

10-1996

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Klemm, Amy L. (1996) "Wigwam Metropolis: Camp Ford, Texas," *East Texas Historical Journal*: Vol. 34: Iss. 2, Article 8.
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“WIGWAM METROPOLIS”: CAMP FORD, TEXAS

by Amy L. Klemm

Approximately four miles northeast of Tyler, Texas, “on the side of the main road to Marshall,” emerged Camp Ford, the largest prison for Union captives west of the Mississippi River. Accommodating nearly 5000 military and civilian inmates at its peak population, this facility fostered a community in which many captives consolidated their efforts to relieve the monotony of prison life. Amid physically oppressive conditions, some inmates occupied themselves with commercial, intellectual, and recreational pursuits while others entertained and executed plans to escape to Federal lines. Union prisoners made the best of an unfortunate situation, hoping that they would soon return to their units and to their families.¹

Colonel John Selman “Rip” Ford, the Texas Superintendent of Conscripts, established his branch office at Tyler during the summer of 1862, which grew into a full-fledged post by the following September. Expressly used as an instructional facility for Confederate conscripts between the summers of 1862 and 1863, Camp Ford became a “point of temporary detention” for Union prisoners awaiting exchange below Shreveport, Louisiana, on the Red River. Escorting forty-eight captives from Shreveport to Camp Ford, Captain Samuel J. Richardson’s Cavalry arrived on July 30, 1863, under orders to “establish a post at Tyler and to provide a guard for the prisoners.”²

With the appointment of commandant R.T.P. Allen in the winter of 1863 came the first indication that General Edmund Kirby Smith envisioned Camp Ford as a permanent prisoner-of-war facility. Tyler was the logical choice for such an establishment. Officials could draw an ample guard from the conscript camp, and the Tyler “military headquarters” could provide administrative personnel. Tyler also was an excellent transportation depot, one far removed from the enemy line. Add the proximity of the Confederate commissary supply, and Tyler seemed more than a suitable locale.³

Because of the small number of prisoners initially confined there, Camp Ford at first had no enclosure. Surrounding the compound was a line of armed guards who rigorously enforced a three-pace limit that prevented inmates from crossing that boundary. One unfortunate captive, Private Thomas Moorehead of the 26th Indiana Infantry, unintentionally violated this regulation and perished due to a guard’s swift bullet.⁴

In November 1863, officials transferred 461 prisoners awaiting exchange from Stirling Plantation, Louisiana, to Tyler, increasing the total prison population to 500. Prompted by fears that the sizable number of Ford’s inmates would overpower the guard and “sack the town,” the citizens of Tyler erected the first stockade. Within ten days they built a pen of pine timbers, “split in halves, and set close together” approximately three feet into the ground. From a stationed platform along the top of the sixteen to twenty-foot-tall structure, armed guards surveyed the two to five acres inside. Described as “small boxes or houses,” these stations sheltered the guards “when it rained or was excessive hot.” A strictly-enforced “dead line” circled the stockade’s interior and

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prevented prisoners from coming within ten to thirty feet of the gates.⁵

Signaling the first confinement of a permanent nature, a contingent of 350 Federal prisoners, transferred from Camp Groce in Hempstead, arrived on December 22, 1863. The beginning of 1864 witnessed few newcomers. Occasional prisoners trickled in between January and March, including Lieutenant Colonel Augustine J.H. Duganne of the 176th New York Infantry, a holdover from Camp Groce, and Aransas Bay captives Captain Edward Coulter and Captain Dolphus Torrey of the 20th Iowa Infantry. Then, in a sudden expansion of the prison population, 760 enlisted personnel invaded the compound on March 30, 1864. These prisoners, sent forward for exchange at Shreveport in December, represented the enlisted component at Camp Groce, as well as Camp Ford's Stirling Plantation contingent, headed by Lieutenant Colonel Joseph B. Leake of the 20th Iowa Infantry. Bristling at their revoked paroles, this group absorbed the remaining available space within the stockade walls. Leake's men, moreover, reclaimed their old cabins, promptly evicting the current inhabitants. Conditions grew uncomfortable and restrictive for the 1000 inmates confined by the end of March. These discomforts merely foreshadowed an impending population explosion, for Camp Ford soon swelled with the rapid influx of more than 4000 newcomers captured in Louisiana and Arkansas.⁶

On April 13, 1864, Colonel Allen detailed four members of Captain Samuel Richardson's guards to impress slaves from the surrounding countryside to enlarge the stockade. Work commenced two days later by sawing off the top halves of the stockade timbers and using them as posts. The walls were "moved back six hundred feet," thereafter encompassing between ten and twelve acres. Between April 15 and 20, nearly 1700 Mansfield, Pleasant Hill, and Powderhorn captives arrived. The summer months heralded further population expansion as the influx of more than 2600 Arkansas and Louisiana prisoners placed even greater pressure on limited resources and space.⁷

Amid the prairie and timbered hills, the stockade resembled an "irregular rectangle," built slightly askew from a north-south orientation. The main entrance to the facility, constructed within the western wall, usually was open and manned by a sentry. Located opposite the main gate were the guard-house, the guards' cabins, and the "wolf-pen," a log-frame enclosure where officials kept cantankerous prisoners and where Confederate conscripts and Union sympathizers remained while awaiting "removal to the provost prison of Tyler, or to Houston, where they can be tried for 'treason' to the 'Southern Confederacy.'" An auxiliary gate along the northern wall revealed an open plain where sheep, hogs, deer, and wild foxes roamed. Near the eastern wall of the compound flowed Ray's Creek, along which cavalry regiments camped and conscripts constructed their huts. Just outside of the southern wall arose an abrupt hill from which the commandant's headquarters, composed of two or three log houses, overlooked the stockade. "Opposite the southwest corner," a small cemetery served as the eventual resting place for nearly 300 prisoners.⁸

Into the southwest corner of the stockade flowed a streamlet, or "spring," from which both guards and inmates drew their water supply. "Impregnated with iron and sulphur ... a perpetual tonic," it trickled into three wooden reservoirs, "spouted from one to the other," used for washing, drinking, and

cooking. When the spring occasionally threatened to withhold its bounty, Acting Master Amos Johnson, captain of the *Sachem* and self-styled "Commissioner of Aqueducts," had the reservoirs sunk to insure a perpetual water supply.⁹

In the beginning, authorities quartered prisoners in the open air, without the benefit of blankets. Throughout the fall of 1863, inmates "bivouacked under the trees, which grew thickly, or slept in a small barrack-stack, within their allotted limits." Attempting to procure lumber with which to erect barracks for his charges, prison commandant Major Thomas Tucker met with stiff opposition from the post quartermaster. Thwarted in his efforts, Tucker allowed guarded prisoner details to gather building materials, such as timber and brush, with which to construct log cabins. A Federal officer whom Confederate officials had transferred from Camp Groce to Camp Ford in December 1863 described it as "the most miserable hole we have been in yet," a "barren looking camp" which offered new arrivals no shelter whatsoever, except for a few unoccupied shanties that were available for purchase. Describing these ten-foot-long structures as what "appeared to be pig-pens" at first, another Camp Groce transferee realized that these were, indeed, the cabins of confined officers.¹⁰

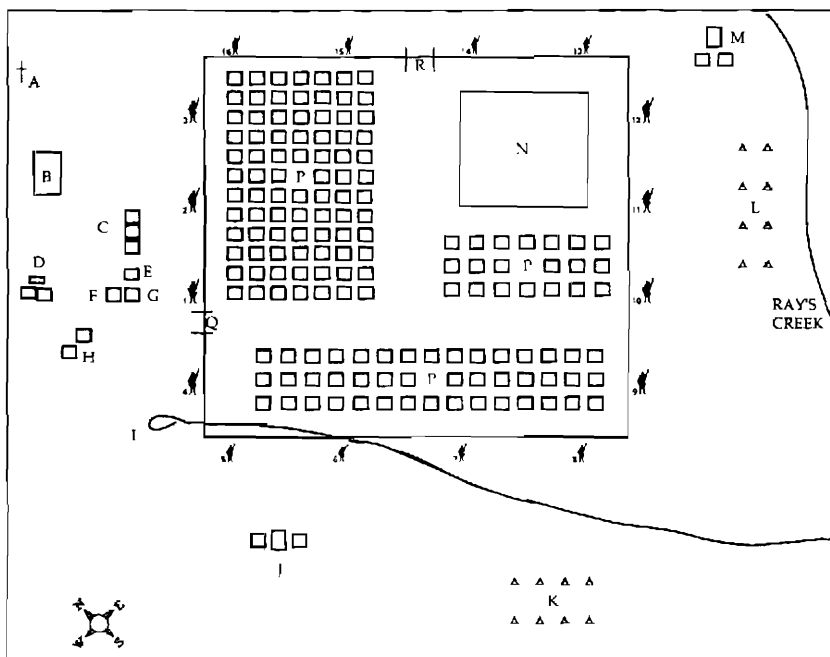
Upon his arrival at Camp Ford, 1st Lieutenant William H. Cowdin of the 42nd Massachusetts Infantry found no available shelter and had to pitch a tent. The following day, Cowdin and his comrades procured lumber for their "shebang" (a makeshift habitation) by tearing down an old cabin, had it "drawn up to our grounds and laid the foundation for our building." With the expertise and assistance of two lowans, construction began on the "42nd mansion" on Christmas Day, 1863. Spending the next five days hauling mud and stones for the chimney, tearing down "an old shanty outside the stockade for boards," putting in the floor, and installing bunks, the officers of the 42nd Massachusetts slept on the floor of the Iowa Cabin until their quarters were habitable.¹¹

Upon his arrival, Lieutenant Colonel Augustine J.H. Duganne found plenty of available land, but no empty cabins. He bunked with 1st Lieutenant John F. Peck of the 23rd Connecticut Infantry and 1st Lieutenant William H. Root of the 75th New York Infantry in their "demi-subterrene 'shanty'" his first night at Ford. Choosing a plot of ground the next day, Duganne hired, for the sum of \$100 Confederate dollars, "Dawes and Hicks" of Kansas to build a cabin twelve feet by ten feet with a stone fireplace and a clay chimney. Duganne rapidly became one of Camp Ford's "leading citizens" since his "real estate" placed him among "men of substance." As a house-warming party, Duganne held "Sabbath-services at the door."¹²

Between February and March 1864, a prisoner council convened to plan a "town" within the stockade. "Ford City," cleverly described as a "wigwam metropolis," was "arranged in streets, right-angled with a central thoroughfare, called 'Fifth Avenue.' Midway, a platform, covered with a canopy of pine boughs served as the market-place." They reserved the southeast corner of the stockade for a public square, with latrines located at the south end of camp. The basic social unit of the camp was the mess: the collective inhabitants of a cabin, hut, or shebang, numbering between three and twelve members. Most buildings in "Ford City" bore the name of the messes which lived in them.

Holding a special position within the society of "Ford City," a group of the earliest inhabitants, known as the "Old Seventy-Two," gained the undying respect of their fellow inmates.¹³

Incoming prisoners, captured at Mansfield, Louisiana, in April 1864, found only a few log cabins and dugouts in one corner of the stockade, with the rest of the prison yard full of stumps and brush heaps. Assigned an area in which to sleep, eat, and answer roll call, each regiment received a plot of ground the length of its line and fifteen to twenty feet wide. A dearth of sufficient building materials left many newcomers unable to construct suitable quarters; yet, according to Corporal Aaron T. Sutton of the 83rd Ohio Infantry, many new prisoners improvised some sort of shelter for themselves. Most of the recent arrivals, however, simply slept on the ground, swearing themselves to sleep. Construction seemed to be an eternal process because inmates relied upon small, guarded working parties to gather poles and brush from the surrounding forest. Fortunately, the Texas climate afforded warm days, and



CAMP FORD, TEXAS,
FOLLOWING STOCKADE EXPANSION IN APRIL 1864

A = prisoner cemetery
 B = prisoner garden
 C = guards' quarters
 D = hospital
 E = wolf pen
 F = Officer-of-the-Day's Headquarters
 G = guard house
 H = commissary storehouse

I = spring
 J = Commandant's headquarters
 K and L = cavalry encampments
 M = cavalry headquarters
 N = prisoner ball field
 P = prisoner shebangs
 Q = western (main) gate
 R = northern (auxiliary) gate

most of the new arrivals, "fresh from camp-life and service," heartily withstood the elements. Nightfall, however, inevitably brought considerably cooler temperatures, forcing shelterless captives to keep in constant motion or to huddle over tiny fires in order to keep warm.¹⁴

Corporal Sutton's regiment was assigned a plot of mostly "new ground" known as Keno Corner due to the constant gambling activity in the area. From a nearby wood pile, Sutton and his comrades procured two "forks" which they set into the ground. Across the top they straddled a pole which served as a support for a wall composed of branches and bark. They constructed a westward-facing shebang into which messmates raked leaves and stowed their few personal belongings. Storm clouds soon rumbled overhead, and Sutton's company realized that their present edifice was not waterproof. Methodically, they "cut a drain on the sides and upper end" of their shebang "and put dirt on the poles." Completely sodden, that structure effectively repelled a torrential downpour.¹⁵

Intent upon improving the 83rd's mess, Sutton convinced the new post commandant, Colonel Scott Anderson, to allow him to venture outside the stockade to split some boards and rails. Giving Sutton an "ax and maul and two iron wedges," Anderson delineated a work area, warning Sutton not to stray. After paying a Negro driver ten cents to haul seventy-two rails to Keno Corner, Sutton logged off five more board cuts and returned to the stockade, rolling his timber to the main entrance. When the sentry would not allow Sutton to bring his prize into the compound, Sutton called for the Corporal of the Guard and obtained the necessary permission, much to the chagrin and embarrassment of the gatekeeper. After a brief rest, Sutton supervised as his "boys" dismantled their old shebang and leveled off an area for the foundation of their new quarters. When raised, the structure resembled a "corn crib" with a "shed roof" weighted by poles from the old shebang and by twenty-five cents' worth of green brush purchased from a Negro wood hauler. The following day, Sutton busied himself with cutting boards and installing bunks, while his messmates daubed the exterior.¹⁶

After the influx of Red River prisoners, Lieutenant Colonel Duganne complained that "Ford City" lost much of its village-like charm. Even though these newcomers arranged their shelters into city block patterns, the character of Ford changed to that of an "immense bivouac-ground, stretching from side to side of the low stockading." Encompassing about one acre, officers' quarters served as smaller communities within the greater aspect of "Ford City," where doorways were "shaded by a broad verandah, thick with evergreens; in some streets these verandahs joining midway," shading the area between quarters as well. Shelters for enlisted personnel and other types of prisoners occupied three sides of the stockade and were as "densely populated as the tenant-houses of a New York ward." Incorporating a broad range of architectural styles, enlisted men utilized whatever materials that they could find and supplies became more scarce as the prison population expanded. Some used upright poles with a roof composed of either a blanket, a thatch of leaves, or a bark overlay. Others constructed "palisaded mansions, eight feet square, with stakes, inserted in the earth, like picket fences, and covered with a roof of twigs." Still others contrived "basketwork" dwellings made of "ashwood peelings," or erected a clay-plastered, oak-slab roof slanting down from a six-foot mud wall. Those men who were short on material simply dug caverns into the ground. These

burrows, however, were abandoned after the first heavy rain.¹⁷

With the approach of winter, inmates realized that their quarters would not adequately shelter them from the bitter cold. Prisoner appeals for improved housing spurred the post commandant to send two separate transmissions to General E. Kirby Smith. Receiving no response, the commandant authorized four working parties, composed of eight and ten captives each, to collect timber and brush from the surrounding forest. After working every morning and afternoon for two months, these guarded details amassed enough building materials to construct adequate quarters for all prisoners.¹⁸

As the prison population expanded, guarding became an increasingly difficult duty. Major Tucker reported having only one company of militia, numbering seventy-one men, to guard 500 prisoners. He deemed this force insufficient, particularly when he had to send guards along with firewood details. In order to supplement this force, Confederate officials dispatched cavalry units to perform guard duty at the camp. The Reserve Corps, however, still shouldered the brunt of this responsibility because cavalry detachments left frequently for the battle front. Sixteen wall guards stationed on plank walks near the top of the original stockade, and treading a pathway around the low wall of the expanded version, patrolled the perimeter during the day. Each guard served two hours and was off four hours in a continuous cycle for a twenty-four hour period. At night, the guard force doubled.¹⁹

By December 22, 1863, Samuel Richardson's Cavalry had returned to their former post, guarding prisoners and retrieving deserters at Colonel Allen's request, "doing heavy, but unthanked for duty." Described by Lieutenant Colonel Duganne as "a company of partisans, who had never known real service, but had signalized themselves as kidnappers of conscripts," they harbored bitter feelings toward their Yankee underlings. These guards had been prisoners themselves at Camp Butler in Ohio less than a year before and relished the irony of their situation. Colonel Allen's benevolence toward his charges, signified by his gifts of fresh food for confined officers, was anathema to Richardson's men. Yet, insinuations that they repeatedly attempted to shoot inmates might be exaggerated.

Exhausted and overworked, Private W.W. Heartsill, a member of this unit, recorded in his diary that "guard duty is very heavy and no prospects of it becoming any lighter." His comrades had to forego a ten-day furlough because there were no relief guards. Even the arrival of Lieutenant Colonel John P. Border's cavalry regiment on April 19, 1864, did not lessen this burden "as the stockade is three times larger than formerly." Furthermore, Richardson's men shouldered the stigma of military inadequacy, heaped upon them by both soldiers and local citizens, because they merely guarded prisoners and retrieved deserters. Heartsill and his comrades longed to return to the front in order to regain their dignity. Under such pressures, it is understandable that tempers flared on occasion.

If Heartsill's comments are any indication, Richardson's men disapproved of random acts of violence. Heartsill blamed Colonel Scott Anderson's cavalrymen, who arrived for guard duty on May 15, 1864, for the shootings of two prisoners on May 22 and July 12, adding that "this makes two [inmates] that has been killed lately for trifling offenses ... and it is a shame on the

officers who will allow such outrite murder to go unpunished.²⁰

After Richardson's men left for the front on July 15, 1864, guard duty fell to Border's and Anderson's troops, as well as to the newly-arrived 15th Texas Cavalry commanded by Colonel George Sweet. In the wake of thirty desertions from Sweet's battalion, a new guard, drawn from the Reserve Corps, replaced the rest of Sweet's men on March 14, 1865, in an effort to allay fears of further treachery. As the war progressed, guards and prisoners stood on friendlier terms. Remnants of the 15th Texas Cavalry allowed inmates to roam their environs on parole after news came that Robert E. Lee had surrendered to U.S. Grant.²¹

"No medicine for the sick, no shelter, no blankets, no change of diet, a filthy camp and not enough to eat was trying to both body and soul," lamented Corporal Sutton. Lacking variety and essential nutrients, Confederate-issued provisions never satisfied an inmate's appetite. Writing his diary entry for December 23, 1863, Cowdin described the fare that he received that day: "we are issued here meal sugar, salt, and rye for coffee." Delivered to the central market-place by the Confederate commissary, rations came in bulk. Federal "weighers" divided them proportionately among the messes, normally allotting each prisoner one pint of cornmeal, a half to one pound of beef, and enough salt to season it. When prisoner officials placed captives on "short rations," portions decreased considerably.²²

Corporal Sutton complained about insufficient cornmeal rations, describing them as miserably poor at times. In order to use this staple, prisoners had to sift out large pieces of cob and husk, along with an occasional worm. Most of the time captives consumed the raw product, much to the disdain of their digestive systems. The long wait for a mush pot and pine paddle hardly seemed worth the effort, so many inmates mixed their cornmeal with water, placed the dough on a board, and propped it up over a fire to bake. When the commissary ran out of meal, it sent shelled corn in its place.²³

Augmenting the typical prison diet, the commissary later issued beef once or twice per week, with daily portions distributed by the summer of 1864. Select prisoners butchered the bovine, reserving extra portions for themselves, such as the kidneys and the liver. If issued and butchered the same day, the meat pleased the palate; however, if it aged even twenty-four hours, it became "fly-blown" and thus inedible. Each mess had a designated cook who hoisted the beef on pulleys to expose the meat to the sun's drying rays and to protect it from insect infestation. Oddly enough, according to one inmate, flies seldom bothered elevated meat portions.²⁴

Occasionally, local farmers sold their produce to the Federals, realizing that Union greenbacks wielded greater buying power than their devalued Confederate notes. In his diary entry for December 30, 1863, Cowdin recorded that he had purchased turnips and pork. Colonel Charles C. Nott of the 176th New York Infantry recalled visiting local farmhouses while on temporary parole by Colonel Allen, offering greenbacks for food items that he intended to use to prepare a New Year's "feast" for his fellow inmates. Although some farmers refused to sell their goods to "Yankees," others consented. Nott collected one small rooster, ten eggs, a peck of dried peaches and sweet potatoes, a pumpkin, and a quart of cider vinegar.²⁵

More than likely, a local trader peddled his wares inside the stockade only if the guards could not afford his extortionistic prices. Corporal Sutton remembered one Creole trader who came to sell cabbage, sweet potatoes, sacks of yellow cornmeal, pies, and cakes. Accepting a leather cavalry-artillery pouch, the sutler gave Sutton four-and-a-half bushels of yellow cornmeal. In turn, Sutton sold his stash to his comrades for twenty-five cents a quart, reserving a peck for emergency purposes. Other prisoners could not afford the Creole's goods. Unable to pay outrageous prices, an unruly mob dismantled the trader's wagon and confiscated its contents while the Creole brandished a hickory cane in self-defense. Sutton complained that he recovered only one small head of cabbage in the ensuing melee, but he beamed that Keno Corner had a new smell for dinner that evening.²⁶

Attempting to supplement their meager diets, prisoners implemented various strategies. Early in Ford's history, numerous pigs roamed the camp neighborhood, "though bacon rations seldom visited" inmates. When guarded by a "Union Texan," firewood details would kill a swine, cut it into quarters, and hide it under the gathered brush to evade the watchful eyes of the gate sentry. In another effort, many inhabitants planted "kitchen-gardens" prior to the arrival of the Red River captives, sowing seeds for "corn, rye, lettuce, sweet potatoes, water-melons, beans, peas, cabbages, and red peppers." Trampled by the onslaught by new prisoners, only a "clump of corn" and a few "green sprouts" survived.²⁷

A stickler for observation, Lieutenant Colonel Duganne wryly commented on the condition of prisoner apparel. "I wish our Uncle Abraham, or Sam, could see this *sans culotte* procession march up Pennsylvania Avenue." Atop prisoners' heads perched a variety of headgear: Zoauve caps, crowns without rims, rims without crowns, torn handkerchiefs, even "wisps of straw." With the "rank and file generally hatless, bootless, and shirtless," several captives swaddled tattered blankets around their waists to cover their nakedness. Even the earliest Ford inhabitants suffered the effects of exposure due to a lack of proper clothing. Major Tucker tried, without success, to procure badly needed shoes and blankets for his inmates. Often, prisoners sold their overcoats and extra clothing to obtain money to buy food and supplies. Not realizing that they would have to weather a record-cold winter, most captives laughingly traded their apparel for Confederate dollars. Moreover, prisoners captured during the engagement at Pleasant Hill, Louisiana, surrendered their meager belongings to angry Confederates rather than incur the violent wrath of their captors.²⁸

"In the greatest destitution," Federal prisoners appealed to their own government for new clothing since the Confederates were apparently unable to supply a new wardrobe for every prisoner. The 831 soldiers who had been captured between January 1 and September 29, 1863, had gone without a change of underwear for approximately six months. Most were shoeless, with some "naked from the waist, and some having nothing but their ragged blankets girt about them in place of trousers." Each man needed an entire "suit of clothing": one blouse, one pair of pants, one pair of shoes, two pairs of drawers, two shirts, two pairs of socks, and one blanket. Red River captives lacked only underclothing and shoes, but would require "an entire suit per man" within the following few months.²⁹

Naval prisoners were as destitute as their soldier counterparts. Most belonged to the oldest contingent present at Ford, having been transferred from Camp Groce in December 1863. Taken aboard the vessels *Morning Light*, *Velocity*, *Clifton*, and *Sachem*, these 205 inmates needed undershirts, drawers, trousers, socks, shoes, and wool shirts.³⁰

Plagued by various illnesses, Camp Ford prisoners were in dire need of medical attentions as well as sufficient clothing and a proper diet. Originally, Camp Ford had no medicines, no medical accommodations, and no post surgeon. Prisoners relied on the improvised services of their fellow captives. Surgeon J.W. Sherfy of the *Morning Light* and Surgeon David Hershay of the 84th Infantry, U.S. Colored Troops. An old Confederate surgeon who occasionally ventured into the compound received credit for saving the life of Colonel Isaac Burrell of the 42nd Massachusetts.³¹

The walls of the stockade barely contained the sea of blue-jackets that filled them to the rim throughout the spring and summer of 1864. Such a concentration of the prison population compounded the health problem tremendously. The demand for rations, clothing, and medical stores increased almost exponentially, while sanitary conditions, already poor, grew steadily worse. Reporting that disease already had ravaged the older captives, Colonel Nott commented that it was spreading rapidly throughout the new population. Acting Volunteer Lieutenant Crocker's report indicated that many seamen from *Morning Light*, *Velocity*, *Clifton*, and *Sachem* had fallen prey to deadly maladies. Both Nott and Crocker feared even greater mortality rates with the coming summer if the Federal government refused to send desperately needed medical supplies. Despite widespread sickness caused by exposure and malnutrition, only a small percentage of the prison population perished. In fact, by the time of Camp Ford's evacuation in May 1865, the cemetery contained only 282 graves.³²

At least two outbreaks of small pox threatened the health of both guards and inmates. Private W.W. Heartsill recorded on March 13, 1864, that three of his comrades served guard duty at the "Small Pox Hospital," a facility built just outside the western wall where Confederate officials quarantined infected inmates hoping to prevent a major outbreak of the disease. With the following summer came a second wave. According to 1st Sergeant Henry S. McArthur of the 75th New York Infantry, the June outbreak alarmed the Confederates more than their Federal charges since most of the prisoners had been vaccinated. Still, several inmates succumbed to the disease while under the care of a purportedly drunken doctor at the small pox hospital.³³

With many captives prostrated by illness, prison officials recognized the need for an improved hospital facility. Choosing a site approximately 300 feet from the western stockade wall, volunteer work parties erected a one-story clapboard structure, to which members of the 19th Kentucky Infantry added a smaller ward. Captain J.M. Wilcox of the 3rd Missouri Cavalry "assumed charge of the Medical Department, assisted by Maj. Morris, who had been likewise surgically educated." Other prisoners contributed their talents as well, with 1st Lieutenant James DeLemater of the 91st New York Infantry volunteering as hospital steward. By June 14, 1864, the hospital had admitted thirty-five to forty patients, seven of whom died and two of whom returned to

the stockade. The medical staff provided the best care possible in spite of limited medicines and supplies. At least, patients were able to recuperate in airy rooms with clean bedding and benefited from increased rations.³⁴

Appointed as surgeon-in-charge by Colonel Anderson in June 1864, F.W. Meagher saw no way to restore health to the Ford compound. Overcrowding and filth inevitably bred infirmity. Of the 4500 confined prisoners, enlisted personnel suffered the most due to inadequate, and sometimes nonexistent, housing. Facing local prejudice toward Union prisoners, the new hospital staff searched in vain for better bedding and additional medical stores.³⁵

By the time Captain Robert Henderson of the 6th Kansas Cavalry arrived at Camp Ford on July 14, 1864, a second addition had been added to the hospital facility. Faced by an overwhelming clientele, the medical staff erected an open-air lean-to, described as "crotches set in the ground, covered with brush," where nurses bunked their patients on "fourteen-foot board[s] raised slightly at one end ... deemed ample bedding for two."³⁶

Still, rampant disease wreaked havoc on the prison population, Colonel George H. Sweet, commandant of the prison in October 1864, received orders from his superior, Major General John G. Walker, to make his captives comfortable in the midst of terrible suffering. Unable to spare a medical officer of his own, Walker appealed to Surgeon D.W. Yandell in Shreveport, hoping that supplies and personnel could be sent from Marshall or Shreveport to establish a general hospital. But little outside help arrived. Inundated with ill captives, the hospital underwent a final expansion in the spring of 1865. Affording little comfort to ailing men, the enlarged facility lacked sanitary supplies and medicines.³⁷

If a prisoner could not afford to supplement his diet with fresh produce and meat, he suffered the ravages of nutritional deficiency. Diarrhea afflicted the majority because their diet seldom varied. 1st Lieutenant Cowdin recorded that he awoke five times one night, with diarrhea troubling him "considerably" shortly after his arrival at Camp Ford. Both Private Thomas H. Pace and Private Etheanan Burks of the 3rd Iowa Cavalry testified that their messmate Private Xerxes Knox suffered from diarrhea, like most prisoners. Scurvy was a prevalent disease among inmates, due to a lack of fresh vegetables, especially those containing citric acid. In February 1865, a shipment of supplies arrived, courtesy of the Federal government, containing vegetables to combat this disease. In addition, Lieutenant Colonel J.C. Jemison, the current commander, allowed three parties, composed of the 77th Illinois, the 130th Illinois, and the 120th Ohio Volunteer Infantries, to enclose and cultivate a six-acre garden near the stockade, with seed donated by Jemison himself. In place of a team, a dozen inmates pulled the plow through the field.³⁸

Many prisoners suffered from "sore eyes," a condition most likely brought on by Vitamin A deficiency and manifested by sudden temporary blindness lasting several days, followed by visual recovery, but accompanied by sharp pain. Sutton, stricken himself, remarked that this condition "let many strong spirits down and done it in a way that it was difficult to rally up again." Most inmates recovered; however, some became pitiful "blind wrecks" after a relapse, losing their minds in the process.³⁹

Another prevalent ailment was the "itch." Sutton and his regiment

suffered from this condition when they first arrived at Camp Ford. In return for five dollars, a Confederate brought Sutton a quart of sulphur, a portion of which he mixed with grease and applied like a poultice. The rest of the squad partook of Sutton's remedy and experienced speedy relief.⁴⁰

Contending with "vermin and reptiles," prisoners faced the constant threat of bites and infestation. Centipedes and scorpions shared the same quarters as captives, and one early inhabitant died from a tarantula attack. "Beetles, bugs, and aphides" were also a common sight, as was the ever-present louse. Snakes made fewer appearances, but venomous varieties occasionally stowed away in firewood brought in by prisoner details.⁴¹

Filth reigned inside the stockade, particularly during Ford's early history. At first, there were no sink systems, and the grounds were never policed. Colonel Allen left sanitation duty to the prisoners themselves and early organizational attempts were thwarted by conflicts of authority among captives. Eventually dug with the planning of "Ford City," sinks reduced widespread uncleanness. Still, the problem of trash removal remained. Sutton recorded that maggot-filled piles containing "bones, lice, hair, rags, filth of an indescribable kind" filled the compound. The initial remedy was burning, but soon fire would not "take hold." Sutton approached Colonel Anderson about the situation to no avail. Not taken seriously until a Confederate officer stepped backward into one of the refuse piles while calling roll one morning, Sutton finally convinced Anderson to provide a wagon, a team, and some shovels with which captives could remove trash from the stockade. Choosing a "small, boyish looking" inmate to drive the cart, Colonel Anderson gave him directions to a dump site and designated a special guard detail to oversee operations.⁴²

Physically, Federal prisoners suffered miserably due to a dearth of appropriate medical care. Spiritually and emotionally, captives maintained a sense of hope because of their undying patriotism. Despite feelings of neglect by the United States government in matters of supplies and exchange, captives resented "any flings or insults" toward the American flag and expressed "sentiments within them by singing national songs" and by celebrating important national holidays.⁴³

Planning a grand celebration for Washington's Birthday in 1864, confined officers arranged a program of events that included an oration by Lieutenant Colonel Leake and the reading of an original poem by Lieutenant Colonel Duganne. In honor of the occasion, prisoners held a mock election for the offices of governor, lieutenant governor, secretary of state, treasurer, superintendent of insane hospitals, and attorney general. A voter registration board, overseen by Surgeon J.W. Sherfy, 1st Lieutenant John P. Robens of the 176th New York Infantry, and 2nd Lieutenant Charles Avery of the 25th Connecticut Infantry, manned the polls, open from sunrise to sunset. Sam Morton of Indians won the governor's seat and was "taken in a chair through the camp with great *eclat*." Ending the day's festivities with a grand ball, captives enjoyed the stirring renditions of their "singing club," as well as several patriotic tunes played by a "band of minstrels" composed of violinist Captain William H. May of the 23rd Connecticut Infantry, banjo player Engineer R.W. Mars of the *Diana*, flutist Captain Samuel E. Thomason of the 176th New York Infantry, and fife player 1st Lieutenant Elisha J. Collins of the

26th Indiana Infantry. The most memorable event of the day, however, did not appear on the program. Springing from the door of the Hawkeye Mess, a survivor of the *Morning Light* waved a tattered American flag, quickly hiding it to avoid detection by the guards.⁴⁴

Similar festivities marked the July 4th holiday in 1864, championed by Colonel Isaac Burrell. Prisoners raised a platform under the verandah of Lieutenant Colonel Duganne's cabin, winding red, white, and blue blankets around the posts. Marked by much oration, poetry, and singing, this assemblage was twice threatened by irate guards. Unaware that Lieutenant Colonel John P. Border, prison commandant, had given his permission for such an event, sentries ordered the inmates to disperse. The celebration proceeded as planned when the officer of the day verified Border's consent. Toasting without drinks, revelers crooned "The Star-Spangled Banner" and "God Save America." Once again, a patriotic inmate (this time a survivor the *Clifton*) unfurled the American flag, much to the delight of his fellow prisoners.⁴⁵

In addition to patriotism, faith in God also sustained forlorn prisoners' hopes throughout their lengthy confinements. Chaplains Hamilton Robb of the 46th Indiana Infantry and John S. McCulloch of the 77th Illinois Infantry tried to evoke "religious sentiment" with frequent prayer meetings, held almost every evening when weather permitted. Religious officers even bestowed the rites of baptism on some converts, such as 2nd Lieutenant Brown P. Stowell of the 42nd Massachusetts Infantry. With the hearty approval of Colonel Allen, an ardent Free Will Baptist, chaplains conducted interdenominational services every Sunday morning near the Quartermaster's Grave, the final resting place of 1st Lieutenant John F. Kimball of the 176th New York Infantry. With chaplains benefiting from frequent exchange because of their noncombative mission, religious duties changed hands often. In fact, the Confederate guards' chaplain preached twice. The only chaplain who faced lengthy confinement was Reverent H.B. Lamb, whose service with a black regiment entailed deep prejudices among his Rebel captors.⁴⁶

Religion was only a part of daily life at Camp Ford. Rising before dawn, inmates filled the main thoroughfare, calling to one another and gathering "fuel, rations, and water vessels." After a quick wash at the spring and a nibble of breakfast, captives reported to the appropriate ward for roll call at the prompting of the Confederate drummer. A mounted adjutant, followed by approximately twenty musketed guards and several officers holding prisoner lists, entered the compound and busied themselves with separate Union detachments. Initially, officers called or spelled out names, listening for a response. Later, officials instituted a numerical count to deter captives from answering for escapees. In at least one instance, headcounting counteracted the effects of illiteracy among Confederate roll officers. The sergeant in charge of Sutton's ward deputized "the First Sergeant of each Yankee Company to call" instead of carrying out the duty himself. Sutton suspected that this Rebel could not read and proved his suspicions by omitting several names while the Confederate looked over his shoulder.⁴⁷

After dismissal at roll call, officials allowed their inmates free range of the stockade. Various activities ensued, depending on the inclinations of individual prisoners. Some wiled away their time by "gambling, cheating,

stealing, and fighting." Gambling activities were constant and varied at Keno Corner, according to Sutton, and were the perpetual target of Lieutenant Colonel Border's adjutant, Lieutenant B.W. McEachen. Described as a "swell-headed hellyon" who only behaved properly if his superiors were nearby, Lieutenant McEachen tried his best to break up games of chance, such as Keno. Some prisoners shared Lieutenant McEachen's views on the subject, particularly because several of their counterparts held tampered lotteries wherein donors "in two thirds of the cases, draw the prizes themselves."⁴⁸

Not everyone engaged in such pursuits. Some men attempted to grow gardens while others occupied themselves with repairs to their quarters. Still others read books, played chess, and engaged in intellectual conversation. According to Duganne, "more venerable prisoners" sat and gossiped "in their armchairs" while younger captives played various forms of sports, including baseball and quoits, a game similar to horseshoes. Several inmates erected turning-poles and parallel bars in the central square for physical exercise. By far, the most impressive activity in "Ford City" was the establishment of a commercial district where prisoners provided goods and services for their fellow captives, and for their guards in some instances.⁴⁹

Passing along the wisdom that he gained while confined at Camp Groce, Colonel Nott urged lethargic prisoners to become industrious and to use whatever talents they had to help pass the time. Among the first products to appear were handcarved trinkets such as "rings, toothpicks, combs, dominoes, and dice." Rings were a favorite "Reb" trinket, bought at "fancy" prices. Invariably, guards went away grumbling about a "damn Yankee trick." Other items fetched handsome prices as well, such as a set of chessmen carved by 1st Lieutenant John A. Woodward of the 23rd Connecticut Infantry that brought in fifty dollars in greenbacks.⁵⁰

Acting Master Amos Johnson devised Ford's first turning-lathe and "inaugurated chair-making," producing every style: "Gothic, rustic, cane-backed, willow-woven, grape-vine-wrought, and oaken-ribben." He gave his first issue to his messmate, acting Volunteer Lieutenant Frederick Crocker. Other captives imitated Johnson and turned wooden trinkets on hand-made machines, including 1st Lieutenant Woodward and Acting 3rd Assistant Engineer William Johnson of the *Diana*.⁵¹

Nearly every occupation manifested itself in some form in the business district. Ford City boasted a tailor, a cobbler, a baker, a banker – and two editors. Captain William May, violinist for the local band, hand-scribed a small newspaper called *The Old Flag*, a venue for tongue-in-cheek commentaries on prison life, announcements of upcoming events, and advertisements for local businesses. Issued only three times (February 17, March 1, and March 13, 1864), it enlivened many monotonous days as it passed from hand to hand throughout the stockade. Its advertisers included Stevens' Drug Store; L.P. Walsh, cigar manufacturer; C. Bailey, "Professional Hair-Cutter;" Dr. Hershey, "Physician and Surgeon;" and H. Hay-Ley's "Soap Manufactory." Captain Lewis Burger contrived another news sheet, issued only once on May 1, 1865, called *The Camp Ford News*.⁵²

Corporal Sutton ventured into the commercial realm as well. Finding that he needed more money to buy tobacco, Sutton refused to gamble away what

little funds he had left. One day, he met Private James Doran, of Company D, 83rd Ohio Infantry, who ran a shaving business. Seeing an opportunity, Sutton used his last five dollars to procure a pair of scissors from the sailors' quarters. Forming a partnership, Doran agreed to do all the shaving and half the shampooing if Sutton would shampoo and cut hair. Clearing at least five dollars every day, Doran and Sutton charged ten cents per haircut, ten cents per shave, and twenty-five cents per shampoo. Eventually, these two inmates sought to expand their business, setting up shop on the north side of Sutton's mess. The new shop had two stools, one with a slip yoke to adjust its height. Whenever they experienced an occasional lag in patronage, Sutton would perch himself atop one of the stools and "run over all the tom foolery" that he could muster and would then auction anything he had for sale or trade. Most of the time, Doran and Sutton "got steady work ... from sun up to sun down." Business was so profitable, in fact, that Sutton hired a messmate to cook his supper.⁵³

Longing to hear news from home and from the front, inmates yearned to receive mail. Letters that eventually arrived were few and far between, as in the case of Captain Cyrus Savage and 2nd Lieutenant Thaddeus H. Newcomb of the 42nd Massachusetts Infantry. They received letters on June 10, 1864, that were dated February 28 and March 4. Prisoners could not send or receive mail, except under a flag of truce. Mail service quickened during the last six months at Camp Ford, subject to thorough examination by prison officials. Gathering eagerly around the mail orderly, captives passed letters overhead to joyful recipients.⁵⁴

Another source of information involved the so-called "police telegraph," an unsuspected method of talking with Union sympathizers who were incarcerated in the "wolf-pen." Selected captives took turns committing minor transgressions, such as being late for roll call. For these petty infractions, violators spent the day in the "wolf-pen," restricted to corn and water. A leisurely day of conversation ensued, a comfort to both Federal inmates and Southern Unionists.⁵⁵

Aside from *The Old Flag* and *The Camp Ford News*, prisoners perused weekly Southern newspapers and devoured occasional Northern issues. Mr. Cushing, editor of the *Houston Tri-Weekly Telegraph*, regularly sent his paper to Lieutenant Colonel Duganne and Acting Volunteer Lieutenant Crocker, who deemed it fairly accurate despite its obvious Southern bias. Cushing also sent Duganne a "half-ream of good writing-paper" with which Duganne replenished his own stock and which he shared with his fellow captives.⁵⁶

The world outside of the stockade fascinated the captives penned inside, and the lure of freedom inspired many to plot their own inconspicuous exists. Escape attempts were numerous but on the whole, unsuccessful. Obstacles abounded, both inside the stockade and outside the compound as well. With increasing attempts, guards watched prisoners more intently and roll officers counted inmates more thoroughly. Once an escapee passed through the stockade, abundant pickets and conscripts were likely to spot him. Furthermore, an "old

western trapper” named Chillicothe circled the perimeter every morning with a dozen hunting dogs, hoping to catch a fresh trail. Described by Sutton as “meaner than the dogs in his keeping,” Chillicothe boasted that he could “out-Indian Indians.” If an escapee was fortunate enough to evade this “expert tracker,” he had to battle intense hunger and exhaustion. Union lines were usually more than 300 miles away, a distance too great to travel on an empty stomach. Turned in by loyal farmwives, most recaptured inmates deeply regretted going to a nearby house to beg for food.⁴⁷

Despite the overwhelming odds, prisoners still attempted to escape. Their methods were various, ranging from tunneling out to hiding under the trash in the dump cart. One prisoner even slipped away while serving on a firewood detail. Joseph T. Mills of the 77th Illinois Volunteer Infantry happened across a disabled prisoner from the 6th Kansas Cavalry, who agreed to fill the void in the detail if Mills or his accomplice John T. Roberts – a spy employed in “Lieutenant Earl’s United States Secret Service” posing as a member of the 2nd New York Cavalry – chose to flee. Roberts took the initiative, and Mills joined him later that evening by scaling the stockade wall.⁴⁸

Tunneling was the least effective means of egress because tracking dogs easily picked up scents at the obvious opening in the ground. One effort failed before anyone even ventured to break ground outside of the stockade. Around mid-February 1864, members of the “Hawkeye Mess” began tunneling through the floor of their fireplace, covering the opening with a false bottom. The shaft shank eight feet deep and pointed toward the northern stockade wall, leading to the Quartermaster’s Grave, just beyond the line of sentinels. Digging in shifts, messmates packed excess dirt into a cigar box and dumped it in the fireplaces of neighboring quarters, ostensibly to “raise the hearths,” thereby allaying suspicion. Operations seemed to be proceeding well until another inmate informed the guard about their plan. Most of these prisoners later escaped with Lieutenant Colonel Augustine D. Rose of the 26th Indiana Volunteer Infantry by pulling back a stockade post while the band and singing club distracted the guard with a stirring rendition of “Dixie.” Not even reaching the Sabine River, the forces of exhaustion and the instinct of Chillicothe led to their speedy recapture.⁴⁹

Others tried to escape by hiding under the trash in the dump cart. Loyal to his comrades, the driver knew of every maneuver and dumped his load in an advantageous spot, being careful not to arouse suspicion. In order to divert guard’s attention, inmates would try to vend their trinkets. If that method failed, two men would feign a fight, awaiting the signal to disperse – a shovel striking the cart wheels. In the meantime, accomplices would cover two escapees with blankets and pile refuse on top of them. Unimpeded, the cart passed through the upper gate and headed for the dump site. If a potential escapee failed in either timing or attempt, he lost his turn in the “Palace Cart.”⁵⁰

Private Horace B. Little of the 43rd Indiana Infantry complained that he had nothing to do but plan his escape when he arrived at Camp

Ford. After much consternation, Little decided to forge a nurse's pass with the help of a New Yorker with excellent penmanship. He had to find two accomplices because all nurses had two assistants; otherwise, he would arouse the sentry's suspicion. Other members of the 43rd Indiana answered for Little and his comrades until the eighth day after their escape, when officials held a general muster. When Little and his allies did not answer roll, the guards immediately put the hounds on their trail, but to no avail.⁶¹

Despite consistently being recaptured, Private Xerxes Knox of the 3rd Iowa Cavalry persisted in his attempts to flee Camp Ford. His first adventure, in late June 1864, took him over the stockade wall, with the aid of his messmate Private Etheanan Burks, only to be recaptured and chained to a log at the guard-house on July 4, 1864. In early August he tried again. Knox and an accomplice named Brown left the stockade by way of the "Palace Cart," making it all the way to Fort Gibson in Indian Territory on September 5. Recaptured once more, he left Ford yet again on November 19, 1864 – this time successfully.⁶²

As the war progressed and the guards became more lax, prisoners began to "exchange" themselves, using passes written by sympathetic sentinels. Within one week, approximately 100 inmates left the compound under these pretenses. Prison commandant Jemison, visibly annoyed that his guards were instrumental in such escapes, conferred with his superior officer, Tyler post commander Colonel W.R. Bradfute, who issued an order revoking any paroles or leave passes that did not bear his personal approval. Thereafter, firewood details went out only under heavy guard, and a new curfew required all inmates to remain in their quarters from sunset to dawn, with the call for lights out at 8:00 p.m. Under orders to shoot any violators, guards became ever more vigilant in their patrols, not wanting to incur the wrath of their superiors. In one notable incident, a captive who had obtained permission from two guards to leave his quarters in order to visit the sinks fell victim to a third guard's fire as he stopped over his doorsill.⁶³

Invariably, those prisoners who tried to escape did not trust that prisoner exchange agents would rescue them from captivity. Indeed, such relief offered no promise because the Union War Department suspended the cartel in 1863. 1st Lieutenant Cowdin noted in his diary entry on December 28, 1863, that a letter from Colonel Leake's contingent, sent forth for exchange at Shreveport on Christmas Day, stated that their paroles had been revoked. Along with the Camp Groce enlisted captives sent to Louisiana earlier in December, these despondent men marched back to Camp Ford in the latter part of March, dispelling all hope of further exchange. Sutton commented that many inmates harbored hard feelings toward Federal government and could not understand this situation. They felt that exchange agents had grown unsympathetic to their plight, believing that if these officials could experience captivity, exchange would be more frequent.⁶⁴

Irate inmates later realized that Federal officials had a valid reason to curtail the exchange process. Northern and Southern agents fought

bitterly over the status of black captives, with the Confederacy tending to treat black Federals quite differently than white soldiers and sailors. In a letter to Major General Benjamin F. Butler, Lieutenant General Ulysses S. Grant made his intentions quite clear. In matters of exchange, no plausible distinction could be made between white and black prisoners, "the only question being, were they at the time of their capture in the military service of the United States." Any distinction made or prejudice shown by Confederate exchange officials constituted a breach of further exchange negotiations. Most prisoners braced themselves for a lengthy stay, confident that their government would do all that it could "without compromising principle or honor." Nor did prisoners realize that the treatment of black troops was not the only issue at stake. Confederates consistently returned parolees to active duty, proclaiming them exchanged due to alleged "technical irregularities" present in their paperwork. Grant argued that the Confederate army benefited from exchange, replenishing its dwindling ranks with relatively healthy troops, while captives in Southern pens were unable to return to duty because they suffered from disease and malnutrition.⁶⁵

Naval exchange experienced a two-year delay because Confederates refused to trade sailors for anyone except other naval personnel. The only Confederate naval inmates in Union hands, however, were a few captives from Mobile Bay. Since these prisoners were not members of the Trans-Mississippi Department, they could not be readily swapped for naval inmates confined at Camp Ford. Major Ignatius Szymanski, Confederate exchange agent for the Trans-Mississippi Department, had to obtain authorization from the Confederate capitol at Richmond, Virginia, before initiating any naval trade.⁶⁶

With the spring and summer of 1864 came more frequent incidences of exchange. Shortly after Lieutenant Colonel Rose and his allies attempted to escape through the stockade wall, Lieutenant Colonel Leake's contingent marched once again to Shreveport to be forwarded for exchange near Alexandria. Early May brought a visit from a Confederate officer who recorded names of many prisoners in preparation for a June 1st exchange of approximately 200 ill Union inmates. Around the first of July, chaplains captured at Mansfield, surgeons, and several civilian prisoners left under parole, but without an escort. To the overwhelming joy of the older captives, Colonel Isaac Burrell announced the arrival of a Confederate paroling officer on July 5. Preparing for their July 9th departure, enraptured prisoners spent July 7 and 8 baking "hard bread" for the march to Shreveport. On the morning of July 9, 930 officers and enlisted left Camp Ford to return to their units. With July 28 came the exchange of several Ford inmates for members of the Louisiana brigade and for all Confederate Army officers and enlisted personnel then held by General Steele. Still another exchange took place on October 1, with approximately 600 men leaving the stockade.⁶⁷

Coming with the month of May 1865 were rumors of the Lincoln assassination and Lee's surrender to Grant. On May 13, Captain Birchett, a Confederate paroling officer, brought in a large mail ship-

ment and several Northern newspapers, all of which confirmed those rampant whisperings. On May 14, most of the Reserve Corps dismissed themselves, leaving only the 15th Texas Cavalry to guard. Not concerned with the activities of their charges, these guards allowed the inmates to roam the countryside freely, and to the credit of both Confederates and Federals, there were no incidences of violence. Awaiting rations from Tyler, captives spent three more days in the old stockade. When provisions did not arrive, Confederates procured a wagon and ox team to transport those prisoners who were too weak to march to Shreveport. Before leaving Ford forever, a detail under 1st Lieutenant Henry J. Wyman and 2nd Lt. Charles F. McCulloch of the 77th Illinois Infantry erected a post and rail fence around the small prison cemetery, enclosing one acre of land and 282 graves. Union occupation forces quickly descended on the town of Tyler after Ford's prisoners departed. "Maj. Thomas D. Fredenburg and a detail of the Tenth Illinois Cavalry" destroyed the stockade, relishing their actions as they remembered their own confinement at Camp Ford.⁶⁵

Despite limited resources and infrequent exchanges, Union prisoners confined at Camp Ford managed to relieve the obvious monotony that captivity entailed. Through industrial and recreational pursuits, captives maintained their sanity and sense of self-worth while patriotism and religious faith fostered hope for freedom and dreams of home. Developing almost familial relationships with their fellow inmates, Camp Ford captives endured seemingly endless confinement as a loyal community, determined to uphold the ideals of their country.

NOTES

¹S.A. Swiggett, *The Bright Side of Prison Life* (Baltimore, MD, 1897) p. 44; W.H. Bentley, *History of the 77th Illinois Volunteer Infantry* (Peoria, IL, 1883) p. 304; Albert Woldert, *A History of Tyler and Smith County, Texas* (San Antonio, TX, 1948) p. 40. Bentley estimated that the prisoner population of Ford eventually reached 4700, whereas W.W. Funderburgh, a former Ford guard, told Woldert that the total population, including guards, peaked at 6000.

²F. Lee Lawrence and Robert W. Glover, *Camp Ford C.S.A.: The Story of Union Prisoners in Texas* (Austin, TX, 1964) pp. 3-5; W.W. Heartsill, *Fourteen Hundred and 91 Days in the Confederate Army*. Bell Irvin Wiley, ed. (Wilmington, NC, 1987) p. 191.

³Lawrence and Glover, *Camp Ford*, pp. 4, 6-7.

⁴A.J.H. Duganne, *Camps and Prisons: Twenty Months in the Department of the Gulf* (New York, 1865) pp. 329-330.

⁵Lawrence and Glover, *Camp Ford*, pp. 4-6; Maj. Thomas F. Tucker, letter to Maj. E.P. Turner, November 7, 1863, in *The War of the Rebellion: A Compilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate Armies* (Washington, DC, 1880-1901) II, 6, p. 484 (hereafter *OR*); David G. MacLean, ed., *Prisoner of the Rebels in Texas: The Civil War Narrative of Aaron T. Sutton, Corporal, 83rd Ohio Volunteer Infantry* (Decatur, IN, 1978) p. 11; Woldert, *History*, pp. 39-40; Horace B. Little, "Reminiscences of the Civil War: Escape from Fort Tyler Prison," *Indiana Magazine of History* 13 (March 1917): pp. 42, 45; Bentley, *History*, p. 288.

⁶Gary E. Wilson, ed., "Diary of a Union Prisoner in Texas," *Southern Studies* 23 (Spring 1984): p. 118; Heartsill, *1491*, pp. 192, 199, 200; Charles P. Bosson, *History of the Forty-Second Regiment Infantry, Massachusetts Volunteers, 1862, 1863, 1864* (Boston, 1886) pp. 427, 432-433; Charles C. Nott, Lt. Col. J.B. Leake, Lt. Col. A.D. Rose, Lt. Col. John Cowan, and Capt. E.B. Hall, letter to General Comdg. U.S. Forces, Department of the Gulf, June 7, 1864, in *OR* II, 7, p. 208. Nott reported that 831 prisoners at Ford had been captured between January 1, 1863, and September 29, 1863.

⁷Charles C. Nott, *Sketches in Prison Camps*, 3rd ed. (New York, 1865) p. 192; Duganne, *Camps*, p. 376; Bentley, *History*, p. 290; Heartsill, *1491*, pp. 200-210, 204-209.

¹²Woldert, *History*, p. 39; Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 335-336; Bentley, *History*, p. 305.

¹³Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 336-337; MacLean, *Prisoner*, p. 11.

¹⁴Tucker to Turner, November 7, 1863, *OR* II, 6, p. 484; Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 329-330; Wilson, "Diary," p. 118; Bosson, *History*, p. 427.

¹⁵Wilson, "Diary," pp. 118-119; Bosson, *History*, p. 427.

¹⁶Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 328-329, 338-339.

¹⁷Swiggett, *Bright*, p. 46; Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 333, 377.

¹⁸Bentley, *History*, pp. 288-289; MacLean, *Prisoner*, pp. 12-13; Duganne, *Camps*, p. 376; Lawrence, *Camp*, pp. 5-6.

¹⁹MacLean, *Prisoner*, pp. 12-13. Keno is "a gambling game in which players cover numbers on their cards as those numbers are chosen from the cage ('goose') or wheel of chance. The first five numbers in a row wins the prize. Similar to lotto or bingo." (Maclean, *Prisoner*, p. 174).

²⁰MacLean, *Prisoner*, pp. 18-20.

²¹Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 376-377.

²²Bentley, *History*, p. 291.

²³Tucker to Turner, November 7, 1863, *OR* II, 6, p. 484; Thomas Ludwell Bryan, "The Old Stockade," *Chronicles of Smith County, Texas* 12 (Summer 1973): p. 24; Little, "Reminiscences," p. 45; Woldert, *History*, p. 40. White males who could not serve in regular Confederate organizations because they were either younger than eighteen or older than forty-five years of age performed guard duty and local defense as members of the Reserve Corps. (Lawrence and Glover, *Camp Ford*, p. 39.)

²⁴Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 330-331; Heartsill, *1491*, pp. 191, 197, 198, 199, 201, 204, 205, 206, 210.

²⁵Swiggett, *Bright*, p. 112; Heartsill, *1491*, p. 210; Bentley, *History*, p. 298; Woldert, *History*, p. 40.

²⁶MacLean, *Prisoner*, p. 20; Wilson, "Diary," p. 118; General Affidavit, Thomas H. Pace, July 30, 1888 (Xerxes Knox Papers, Smith County Historical Society Archives, Tyler, Texas, hereafter SCHSA); Duganne, *Camps*, p. 377; Bentley, *History*, p. 292.

²⁷MacLean, *Prisoner*, p. 36; Little, "Reminiscences," p. 43; Bentley, *History*, pp. 290, 292.

²⁸MacLean, *Prisoner*, p. 36; Duganne, *Camps*, p. 387.

²⁹Wilson, "Diary," p. 119; Nott, *Sketches*, pp. 153-156.

³⁰MacLean, *Prisoner*, pp. 37-38; Bentley, *History*, p. 295.

³¹Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 376-378.

³²Duganne, *Camps*, p. 381; Tucker to Turner, November 7, 1863, *OR* II, 6, p. 484; Bosson, *History*, pp. 432-433, 435; Nott, et al., to General Comdg., June 7, 1864, *OR* II, 7, p. 208.

³³Col. Charles C. Nott, Lt. Col. J.B. Leake, Lt. Col. John Cowan, and Capt. E.G. Hall, letter to Gen. E. Kirby Smith, June 7, 1864, in *OR* II, 7, p. 208.

³⁴Frederick Crocker, letter to Rear-Admiral D.G. Farragut, June 7, 1864, in *OR* II, 7, p. 209.

³⁵Bosson, *History*, p. 432.

³⁶Nott, et al., to General Comdg., June 7, 1864, *OR* II, 7, p. 209; Crocker to Farragut, June 7, 1864, *OR* II, 7, p. 209; Bentley, *History*, p. 305. Nott requested a six-month supply of medicines for 4,527 men: "Quinine, calomel, blue mass, proto iodide of mercury, muriated tinc, iron, nitrate silver, nitrate potash, sulphate magnesia, small quantity of assorted medicine, castile soap, opium, Dover's powders, morphine, ipecac, antimony, carbonate ammonia, camphor (gum), stimulants." Crocker requested most of these items for his naval comrades as well.

³⁷Heartsill, *1491*, pp. 198, 208-209; Henry McArthur, *Memoir 1863-1864, Biography 1835-1905*, (*Civil War Times Illustrated* Collection, United States Army Military History Institute, Carlisle, PA), pp. 31, 34-35.

³⁸Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 414-415.

³⁹Meagher to Hayden, June 14, 1864, in Duganne, *Camps*, p. 415.

⁴⁰George W. Martin, "A Kansas Soldier's Escape from Camp Ford, Texas," *Transactions of the Kansas State Historical Society* 8 (1903-1904): p. 409.

⁴¹J.G. Walker, letter to Col. George H. Sweet, Oct. 2, 1864, in *OR* II, 7, p. 913; J.G. Walker, letter to Surgeon D.W. Yandell, Oct. 2, 1864, in *OR* II, 7, p. 913; Bentley, *History*, pp. 298-305.

⁴²Wilson, "Diary," pp. 118-119; General Affidavit, Thomas H. Pace, July 30, 1888 (Xerxes Knox Papers, SCHSA); General Affidavit, E.W. Burks, September 21, 1886 (Xerxes Knox Papers, SCHSA); Bentley, *History*, pp. 298-299; J.M. McCulloch, letter to "Colonel," Feb. 8, 1865, in *OR* II, 8, p. 196.

- ³⁹MacLean, *Prisoner*, pp. 35-36.
- ⁴⁰MacLean, *Prisoner*, p. 11.
- ⁴¹Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 382-384.
- ⁴²Bosson, *History*, p. 431; Swiggett, *Bright*, p. 46; MacLean, *Prisoner*, pp. 22-24; Little, "Reminiscences," p. 43.
- ⁴³Bosson, *History*, 436; Nott, et al., to General Comdg., June 7, 1864. *OR II*, 7, 208.
- ⁴⁴Bosson, *History*, pp. 428-429; Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 339-340; *The Old Flag*, February 17, 1864: p. 1; Bentley, *History*, p. 294; Captain William May, "They Raised 'Old Glory,'" in *The Old Flag: 50th Anniversary, 1864-1914* (Bridgeport, CT. 1914).
- ⁴⁵Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 417-418; McArthur Memoir (CWTI Collection, USAMHI), p. 35.
- ⁴⁶Bosson, *History*, pp. 433-434; Bentley, *History*, p. 294; Swiggett, *Bright*, p. 61; Duganne, *Camps*, p. 410.
- ⁴⁷Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 380-381, 387; Swiggett, *Bright*, pp. 53-54; MacLean, *Prisoner*, pp. 53-54.
- ⁴⁸Little, "Reminiscences," p. 43; Bentley, *History*, p. 293; MacLean, *Prisoner*, pp. 13, 21; Lawrence and Glover, *Camp Ford*, pp. 44-45.
- ⁴⁹*The Old Flag* 17 Feb. 1864: p. 2; Bosson, *History*, p. 428; Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 361, 387, 389; Bentley, *History*, p. 293.
- ⁵⁰Nott, *Sketches*, p. 170; MacLean, *Prisoner*, p. 21; *The Old Flag* February 17, 1864: p. 2.
- ⁵¹Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 334-335, 337.
- ⁵²Bentley, *History*, p. 293; *The Old Flag* February 17, 1864: p. 4; Bosson, *History*, p. 429; Lawrence and Glover, *Camp Ford*, p. 37n.
- ⁵³MacLean, *Prisoner*, pp. 15-16, 20.
- ⁵⁴Bosson, *History*, p. 435; Bentley, *History*, p. 292.
- ⁵⁵Duganne, *Camps*, p. 336.
- ⁵⁶Duganne, *Camps*, p. 358.
- ⁵⁷Nott, *Sketches*, pp. 179-180; MacLean, *Prisoner*, p. 28; Duganne, *Camps*, p. 354; Little, "Reminiscences," p. 44. Most accounts refer to Chillicothe's dogs as bloodhounds; however, they were most likely of the "common East Texas hound variety, used even today to hunt raccoons and foxes." Accustomed to human scents, these may have been "Negro dogs," used to track fugitive slaves. (Lawrence and Glover, *Camp Ford*, p. 55)
- ⁵⁸"Joseph T. Mills," typescript biographical sketch (SCHSA) pp. 1-2.
- ⁵⁹Swiggett, *Bright*, pp. 66-67, 71, 91; Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 346-354; Woldert, *History*, p. 40.
- ⁶⁰MacLean, *Prisoner*, pp. 30-32.
- ⁶¹Little, "Reminiscences," pp. 43-48.
- ⁶²General Affidavit, E.W. Burks, September 21, 1886 (Xerxes Knox Papers, SCHSA); Statement of Etheanan W. Burks, January 29, 1889 (Xerxes Knox Papers, SCHSA); Xerxes Knox, letter to James Garner, March 31, 1889 (Xerxes Knox Papers, SCHSA); War Department Adjutant General's Office, Washington, to Commissioner of Pensions, August 5, 1886. (Xerxes Knox Papers, SCHSA).
- ⁶³Bentley, *History*, pp. 299-301.
- ⁶⁴Bosson, *History*, p. 428; Wilson, "Diary," p. 119; S.S. Anderson, letter to Maj. Gen. Magruder, November 10, 1863. in *OR II*, 6, pp. 498-499; MacLean, *Prisoner*, p. 36.
- ⁶⁵U.S. Grant, letter to Maj. Gen. B.F. Butler, April 17, 1864, in *OR II*, 7, pp. 62-63; McCulloch, letter to "Colonel," February 8, 1865, *OR II*, 8, p. 196; James McPherson, *Battle Cry of Freedom: The Civil War Era* (New York, 1988), pp. 792, 799.
- ⁶⁶Charles C. Dwight, letter to Maj. Gen. E.R.S. Canby, October 28, 1864, in *OR II*, 7, p. 1057; Ig. Szymanski, letter to Charles C. Dwight, September 4, 1864, in *OR II*, 7, p. 764.
- ⁶⁷Duganne, *Camps*, pp. 358, 416; MacLean, *Prisoner*, pp. 20-21; Bosson, *History*, pp. 435-436; "Cariel for the Exchange of Prisoners Captured, Respectively, from the Commands of Maj. Gen. E.R.S. Canby, U.S. Army, and General E. Kirby Smith, C.S. Army, Made at Red River Landing, LA., July 28, 1864; in *OR II*, 7, p. 508; Bentley, *History*, p. 290.
- ⁶⁸Bentley, *History*, pp. 301-303, 305; Swiggett, *Bright*, pp. 216-218; Lawrence and Glover, *Camp Ford*, p. 79.