandusky in this State. It will give me pleasure to consult with Colonel Hoffman in regard to the appointment of officers and the selection of men for the duty, and will delay all action in respect to raising the company until I may see him. How soon will he be here? Respectfull, yours W. Dennison.

Officer Commissary - General of Prisoners, New York City Nov. 1, 1861

Lieut E.W.H. Read, Eighth Infantry, X Troy, N.Y.

Sir: Having been designated as quartermaster and commissary of the depot of prisoners of war about to be established near Sandusky, Ohio you will proceed immediately to that city and ~~000~~ await further orders.

W. Hoffman, Lieut Col Eighth Infantry, Commissioner Gen of prisoners.

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Office Commissary - General of Prisoners, Sandusky, Ohio, Nov. 10, 1861

Col. J. Symington, commanding Allegheny Arsenal, Pittsburg, PA

Colonel: I am erecting as part of the depot for prisoners of war near the city two block houses which I propose to arm with a 12-pounder howiever each. I propose to mount the gun on a casemate carriage with chassis, or of that style such as I believe are made by the Ordnance Department, so arranged that the gun may be transferred from one port hole to another. Will you be kind enough to give me the dimensions of such a carriage with a little plan of it, if it is not too much trouble, so that I may be able to fix on the dimensions of the buildings? I am etc. W. Hoffman, Lieut. Col. Eighth Infantry Commissary-General of Prisoners.

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Officer Commissary - General of prisoners, Sandusky, Ohio, Nov 15, 1861

General M.C. Meigs, quartermaster-general U.S. Army, Washington, D.C.

General: I have the honor to inclose her with the lease (omitted) for the land to be occupied on Johnson's Island for the depot of prisoners of war; also the contract (omitted) and bond for the erection of the buildings, all made under my direction. Some little additional expense has been put on the buildings to make them more suitable for winter climate and I have allowed the contractors \$1,500 to

cover the increased expense of erecting the buildings on the island, an amount which seems to me only reasonable. The quarters for the officers who are prisoners will accommodate 256 persons, one-fourth more than on my estimate, and have four small rooms and two large rooms in each building for messrooms and kitchens.

All the quarters with the hospital, store and block-house and the fencing which on the account of the character of the lumber will cost more than I expected will give a total cost of less than \$28,000, and there can be little doubt that \$30,000 will cover all contingencies.

I also inclose a plan of the arrangement of the buildings on the ground. In the two lines of buildings for prisoners there are sites for two additional buildings for officers and two for soldiers besides ground for a third line if more room should be required. A site is also selected for the commanding officer's quarters if it should be thought advisable to order a major to command, as I think will be found to be absolutely necessary, and a site for another building if more quarters should be required for the guard. The one block to be erected for the guard will quarter two companies of eight-four men each. The plat contains only part of the cleared ground and is less than one third of the land leased. Much of the lumber is already on the ground and the work is progressing rapidly. The contractors are energetic, reliable men and will complete the work in the least possible time. I gave them until February 1 because circumstances might reduce it beyond their power to fulfill the contract in less time but I am satisfied if the weather is favorable they will do it within that time.

Hoffman etc.

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Office Commissary - General of Prisoners, Columbus, Ohio, Dec. 17, 1861

Governor William Dennison, Governor of Ohio: Sir: I am authorized by the adjutant-general of the Army to call on you for an additional company of select men to makeup the guard for the depot of prisoners of war at Sandusky. I am also authorized to ask the appointment of a major to command the guard, and to fill the position I respectfully request, if it meets your approbation that Mr. William S. Pierson of Sandusky, might be appointed....Mr. Pierson has no experience in military matters nor can we expect to find one who has possessing the other necessary qualifications who is not now engaged in duties of greater or equal importance, but he has the ability and the ambition to fit himself for all the duties of the office

W. Hoffman

Lieut. Col. Eighth Infantry Commissary-General of Prisoners

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Office Commissary-General of Prisoners, Sandusky, December 28, 1861

Maj. W.S. Pierson, Ohio Volunteers, Sandusky, Ohio

Major: Having been commissioned by the governor of Ohio as major of the battalion of volunteers now being raised as a guard for the depot of prisoners of war on Johnson's Island you will on the first proximo assume command of the depot and take all necessary measures for the organization, discipline and instruction of the companies as the men arrive. You will also as far as practicable give such assistance to the quartermaster by men on extra or daily duty as he may require in completion of the work now in progress, being governed by Army regulations in making the details..

(Hoffman)

Office Commiss onary General etc.

New York City, January 17, 1862

Dr. C.A. Finley, surgeon-general U.S. Army, Washington D.C.

Sir: I am authorized by the adjutant-general to employ a private physician to attend the troops and prisoners at the depot of prisoners or war near Sandusky, and as it will take some time to find a suitable person I respectfully request in order to avoid inconvenient delay that Surg. R.S. Satterlee, medical purveyor in this city, may be directed to furnish such medicines and hospital stores for the depot as he may deem requisite for a command of 1,000 men for six months, viz, two companies of a hundred men each with nine commissioned officers and 600 to 800 prisoners. The location is healthy and I apprehend don't apprehend much sickness.

The physician who attends the depot must live on the island and I doubt if any competent person can be found to accept the place on the compensation which the regulations allow, \$80 a month without other allowance, whatever, not even fuel and quarters.

I am etc (Hoffman)

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Sandusky, Ohio, February 4, 1862

Capt. F. Myers, assistant quartermaster, Columbus, Ohio

Captain: Can you furnish blankets for the depot of prisoners of war to be used by prisoners on my requisition? Very etc.

(Hoffman)

p 269

Davenport, Feb. 17, 1862

Hon James W. Grimes, U.S. Senate: Three thousand prisoners can be kept here at 16 cents each per day. Government furnishing building, fuel and guards. Government has building for 1,200, H. Price, Adj. Gen Iowa.

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New York City Feb. 19, 1862

Maj. W.S. Pierson, commanding depot of Prisoners of War, Sandusky, Ohio
 Major: Yours of the 15th with Doctor Woodbridge's acceptance of the
 appointment of medical officer at ~~the~~ the depot at \$100 per month is
 just received. I send a telegram to you requesting you to employ him
 immediately. Make a contract with him according to Form 18 medical
 regulations specifying that he is to receive the fuel and quarters
 of an assistant surgeon.

When I return to Sandusky I will ~~ap~~ ~~rove~~ the contract and forward
 it to the Surgeon General. If I should not return you can forward
 it as having been made by my order.

While the men are suffering with the mumps it may be well to quarter
 some of them in the officers' block nearest to the gate, north side, in
 the inslume.

(Hoffman)

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New York City February 24, 1862

General M.C. Meigs, quartermaster general U.S. Army Washington D.C.

General: I have the honor to report that the depot is now ready to
 receive a limited number of prisoners, say 500 to 600. The guard is not
 yet completely armed not having received revolvers, nor is it
 sufficiently instructed to take charge of a large number of prisoners. The
 crossing to the island is uncertain just now on account of the
 breaking up of the ice in the bay, but it cannot be interrupted over
 a day or two. I return to Sandusky this evening and will report from
 there (Hoffman)

Quartermaster General's Office, Washington, February 25, 1862

Lieut. Col. W. Hoffman, commissary general of prisoners, New York

Colonel: You are directed to visit such posts on the lake where propellers are most used as you may deem necessary to make a personal examination and comparison in order to secure a proper guard-boat for the use of the Sandusky depot in accordance with the request contained in your letter of the 18th instant.

etc M.C. Meigs, quartermaster

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Officer commissary general of prisoners, Sandusky, Ohio Feb. 26, 1862

General M.C. Meigs, quartermaster general U.S. Army Washington D.C.

General I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your instructions of the 25th by telegraph and I shall proceed immediately to carry them out.

The crossing to the island today is very unsafe and if the mild weather continues in two or three days the ice will probably be all out of the bay. In this uncertain state of things I would advise that no prisoners be sent here till they can be crossed on a steam-boat; one will be ready to receive them as soon as the lake is free of ice. The ~~revolvers~~ ~~guns~~ have not yet been received nor the lanterns which I ordered in New York City for lighting the prison inclosure and it would be safer to have these articles on hand before prisoners are taken charge of. I wish to be present when they arrive, and therefore suggest that none be ordered here until my return. The delay will give time for further instructions to the guard which is much needed.

I postponed the erection of quarters for the commanding officer during the winterowing to the inclemency of the weather and the greater expense, and I propose now to erect a building on the plan of those already erected which will accommodate the major and doctor. In the expectation of having to receive a large number of prisoners at the depot I propose also, unless you direct otherwise, to put up an additional building for the guard which will give more room for the guard as it is and admit another company if found necessary as probably will be the case.

The building occupied by the guard was not ~~xxxx~~ intended for 200 men and it is too much crowded in warm weather.

These barracks being erected at this more favorable season of the year and with some changes which can be made to advantage can be put up at less expense than those built in the winter.

Major Pierson will telegraph to you if he is ready to receive the prisoners before my return.

My position as commissary general of prisoners has never been announced to the Army, and in order that my authority might not be recognized merely through courtesy on the 7th of December last I requested that the Adjutant General would notify those in charge of prisoners of war of my appointment and the extent of my authority. I am not aware that any such notice has been given, and to avoid embarrassing conflict of authority I desire to call your attention to the subject in the hope that what is proper in the case will be done.

(Hoffman)

p 345

Sandusky, ^{Mar}March 3, 1862 to Meigs

General: I find that there is a greater number of sick than I anticipated and to provide for them and for any further demand I propose to erect additional accommodations for the sick inside the

inclosure. as the ~~nature~~ nature of the ground will admit of , the buildings to be of the same plan, slightly enlarged, as those already up but much less expensive. They need only be prepared for summer use, and even for winter they may be made very comfortable at considerable less cost than those we have.

If prisoners must be confined in an open camp my impression is that they can best be kept on the island by simply extending the west fence across to the water on the north side of the island and establishing a camp for prisoners on one side of the fence and for the guard on the other side. Guarding the circuit of the island by small boats relieved every two or four hours would be less arduous than keeping up a chain of sentinels about a camp on the mainland. For this plan a propeller would be indispensable.

I expect to return to Chicago on or before the 10th and would be glad to have your instructions on these points at that time.

(Hoffman)

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Washington, March 13, 1862

Col. W. Hoffman, Sandusky, Ohio:

Direct your quartermaster of prisoners to have steamboat ready to transport them to the island.

M.C. Meigs

Sandusky, March 13, 1862

General M.C. Meigs... Telegram of this day received. I want the order for movement of prisoners to pass through me to prevent delay.

(Hoffman)

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Sandusky , March 19, 1862

General L. Thomas, adjutant general, U.S. Army, Washington D.C.

Sir: Arrangements are being made to erect barracks for 3,000 to 5,000 prisoners at this depot and as additional guard will be necessary I respectfully request authority to call on Governor Tod of Ohio for a third company. It will be a month or six weeks before the company can be organized and by that time the depot will be ready for the reception of a large increase of prisoners over the number now provided for

(Hoffman.

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Columbus, Ohio, March 28, 1862

Major General Halleck

I advise as a measure of safety that 250 of the prisoners of war, officers, at Camp Chase be sent to Johnson's Island, Sandusky,

David Tod, governor of Ohio

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War Department, Washington, March 30, 1862

His Excellency David Tod, Governor of Ohio:

I have delayed giving instructions in regard to the prisoners of war at Camp Chase until the views of Governor Johnson could be had. Considerable difference of opinion exists in relation to the subject.

The rebels have violated an agreement for exchange made with General Wool. In the meantime there is much complaint of the license permitted the rebel officers at Camp Chase. General Halleck has been directed to correct the evil. By general regulations the commander of the department has charge of the prisoners. Edwin M. Stanton, secretary of war.

Buffalo, April 2, 1862

General Meigs

General: I am here looking for a steamboat or propeller for service at the depot at Sandusky, and being not far from New York I propose to be in that city for a few days. As my duties are now almost exclusively in the West I would be glad to move my headquarters from New York to Detroit, a central position convenient to all the camps where there are prisoners of war, and I respectfully ask for orders accordingly, etc. (Hoffman)

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(Note atop page April 2k 8, 1862 For reports, correspondence etc. relating to the capture of island No. 10 see Series I, Vol VIII p.76 et seq.)

Columbus Ohio, April 8, 1862

General Halleck:

Twenty six field and staff officers, prisoner of war, left this morning for Fort Warren. It is very important that at least 200 more of the most dangerous should be transferred to Johnson's Island or elsewhere. Please let me now what we may expect.

David Tod, Governor of Ohio

Saint Louis, April 8, 1862

Governor Tod, Columbus, Ohio: Transfer such of the prisoners of war as you may deem proper to Johnson's island and make provision for guarding them. I shall not be able after tomorrow morning to communicate with you for several days. H.W. Halleck, major general.

p 436

Office Commissary General of Prisoners, New York, April 9, 1862

General M.C. Meigs, U.S. Army quartermaster General Wash D.C.

General: In reply to your letter of the 2nd inst. (Not found but see March 26, p. 405) I have the honor to state that the lateness of the season renders it necessary that the buildings to be erected on Johnson's Island should be put up with the least possible delay, and I was induced to give the contract to Messrs Gregg & West upon the assurance of many persons in Sandusky that they were men of energy, integrity and means and better qualified--Mr. Gregg particularly--for that kind of work than any one in that part of the country, and that I might rely upon their carrying out their contract faithfully. There was no time for me to draw up plans and specifications and give public notice for proposals.

I was not disappointed in the men. The work was pushed to completion with unusual energy and success within the time fixed by the contract, and in a manner that is to me perfectly satisfactory.

In some places the roofs have leaked a little, but this has been or will be corrected by the contractors.

...when work was begun I was in hope that much of it might be done by the labor of the men of the guard but it was impossible to carry this out as all the work was completed by the contractors long before the guard was organized. Not a cent was paid to them until weeks after the work was finished and they had to provide means for paying their mechanics as the work progressed.

Before making arrangements for continuing the work this spring I was anxious to take the course that would lead to the best economy of time and money, and while I was waiting for a reply to a reference of the matter of the Quartermaster General I ~~proposed~~ prepared a notice calling for proposals which I left at the printer's office ready for use in case that course was decided on, but was informed by the qm that

reduction of 10 per cent on the old prices under the existing contracts would be satisfactory and the notice was not published. The reduction finally agreed upon was not much short if any of 25 per cent...

I heard of but one other person who would be likely to bid for the work, one of the complainants, and he was said to be without means....

Hoffman.

p 405

Washington March 26, 1862

Lieut Col Hoffman etc. Colonel: Your letter of the 17th instant as to the style of huts to be built for prisoners, and also your letter of the same date giving the prices of Gregg & West at which they propose to erect as many buildings as may be required at the depot have been received. As you are the commissary general of prisoners you best know what is necessary. The subject is intrusted to your discretion and judgment, the interests of the United States, the safety of the prisoners and their comfort being kept in view, M.C. Meigs qm general

p 439

Washington, April 10, 1862 (to Hoffman)

How many prisoners can be accommodated now at the Sandusky Depot? It is suggested to move the 1,000 officers confined at Columbus to Sandusky and to make that aprison for officers alone.

M.C. Meigs, quartermaster
general

p. 448

Washington, April 13, 1862 (From War Department) to Hoffman

Colonel: You will cause the officers, prisoners of war at Columbus to be removed without delay to the Sandusky depot, which will

hereafter be held as a prison for officers alone.

Edwin M. Stanton, secretary of war

p 462

General Orders 42: War Dept. Adj. General's Office, Washington,
April 18, 1862

III--The headquarters of Lieut Col. William Hoffman, Eighth Infantry, commissary general of prisoners, is transferred from New York City to Detroit Michigan. By order of the Secretary of War. L Thomas, adjutant general.

465

Office Commissary-General of Prisoners, Sandusky, April 20, 1862

Hon David Tod, Governor of Ohio:

Dear Sir: I am directed by the War Department to cause all the officers prisoners of war at Camp Chase to be removed to the depot at Sandusky, and I have the honor to request that you will give the necessary instruction to have the transfer made in parties of about 200 at a time. The depot will accommodate in addition to those now there 800 to 1,000.

I am also authorized by the War Department to call on you for another company for the depot guard and as it is required immediately I would suggest that a company from one of the incomplete regiments of Ohio volunteers be assigned to this service. If this is not practicable I will be much obliged to you if you will detach a company for temporary duty at the depot till one company can be organized for the purpose. The company may be divided into two parts and each under a responsible officer accompany as guards a detachment of ~~each detachment~~ prisoners. It should be furnished with tents as the quarters for it are not yet complete and for a week or two it will have to remain in camp.

Please cause rolls to be furnished to me of all prisoners of war sent from Camp Chase to the depot, showing the state, rank, regiment and company of each man and when and where captured as required by paragraph IX Army regulations published in general orders from the War Department of April 2, 1862.

~~Ordered~~ Further accommodations for officers are being erected at the depot, but in the meantime quarters for those recently captured may be required and I will direct that they be sent to Camp Chase to occupy those now being vacated.

I desire also to be furnished with rolls of the same character of all prisoners of war who have heretofore been in confinement at Camp Chase, showing what disposition has been made of them; if released by whose authority. I am tc. (Hoffman)

p. 510

Near Sandusky, Ohio May 1, 1862

Col Hoffman: Your letter is just at hand... I am advised 300 prisoners will be here today. The troops from Columbus are inferior in material, drill and in every respect. But a small portion of them can be trusted on the fence. The company is not full, only one commissioned officer now here. If with the number of prisoners coming, I am satisfied we are not secure with such troops, I shall say so to Governor Tod and have more sent or better... With all the drawbacks I am satisfied the discipline of this post is the best of any in Ohio. ... Wm. S. Pierson

p 548

Detroit, May 17, 1862

Hon E.M. Stanton, secretary of war: Sir I have the honor to inclose herewith (not found) letters from J.D. Lillard and James E. Stewart citizens of Kentucky, who are held as prisoners of war at the depot

at Sandusky, and a letter from Oliver Britt of Cincinnati in behalf of his brother-in-law Charles K. Snyder of Kentucky who is also a prisoner of war at the same place.

From the statements of these letters it would seem that there may be sufficient reason for releasing them on their taking the oath of allegiance and I respectfully suggest if they can furnish any evidence to corroborate their statements that I may be authorized to release them.

In my letter of the 15th of March to quartermaster-general accompanying two letters of the character of these inclosed I suggested that there were probably other cases of prisoners who might with propriety be released on their taking the oath of allegiance, ~~xxxx~~ but the action on that letter left me in doubt whether more than the two names were to be released.

(Hoffman)

p. 574

Columbus, May 22, 1862

Maj. W.S. Pierson, commanding depot of prisoners of war, Sandusky, Ohio. Major: Some fifty officers, prisoners of war, will be sent to the depot from Camp Chase on Saturday. Some of them have been on parole in this city but on arriving at the depot those paroles will be withdrawn. Be prepared to send back with the guard on Saturday evening the enlisted men and citizens who are now among the prisoners of the depot. If there are any enlisted men who are particularly useful you may permit them to remain. Any who are too sick to travel will of course remain. (Hoffman)

confidential: Officer Commissary-General of Prisoners, Detroit, Mich.
May 24, 1862

Major W.S. Pierson, commanding Dept of Prisoners of War, Sandusky, Ohio
Major: I inclose instructions in relation to drill etc. It may seem to make the duty on the men pretty hard, but it is really not to compare with hard service in the field and the necessity is ample justification for it.

There may be complaints against it even by officers, but if soldiers are required to do only ~~xxx~~ what they are willing to do there can be little discipline or instructions. At all events the commanding officer must not find excuses for the neglect of important duties. Please refer to my instructions in relation to drill and observe them as closely as possible.

Hurry forward the drill of the new company so that some of the men now present may be detailed for guard service in ten or fifteen days.

The company from Camp Chase cannot be relieved and it must do its full share of duty. See that its captain attends the drills of his company and that none are absent who are not properly so. The doctor must decide for himself who are really sick.

Neither officers nor men must be excused from duty because they will not do it. It is not possible that twenty-five of the company can be sick.

For offenses committed by prisoners where you cannot discover the individual you must stop one third or one half of the rations of all in the block for as long a period as may be necessary. Officers cannot be excused on the plea that they did not know it was wrong, as was the case in calling through the building when I was there. They must be once (sure?) they are right or they must be punished when they go

wrong. Nothing but a strong determination to act on a rigid rule and in silence will enable you to command without trouble.

(Hoffman)

p 600

Detroit, May 27, 1862

Hon E.M Stanton

I will call on the governors of Ohio, Illinois, Indiana and Wisconsin for volunteers to guard rebel prisoners in place of those ordered to the field. W. Hoffman, commissary-general of prisoners.

p 620

Governor Tod, Columbus, Ohio Wash June 10, 1862

The question in relation to prisoners is now under consideration - if they are paroled great complaint is made by the friends of our prisoners in the South.

No trust can be placed in their parole. I think it is cheaper to keep them where they are than to send them back as recruits for the rebel government will release them by law from their parole and force ~~them~~ ~~on~~ ~~all~~ ~~into~~ ~~the~~ ~~ranks~~ ~~who~~ ~~do~~ ~~not~~ ~~go~~ ~~voluntarily~~, so that we shall only have to fight and take them again.

Edwin M. Stanton, secretary of
War.