

Seven months sufferings in Rebel Prisons, viz
Peterburg (Tms) Va, Andersonville, Savannah
Millen Blackshield Ga. and Florence S. C.

Copied from the original diary kept by
P. C. Milmanth, a member of Co. No. 40th Mass. Inf.

May 16th 1864.

At Clock A.M. Still fighting on the bluffs to the rear of Richmond. Place called Swifts Creek one mile from Fort Darling, has been raining for three day and nights, in light marching order, no extra clothing except a rubber blanket. Wet completely through, cold and hungry and light still raining.

Ten O'clock A.M. Our forces commencing to retreat, slowly falling back, I was sent by the Surgeon, to the front to inform the Senior Medicinal that the hospital was moving back. Went to the Regt. Carried my message and returning to the rear. [The Hospital this day being my station] Was wounded, was taken prisoner by some Virginia Cavalry, one wounded and forty two of us were "gobbled up", mostly wounded ones. Was taken to Washington the well ones put in the Army Jail, the wounded put in the rebel hospital, our jail was a cold place dark and full of filth, and crowded to overflowing, as we found many had taken Prisoners previously. We arrived at this place about dark. Was marched through the miserable streets, hooted at, and called hard names by the fair woman (I cannot call them Ladies) Men, & Childrens of that city.

May 17th

Awoke this morning at day break. Strange
Sensations came over me. When I try to see the surround-
ing Country by peering through the iron grated
Windows. But still the boys are used to the hard
ships of war and try to keep up good spirits
in the way of Jokes, songs, and story telling. I hear
one young Soldier say to his Comrade. "Thunder
Bain, we are in a Jug now, for the first time". Says Jim
Mill. "I and I did not steal anything." Well says Soldier
Boy, you cant make them believe in Mass. that you are
put in a Stone Jail without committing any Crime.
Which so worried poor Jimmy that he found himself sober
and then mad, and only found consolation, by using
rather abusive language to the Rebel guard, in
which he calls him every thing but a Patriotic and
good man. Wrote a letter this day to be sent by flag of
Stones, had to write a very smooth story or in other
words a bare face lie in order for the "Johnny's"
to pass it through the lines. Received our first
Rebel rations to day it consisted of two hard Crackers
and two slices of raw Bacon. The Crackers were
very good but the Bacon was mine, of the best
being some what wormy, but hanging stomachs
did not revolt and we eat our "White Bread"
with a relish, laid down in the floor, and went to sleep.

May 18th ^{AM}

I put this morning as though a little soap and water would do me good. but shall have to dispense with them, as neither of them was furnished me, except the latter, in small quantities for drinking. This they seemed to want to stint us in, as we could not get help we wished. Waiting patiently for them to bring in our daily rations.

(Value, Clock, me.) Order came to be ready to move to another prison, in five minutes. Some marched under guard to a tobacco warehouse on Washington St. and called Military Prison, Change much for the better more room and more cleanly. In moving us to this place they take particular pains to march us through the principle streets of the city, to be insulted by every one that felt so inclined, and not many was there, that thought much of the Union Cause. Their favorite names for us was "Blue bellies" "Yanks" and many other that would not be proper to write, or speak. One young Soldier - "Confed" or "Gray Back" as we call them, asked me to day "What all 'you ones' come down to fight 'we ones' for." It is a fact that many of the Privates in the rebels army do not know the Cause of the rebellion, or what they are fighting for, but have an Idea, that the yanks are on their "Southern Soil" for some selfish motives as they ^{are} of the Northern Rebels.

May 19th Heard heavy cannonading at one o'clock this
morning toward "Burrhead's Round", can hear it at
the time, at o'clock. A.M., think a heavy fight must be
going on, the Mayor of this City said to a Chain of mine
by the name of Pinner Peison, that he was the first
real blue bellied he had seen, Peison told him he
should say he. (The Mayor) was partial to blue, as
the principle part of these soldiers seemed to be
dressed in our uniform, which of course was blue,
and stolen from our soldiers, from the dead on the
battle field, and find us poor mortals that was
taken prisoners, I forgot to state in my Diary of
the 16th the process of searching prisoners of war upon
their arrival to the prison, they are made to stand in
two ranks and the Rebel officials proceed to take
any thing the soldier happens to possess providing
it is good for any thing, any things in the shape of
money, knives, good Boots, over Coats & Blankets &c.
K. apparatus, Canteen & Sawdust, was sure to be lost by
Wash Lane's Soldier,

May 20th

Very quiet to day, Rebel reinforcements came
through the city to day, bound for the Burrhead front.
The following names are members of the Twenty fourth Regt taken
with me, J. P. Brown, J. W. Davis, John A. Lewis - J. W. & Cunningham.

May 31st

Snowing all day. Saw a Regiment of the Rebels pass by our Prison. Their ranks were very thin. We are still loant in Corn Cade and Pork.

May 27th

Started this morning for Georgia, so we are told by the "Gray backs," took passage in box cars from Petersburg. Ninty two, in a car, no room to sit down or even stand with any degree of comfort. On the Weldon and Petersburg Rail Road. Rode all day, and feel very tired. Saw the effects of Speers 11 Penn. Cav Raid on the R. R. bridges.

May 28th

Arrived at Raleigh. Capitol North Carolina this morning. Can see the Capitol buildings from the depot. It looks as tho it had been very pretty here some times. But now things look very much decapitated. passed many towns and villages during the night but was too tired to make a note of them. Got four days patients to day, it just seem to be in South Carolina. Started from Raleigh this afternoon have taken the Georgia Rail Road. great time changing cars rush and a general "hog in" to get into the cars first so we could get a chance to sit down. we are in coal cars and think we shall be Negroes before we get far. growing dark, wish I could lay Adams and go to sleep.

May 27th Arrived at Charlotte this morning now waiting
for a train to take us to Georgia. Saw Capt. Jones of
the tenth Mass. Infy. had been a prisoner nearly ten
months, gave us many hints for our benefit. We
are off from the Cds and sitting and laying down
by the side of the track. This is quite a place.
See any quantity of army supplies in shape of
Meal, Bacon, Corn, &c. as well as Cannon &
Ball, small arms, and they don't look as tho
they were quite so hard up, as I read in the
N. Y. Paper, only a few days ago. There is quite
a junction of Rail Roads here and I should
say was an important post for the enemy.

The train is coming and soon there will be a
rush. We are now in the cars and hurra ye. it
is now afternoon. During our stay in Charlotte few
of the prisoners made their escape.

May 30th

After riding all night we arrived at
Columbia S. C. early in the morning. yesterday afternoon
we passed many splendid Cotton plantations all looking
finely. This part of the Country has never been invaded
by the Union Army. and every thing seems to be in
a prosperous condition. This place is the Capital of the
state and is a splendid place, full of shade trees and
fine buildings. the trees look green & beautiful.

June 5th

Nothing new to day except some talk of a Parole amongst the prisoners, very warm day, feeling well and hungry. Andersonville Prison contains ~~eleven~~¹⁶ acres of land of which is low and marshy upon which no one can travel or hardly walk across without sinking into the deep mud, making eleven acres for the prisoners to occupy, at this time there are eighteen thousand men in this stockade, imagine that number of men on the small space of eleven acres and you will come to the conclusion that there was no room to spare. A Brook runs through the center of the Camp, two hills arise on each side of it, thus dividing the Prison, the two parts of the Camp were distinguished by the North and South side, around the Prison is what is called a Stockade, it is simply pine logs twenty five feet long, five feet being in the ground the remaining part projecting from the same, these logs are bound and put so closely together that it is with great difficulty that one can see through them, it is twenty feet toward the Camp and from the logs is a top of Board nailed into posts about four feet high, these extend completely round the Camp, excepting on the two gates, and is called the dead line, on the top of these logs is erected at about five rods from one another a rail shelter called Sentries Box.

June 6th

This is the day set for an exchange according to the talk in Camp. but it proved to be false, as I expected, it coming from no reliable authority. The lying Dutch man likes to get me on a string when he can, and I don't think he ever came into this prison without telling at least, ten lies before he went out.

Men are very sickly, average number of deaths per day fifty. number of prisoners now in Camp. twenty thousand mostly new prisoners taken this past spring.

June 7th ? Very warm with showers in the afternoon. Sixty men died this day. Think less of the Com. et Confederacy every day. Five hundred more prisoners came in to day, we are very much crowded indeed & many we may soon be exchanged.

June 8th ?

Hot awful. hot, have to stand it, nothing new to day, man fired at near the road line, man was frightened but not hurt.

June 9th ? More flying reports of an Exchange, don't believe it, prisoners dying of very fast. raining day. it has rained some part of the day, every since the first volume, what kind of a Country is it. The boys ask,

June 10th } Prison life commencing to fall, dont get
enough to eat, by half, awful hungry. Cant write
much to day, all out of tobacco. Feel as though
I had lost every friend I had in the world, my
friends will lose me, if I dont get out of this
shortly. Corn meal, and Corn federacy, are
about as substantiated, as the other, a Rebel guard
sang out at twelve last night, twelve O'clock
all well, and Confederacy gone to Hell, think
U.S. Grant must be wasting them some where,

June 11th } More Yanks came in to day, Raiders round
East night, we call them that, they are our own
Union Prisoners, banded together, for the purpose of
robbery some of the boys have a good deal of
money and these Raiders, go to their tent at night
and order them to give it up under penalty of
death, they get clubbed by our crowd and come
away, Had one meat stole by Hoge, one of our
Squad, found it in his haversack, shaved his
head half of it, bucked and gagged him, he wont
steal any more meat I dont think, we take the
law into our own hands, or be trodden under foot
and our rights, stolen from us, Rough place
am willing to cry enough

Aug 18th | Writing what the Rebs call half rations
we are getting a piece of Bread Corn of Course
about three inches square, a piece of Bacon about
one inch, and two spoonfuls of peas, not so
much by half as we have been getting in times
past. and I tell you we are getting awful
hungry. It is a cool nice morning, but it will
soon come out hot and sultry. What an
awful Country this is. Our Boats ache awfully
all the time. I think it is caused by the want
of more salt. we dont get half enough. Some
times they give us none at all. Some of the
prisoners have it to sell, varying from five to
twenty for a Spoonful, according to the
Scarcity of it. but those that do not have
money of course it can do them no good. if it
was for sale.

Aug 19th | Nothing of note. a squad of the 7th
Ohio Mounted Infy. came in to prison to day.
they was with us in Florida, and finally released
us when we came into Virginia.

Aug 31st | Days, weeks and months still not round.
and not much hopes for us that we can see.

Many may think these are exaggerated reports and sketches but they are true as far as they go. but not one fiftieth part of the trials and hardships, and Cruelty of the rebels are done in the few pages. I am not capable of giving the idea that I wish I might, nor do I think any one can definitely enough. that persons may know the exact amount of sufferings in the cruel prisons at the south during the war,

With thanks to God for my deliverance from almost death, I am

Yours. Very Respt.
John C. Kilpatrick