THE MALADMINISTRATION OF LIBBY AND ANDERSONVILLE PRISON CAMPS

A Study of Mismanagement and Inept Logistical Policies at Two Southern Prisoner-of-war Camps during the Civil War

In Accordance with the Requirements and Procedures of Interdepartmental 499.0

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by

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INTRODUCTION

Prisoner-of-war suffering has been perhaps the most unfortunate ramification of war itself. It is this paper's purpose to analyze the original cause of prisoner-of-war suffering in the Confederate States of America during the American Civil War.

Certainly, the problem of legitimate treatment of prisoners-of-war still plagues mankind. The responsibility of political states in their treatment of these prisoners, the nature and character of the Confederate leaders accused of prisoner cruelty, misappropriation, and mismanagement, and the adverse conditions naturally inherent with war; all, over a century after they became 'faits accomplis,' loom in the minds of political and military leaders of today's world. In countless examples, from the newly established countries of Africa and Asia to the world's oldest democratic republic,* war crimes' trials clearly demonstrate man's continued search for the reasons of maltreatment to the victims of capture.

In my research of two Confederate prisons, I have found myself concentrating my attention on the question, "why did

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*I am referring here to Biafra in Western Africa and Bangla Desh in Southeast Asia as well as the United States of America.
the prisoners-of-war have to suffer to the extent they did?"
The specific factors which have conditioned interest in the
treatment of prisoners-of-war in our contemporary society are
intricate enough examined alone. Thus, when analyzed
as a total, homogeneous conglomerate, the question of "why?"
becomes even harder to decipher. Obviously, there is no one,
single answer to this question. The recurring inhumane care
of war prisoners has been exemplified poignantly on at least
three different occasions since the Civil War.* If man is to
improve his situation in this world, he must attempt learn
from past realities and the inevitable problems which follow
immediately after the conflict. Equally, for man to understand
'why?' is for man to prevent 'why not?'

Though there is an obvious difference between then and
now, it is also true that the very nature of prisoner-of-war
administration historically has encountered uniformity and
similarity in analysis. Therefore, I have centered my inquiry
upon 'recurring' aspects of the prisoner-of-war question.

I.

'HOTEL DE LIBBY'

After the First Battle of Manassas (called Bull Run by
the Federal forces), the Confederates had an additional one
thousand men (plus one Congressman spectator) suddenly in
their possession. The confederate field commanders directed
these Union prisoners toward the Capital of the Confederate

*Subsequent to World War II, the Korean Conflict of 1950-53,
and presently in the divided countries of North and South Vietnam.
States of America--Richmond, Virginia. Caught off guard and needing a place to put all these men, the Rebel Government quickly looked to the city's available edifices.

When the unexpected prisoners were brought to Richmond, they were conducted to an unused tobacco factory in the district of the city known as Rockett's. The officers were confined in a warehouse formerly belonging to the firm of Liggon and Sons, and the men were placed in near-by buildings.¹

One of the buildings, Libby (property of Libby and Son, Ship Chandlers and Grocers), later called 'Hotel de Libby' sardonically by some of its inhabitants, was born in an era of bureaucratic necessity.

With the conversion of the ship chandlers' and tobacco warehouse into a prison, the three ensuing problems of narrow space, ventilation, and sanitation were apparent. As the flux of prisoners-of-war progressed, the over-population compounded these dire problems.

The three-story building was hardly adequate for the numbers it housed. Originally, enlisted men were housed with their Union superiors, but they were quickly moved to Belle Isle, a camp designed only for their grades. This, actually, did not alleviate matters much as there was a waiting list of officers detained nearer the lines. These men were immediately transported to Libby. All the buildings (former warehouses) were in the same over-crowded condition and S. P. Moore, the Acting Surgeon-General of the Confederate Army, acknowledged

that the police of the prisons was very bad and, due to the
crowded conditions, it might give rise to pestilence and
disease. He then recommended finding another building to
alleviate a potential danger to the inhabitants of Richmond.
Since the tobacco barns had not been designed for human habit-
ation, the problems involved in all the various functions of
day-to-day living (more aptly here, 'subsisting') were immense:

In the narrow limits of these six rooms
were confined for many months nearly eleven
hundred United States officers, prisoners of
war. This included all our room for cooking,
eating, washing, bathing and sleeping.

with the extremely crowded conditions, such diseases as dysentery,
diarrhea, and typhus rapidly spread and human suffering became
commonplace. The limited area, also, was destined to become
more limited. The paranoia of the citizenry of Richmond in the
later stages of the war, with rumors running rampant of the
prisoners attempting to break-out of Libby, caused Major Thomas
P. Turner, the Commandant of Libby Prison, to curtail the living
space even more:

March 1 (1864): Cloudy, cold, rainy. The first
day of Spring. Eight months of captivity!! The
windows are now all barred with iron, and have
been so several weeks. This morning an order
from Major Turner was read that no clothes must
be hung out to dry or air, under penalty of con-

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2 U. S. war Department, The War of the Rebellion: A Com-

pilation of the Official Records of the Union and Confederate

Armies (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1898), Series

II, Volume III, p. 698. Hereafter cited as OR and all references

will be to Series II.

3 Alva C. Roach, The Prisoner of War, and How Treated (Indian-

fiscation and no one must go to a window, under penalty of being shot. And this in rooms where each person has a space only 6 feet long by 4 feet wide!!! Of course, the Confederates were primarily concerned with their Union captives signaling to sympathizers of the Federal cause in Richmond. As General Dow stated in his diary entry, it is too much to stop prisoner movement near windows due to the already restricted amount of room. Certainly, this seemed like additional Rebel torture!

Owing to the fact that ventilation was not a consideration when the ship-chandlers' warehouse was erected, once the building was converted into a prison, the human occupants had to suffer. During the summer, the prison was almost unbearably hot with little breeze moving through the building. Prisoners simply restricted their movements, so as not to become caught short of breath or perspire and thereby lose body fluid they could ill afford to lose. Frederic F. Cavada, then a prisoner coming into Libby, depicts his first impressions of his prison room in July, 1863, as "long, low, dingy, gloomy, and suffocating." Tobacco warehouses, as a matter of fact, are designed to retain heat to keep the tobacco dry. This certainly was of no consolation to sweltering Union prisoners.

During the winter months, the situation was exactly reversed. Cold drafts whipped through Libby periodically as the

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window panes were not correctly fitted and cracks were numerous in the old and inferior masonry. During the first winter, the situation was alleviated by heating fires, but things got progressively worse, winter to winter. During the winter of 1863-64, Libby was extremely cold due to the lack of wood in Richmond for cooking and heating. The next winter the Turner restriction on movement near the windows prevented any work on the main areas where cold air moved through the walls—namely, between the glass panes and window ledges. Also, this worsening situation created problems of movement on particularly cold, windy days, as inmates were, naturally, more inclined to draw one of their filthy blankets about themselves and huddle. Certainly, there was not the room to move about much, thereby generating heat; consequently, they went to the opposite extreme and bundled themselves. Every soldier, once incarcerated, had to resign himself to minimal movement, for "they could not leave its narrow confines even for exercise." Those prisoners-of-war in the top level of Libby were in the best position because of the warm air circulating there. This was due to the tendency of warm air to move to the top of a building as well as the slant of the roof enhancing more equal distribution of warm air on the third floor.

The sanitation of Libby was also a problem, but it was a problem that the Confederate command seemed to work at some-

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8 Cavada, *Libby Life*, p. 27.
what more effectively than the other two. Originally, Libby was to be a temporary holding prison for prisoner exchange, but, after the summer of 1863, it was obvious that it would be a permanent fixture of the Confederate prison system. The original concept of 'temporary' use of Libby prevented the South from investing much time or money early in the war to improving such 'built-in' inadequacies as I have mentioned to point (i.e., narrow space, ventilation, and sanitation). Of the three problems, sanitation was virtually the only one the South could do much about without completely remodeling the prison.

The Confederates really could not possibly keep ahead of the unsanitary conditions, but they at least made an attempt. The primary reason for the inability to control the sanitation adequately was due to the previous lackadaisical attitude (prior to the 'permanence' of Libby) toward sanitation (by inmates as well as prison administrators) and over-crowding. To minimize some of the unsanitary conditions, the Confederates had their Negro slaves scrub the prison floors with soap and water plus and occasional whitewashing of the walls and ceilings.\textsuperscript{9} Also, prior to prisoners getting up in the mornings, the Rebels assigned two 'colored attaches' to fumigate the rooms with 'tar-smoke.'\textsuperscript{10} Cavada and many other prisoners complained of the inconvenience and ordeal of the process, but, undoubtedly, this procedure did help eliminate some of the hygienic suffering.

\textsuperscript{9}Ibid., pp. 32-4.
\textsuperscript{10}Ibid., p. 47.
Libby's geographic position, as well as other Richmond prisons, was precarious, to say the least. The nerves of the citizens of Richmond were constantly tense and this created a Confederate administration sometimes too cognizant of their nerves. The situation often resulted in actions which were a detriment to the prisoners, which, in turn, appeared as totally unfounded punishment against the innocent Union prisoners-of-war, not aware of the circumstances.

A classic example of this unfolded when the citizenry of Richmond caught wind of a rumor that the Union prisoners were going to 'storm the prison' en masse, take all the weapons from their captors, plunder the city of Richmond while freeing the enlisted men across the James River (Jelle Isle), and advance back to the Union lines, while laying the Confederate countryside to waste in the process of liberation. In order to prevent such an incident (even though, at the time, it was preposterous) the Commandant of the Prison, Major Turner, was prompted to place in the bottom of the prison two hundred pounds of powder and the prisoners were informed that any attempt to break out would result in the blowing up of the prison. The issue of the rumored break was particularly poignant at the time as the Union lines were drawing nearer to Richmond as a result of the exploits of a Union Raider named Dahlgren. In any event, the plot, which was creating the paranoid Richmond citizenry, was laughingly disavowed by the alleged conspirators, the Libby prisoners. In their newspaper (which, incidently, was read

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11Hesseltine, Civil War Prisons, p. 132.
by the editor due to lack of paper), the prisoners-of-war satirically portrayed the whole affair as a foolish fear (which, as it turned out, it was).\textsuperscript{12} Needless to say, the populace of the Capital hindered the Confederate administration of Libby. In the final analysis, unfortunately, the prisoners paid the price of Richmondite paranoia.

The location of the prison was also a detriment in the area of logistical procurement. The two major problems for the geographic location in this case (logistics) are the blockade considerations (with the Union concentrating on hurting Richmond worst) and rations. In the first instance, it would appear that it is merely a case of the 'hazards of war' (i.e., the Union prisoners having to suffer so that the South would be starved into submission), but a closer examination reveals that the Confederate administrative system did not always function for the best in getting the much needed clothing and blankets through. This situation is in light of the blockade and of that material which did reach Richmond. In 1864, the Confederates were even refusing to distribute the supplies which were being sent through the blockade to Libby prisoners and much of the aid stayed on the barges within the sight of the prisoners-of-war:

Because of accusations of the late commissioner of exchange, General Meredith, published in the newspapers, that these provisions were embezzled for sustenance for General Lee's army, they refused to receive any boxes either from our Government or from State governments.

Then, because the Sanitary Commission and various benevolent individuals indulged their patriotism by labelling their boxes, "To our starving soldiers in Richmond," "To our brave defenders in Libby Prison," the rebel authorities refused to receive all boxes sent to our prisoners.13

The refusal of the South to distribute the boxes seemed like a clear-cut act of inhumanity and General Dow, in Libby at the time, was extremely upset that once they were delivered, the contents had seemingly been robbed for Confederate use.14 A secondary logistical problem with the detention of all this material was that the food within was worthless due to spoilage.

Much has been written about the rations which were issued (or, in some accusations, which were not issued at all) to the inmates of Libby. One thing is clear concerning Libby's later stages, they got worse. Frank Bryne attributes this progressively worsening situation to the "inadequacies of the Confederate administrative and transportation system."15 The food ration issue was a multifarious problem in Southern prison camps and, in Libby's case, probably the single most incriminating issue to be brought to light at the end of the war was in regard to rations. However, owing to the poverty of the South after the Union victories in the summer of 1863, the food calamity was inevitable. Perhaps the only real crime the South was guilty of, aside from inability and mismanagement, was the fact that

13 OR, Volume VI, p. 973.
14 Bryne, Civil War History, Volume XII, p. 179.
15 Ibid., p. 171n.
they did not resign themselves to defeat following the surrender of Vicksburg. Financially and logistically, they were unmistakably operating in a deficit situation.

But, for this, the Union prisoners suffered. Lieutenant George Haven Putnam, a prisoner colleague of Dow, described the food the Union soldiers were rationed at Libby bitterly:

We regretted to part with the black bean soup, although we had not been fond of it. It contained about as many bugs as there were beans, the taste was abominable, and the nourishment probably slight. I understand later when I was on parole in Richmond, that the beans and cornmeal issued to the prisoners had been rejected by the commissaries as unfit for their own troops. 16

The accusations that the Confederates issued the Northern prisoners only rations, as Putnam suggests, that their quartermaster had rejected has not been proven. As the quantity as well as quality of food diminished, there was a request by the commissary-general of the Confederacy directed to Secretary of War Walker "that rations of meat should be no longer issued to the prisoners and oat and cornmeal gruel, pea soup, soft hominy, and bread be substituted." 17 However, even this was not approved due to Walker's belief that prisoners and Confederate soldiers should receive the same rations. This was ordered, but, by the last months of 1864, the Libby ration was comprised of soup made out of inconspicuous little beans, and a chunk of corn bread. 18

17 Hesseltine, Civil War Prisoners, pp. 115-6.
18 Putnam, POW in Virginia, p. 22.
Prior to this, the strain of even mental entertainment became too much for the inmates to stand:

Later in the winter, our chess playing came to a stop. We found that the attempt to concentrate eye-sight and attention when we had had so little to eat that our brain cells were dnuded of blood, caused dizziness, and occasionally fainting fits. I think, in fact, that an order to stop chess came from the general or his adjutant.¹⁹

One can imagine what the effect of decreasing an already deficit diet would have on the mental state of the prisoners-of-war. Following Dow's diary, one sees an increasing amount of notations stating, "a little head ache" or simply "head ache" as the days went on and rations decreased. Putnam relates that "during the close of our sojourn in Libby, the soup part was cut off and the ration reduced itself to the corn bread."²⁰ It seems that existence alone became the greatest of all human endeavors for the inmates of Libby Prison.

In direct contrast to the prisoners, the guards fared better due to their access to money and the freedom to travel during off-duty hours at will in Richmond. Although they were to be issued essentially the same basic diet as the inmates (see the Walker reference on the previous page), it was inevitable, owing to their ingenuity, that their plight would be much better than the United States officers they controlled. Also, the temptation of graft surely was too much for some of the guards to bear as extra money for the necessities of life could be made by supplying prisoners with food from the city markets. The

¹⁹ Ibid.
²⁰ Ibid., p. 42.
prisoners had money sent to them from relatives in their mail (some of which was stopped with the Confederate censorship inspections) for, at least in part, this purpose. Their freedom to move about and their salaries from the Confederate States of America enabled the Rebel guards to subsist better than, certainly, the Union officers of Libby Prison.

The inability of the Confederate prison administration to control their guards is apparent in other matters of graft. It seems that the moral acumen of many guards was slight in correlation to their charges' offers of bribery (to escape from the prison). On several occasions, the ability of prisoners to obtain temporary freedom was traced to 'pay-offs' to Confederate guards. The problem seems to last from the days of its prison existence without any administrative remedy or even semi-correction of this undesirable situation. It is this type of prison malfunction which creates more severe problems for the inmates (via reverberations).

A significant event of the Civil War occurred on the night of February 9, 1864, and it is one of the events which helped hasten the 'phasing-out' of Libby. A few officers banded together, "dug a tunnel from a storeroom in the basement [to an] adjoining street [across from the prison]. The tendency of the human mole is to bore upward; the tunnel came to the top too soon . . . with about a hundred of them getting away before

\[21\] Roach, *POW & How Treated*, pp. 91-93.
the noise attracted attention of the guards. 22 This was probably the greatest escape of the War of Rebellion, but less than half of the one hundred and nine prisoners-of-war to escape made it back to Union lines. This, however, was not the first escape at Libby, but only served to be the largest. It was also to have the most punitive aftereffects for those unfortunate enough to be recaptured or unable to even be involved in the escape; in short, those who remained within the walls of Libby. The escapes were more the fault of poor prison management than Union ingenuity. Following the last escape, 'Dick' Turner (a subordinate jailer and of no relation to the commanding officer) attempted to make Libby 'un-escapable!' This did not erase previous administrative errors, though:

January 30, 1864: Yesterday, a little head ache. This morning a canal boat is unloading about 200 private boxes, but the last arrival of boxes have not been yet delivered to us. Cloudy, cold morning. Yesterday and to day, five officers escaped. Being in citizens or Rebel dresses, they walked out boldly, in the day time! 23

Byrne attributes such escapes to Rebel 'lack of internal control.' 24 More simply, this is merely another example of Confederate maladministration.

Another consideration for examination of the South's ineptness in management is the disarray and confusion that they


24 ibid., p. 172n.
epitomised throughout the conflict. Naturally, during these precedent-setting times, they were operating out of no historic premise (at least, with no historic similarity to our Civil War) and a certain amount of disorder was bound to occur. However, certain 'occurrences' were so large in their magnitude that it is not all 'passable' as strictly 'precedent-setting.' It is now documented that the South, during the critical period of prison establishment, had additional hindrances from members of the higher echelon of the Confederate Government conflicting with one another. Examples of this are many but two of the more poignant ones include 'a quarrel over the exercise of authority' and the shifting of responsibility for the unsanitary conditions of the Richmond tobacco warehouses (Libby included, of course). It is a psychological proclivity to do this, but, again, at some point someone is responsible and the Rebel hierarchy had a number of members with expertise in 'passing-the-buck.'

In the North, Libby built-up the nefarious reputation as an example of Rebel prison exploitation. Those being exploited were of course the Union officers held prisoner within Libby's walled confines. The exploitation of newly arrived prisoners by prison guards came in the form of graft and this seems to have fired the imaginations of Northern vindictives even more pronouncedly than simple bribery (see page 13). The admission procedures which prisoners were subjugated to prior to internment were simply a complete, thorough 'shake-down' with the Confederates taking all. The Rebels confiscated everything the prisoners had except for

25 Hesseltine, Civil War Prisons, p. 68.
26 Ibid.
the clothing they had. In most of the post war publications concerning the prisoner's-of-war plight in the South, a point emphasized and reemphasized was that the Union troops were stripped of everything a Rebel wanted. The Confederates, attempting to stop Union currency, contraband, and objects that could be used to 'break-out' of Libby, from coming into the prison, earnestly began the process of collection with a log (receipt books) which the Rebel clerks were to register by name all items confiscated. Unfortunately, the administrative heads did not adequately supervise the responsibility for the log and it was lost. Whether the log was purposely 'misplaced' or not is unknown, but once the items taken were no longer counted and entered in the receipt books, there was certainly an influx of permanently lost and stolen belongings. Needless to say, many Union officers at Libby were embittered much more by this poor management of their possessions.

Principally, two important factors signaled the end of Libby and the movement of prisoners from the warehouse to officers' prisons in Macon, Georgia, and Danville, Virginia. One was the edgy citizenry of Richmond. Hesseltine, in his analysis, lists the escape as one primary reason, but I have attributed the movement to this plus the resentment of citizens to the inflation involved in prices when large sums of prisoners come into the city, the paranoia of the citizenry stemming from the alleged plot, and, finally, the lack of confidence the Rich mondites felt in the guards assigned to keep the Union prisoners under control. 27 Professor

Hesseltine devoted study to all these areas, but the importance of each one, with their correlation to the movement of prisoners out of Richmond, should be considered significant to the matter. Also, Robert E. Lee wrote on October 28, 1863, that since the Federal Government would not exchange any more prisoners, the prisoners-of-war should be moved from Richmond for reasons of:

1) large numbers in the city, 'for many reasons,' is injurious, 2) their presence in Richmond increases the strain on the transportation system, 3) their presence increases the high prices in the markets, 4) the Capital is vulnerable to attack, and 5) the Federal Government has already made arrangements for permanent prisons for Confederate prisoners.28

The second factor is the one which Hesseltine also lists and one to which Lee alluded.29 The constant probing of Rebel lines in the direction of Richmond gave the Confederates just cause for concern. As the Federals advanced, the chauvinistic yell of 'On to Richmond!' made the Southerners cognizant that prisoner evacuation was a vital necessity. Simply, it was a matter of "realizing the danger of the concentration of prisoners in their capital, the Confederates finally emptied Libby and shipped its inmates Southward."30 As a Confederate prison with Union officer inmates, Libby was no more.

28 OR, VI, 438-9.
29 Hesseltine, Civil War Prisons, p. 132.
30 Byrne, Journal, p. 441.
Some final considerations about Libby are appropos prior to examining Andersonville. While many of the stigmata found at Libby could be traced to problems inherent in using a converted tobacco warehouse in the Capital of the Confederacy, some of the events which took place (and added needlessly to the misery of the inmates) were certainly not excusable as, conveniently, 'inherent.' The highly unregulated manner in which the prison was run can be witnessed by the virtually constant graft, large and reoccurring number of escapes, and, obviously, the general lack of confidence the populace of Richmond felt for their Confederate guard security. In the North, these facets of prison misadministration were easy prey for vindictive journalists. Also, the failure of the Southern prison administration to provide an exercise yard no doubt caused the dismal situation to worsen. Had the Turner administration ordered the fumigation and whitewashing (see page 7) during a scheduled exercise period, inevitably the sanitation would have been better, the prisoners more physically fit (and, therefore, less prone to sickness), and the complaints of prisoners-of-war like Cavada and Roach would have logically subsided. Unfortunately, the friction between the prison authorities and the inmates should not have been as acute as it was. It is here that the odious aspects of maladministration created an even more unhealthy atmosphere for all concerned. In the final analysis, the Confederate ineptness of prison administration made a crowded, unsanitary Libby prison almost unbearable.

Following the war, one of the ironies of history befell Richard Turner, (the Commandant Turner had already fled to Canada)
as the victorious Union Army imprisoned him in the same edifice he once helped control. However, he was not alone. Other important Southern officials were imprisoned in Libby until, due to lack of evidence for trial, they were released and Libby was never to be used as a prison again.31

III.
'CAMP SUMTER: THE PEN'

In November, 1863, the Confederate Secretary of War ordered Captain W. S. Winder32 to find a location suitable for a prisoner-of-war camp in the State of Georgia. Captain Winder was to insure that the new site was "in the neighborhood of Americus or Valley Ford" and with access to a quartermaster town.33 It was W. S. Winder who surveyed the area and decided the location of the new prisoner-of-war camp would be "in the midst of Georgia's cotton-and corn-growing section, seven miles west of the Flint River, forty-two miles east of the Chattahoochee, and about sixteen hundred feet east of the depot at Anderson Station."34 Long after the Civil War, Jefferson Davis himself would justify Winder's decision for the new prison's site "because of its supposed security

31 Byrne, Civil War History, p. 183.
32 One of three winders to be involved in the history of Andersonville and the son of the eventual commissary-general of the Confederate prison system.
33 OAR, VI, 558.
from raids, together with its salubrity, the abundance of water and timber, and the productive farming country around it. 35

It was in Sumter County, Georgia.

The Confederate authorities approved Captain Winder's choice and dispatched Captain Richard B. Winder, a cousin of W. S. Winder, to direct the erection of the new prison—a stockade. It is from this point that Confederate stockade managers begin their long series of poor forecasts, 36 calamitous short-range planning, inability to procure essentials for the new prison, and inadequate attempts to cope with stockade sanitation. Originally, the Confederates foresaw the prison to have a population of six thousand men, but Richard Winder moved the figure to ten thousand, in an enclosure of about only sixteen and one-half acres. 37 Winder immediately ran into logistical problems as he could not secure beef due to the need of men to drive them to Camp Sumter (as Confederate officials named the entire compound, garrison included); he had to go fifty miles to Columbus for the nearest quartermaster, he could not obtain cooking utensils due to the remoteness of the camp, and he had already experienced difficulty in being assured of meal from the grist mills. 38


36 The emphasis is on forecasts, not predictions, as the Confederates did not create any modals from which they 'could exaggerate reality from.'

37 Futch, Andersonville Prison, pp. 4-5.

38 Ibid., pp. 5-6.
location of the camp was already obsolete prior erection as far as the Confederate quartermaster was concerned; hence, long before the arrival of the initial prisoners, the odious signs of what was to come due to the Southern nemesis of ineptness were apparent.

As the time of the first arrivals grew nearer and nearer, Captain Winder became desperate for tools and equipment to run the camp. He wrote to his father, General Winder (who made nepotism a reality in the South) to use his position and rank to help obtain the needed supplies.39 A controversy which was to rage long after the war was why the proposed barracks were not built. Simply, the problem was in the inability of Dick Winder to pay comparable prices for the lumber. Winder did not have the finances to compete with 'Georgia schedule prices.'40 Besides, the Confederate Government in Richmond had deemed the railroads the higher priority rating on the lumber question. The tragedy of no barracks will be examined later and the decision to go without the wooden structures was to be one of the most crucial of maladministrative mistakes the Confederacy would make in the course of the war. Captain Winder, had he obtained the lumber, would still have been unable to construct the buildings due to the nonavailability of nails. Winder sought an alternate means of housing, canvass tents, but this was out of the question.

39 Ibid., p. 7.
40 Hesseltine, Civil War Prisons, p. 134.
due to the Confederate armies themselves being short on tents. By the time the prisoners began filing through the unfinished confines, nothing but open space, without even provisions for established paths or routes, faced them, and the guard was already inadequate for the numbers coming into the stockade. Artillery was positioned in the open area\textsuperscript{41} of the stockade perimeter, an area soon to be filled with a Georgia pine wall approximately fifteen feet high.

Captain Winder, desperate over the sudden influx of prisoners with no means to house, feed, or clothe them, pleaded with Major A. M. Allen, the Quartermaster Executive in Columbus, Georgia, for some answers to his logistical problems:

\begin{quote}
There is no market whatever at this post and it is utterly impossible that my laborers and employees can purchase the necessary food to live upon, except at the caprice and exorbitant charges of such persons as will bring provisions to them, and it is equally impossible for them to obtain board of any kind at any price \ldots \ldots 
Again, how are my negro laborers to be fed? And again, under precedent set at Richmond, which I am instructed to follow, the Yankees who are detained at work receive double rations. How are these rations to be accounted for? \ldots \ldots
Please give me your very earliest attention to matters herein contained, as it is necessary that they should be arranged at once.\textsuperscript{42}
\end{quote}

The ability of Captain Richard Winder to cope with the problems of Camp Sumter is questionable. Certainly, the captain did much to try to alleviate the logistical inadequacies and the short-

\textsuperscript{41}The artillery was positioned in this manner to demonstrate to incoming prisoners that the vacuum of the unfinished stockade was not to be explored for an escape route. Until the completion of the pine wall, the artillery served its purpose as no inmates attempted a 'break' at the unfinished portion of the compound.

\textsuperscript{42}\textit{OR}, VI, 1018.
range planning of other Confederate prison authorities (primarily relatives), but, in light of what eventually happened at Andersonville, he did not successfully meet the challenge. However, responsibility for what was to occur can not be simply 'rested' on Captain Winder's back either, as the North did to the last commandant of Andersonville, Major Henry Wirz. Ovid Futch rests a majority of the guilt on the Confederate Government for not realizing their inability:

These difficulties experienced by the architects and builders of Andersonville Prison are suggestive of the troubles that continued to beset its administrators throughout its existence. There is something pathetic about Dick Winder's futile entreaties for supplies and equipment for Andersonville. One gets the impression from reading his letters that a man more capable of efficient organization and more skilled in handling men might have achieved greater success. But it can never be known to what extent his failure was due to his ineptitude or to what extent it was an unavoidable result of the dwindling fortunes of the Confederacy. The prisoners of war who were to suffer and die in Andersonville during the approaching months would reap a portion of the results of a government's attempt to do more than it was capable of doing.44

Now, unprepared and skeptical of where to secure urgently needed equipment and supplies, Captain W. S. Winder, Camp Sumter Commandant, received his first prisoners in late February, 1864.

Union prisoners, notified on Belle Island that they were to be sent to a prisoner-of-war camp in Georgia, were either optimistic as to the movement, or, apparently, unrealistic enough to believe cartel was their new destination. Henry B. Sparks,

43 By this time, "Andersonville" had been designated the prison facility of the camp due to its proximity to the hamlet, Anderson Station.

44 Futch, Andersonville Prison, p. 9.
a member of the Third Indiana Cavalry and a prisoner at Belle Island, made the following notation in his diary on February 18, 1864:

"I have not written for a few days because it was so cold I could not. Yesterday morning 200 were sent away from the Island. Said they were going to Georgia but think they will be exchanged. This morning 400 more were sent away with the same word." 45

Later, Sparks was to learn empirically that his assumption was incorrect—he was also a part of the exodus to Andersonville. General Dow, hearing of the movement of prisoners to Georgia, felt that the move was a positive one and that the new climate would enhance the health of the Union prisoners. 46 He too was unfortunately wrong.

An understanding of the peculiar facets of the administrative process at Andersonville can best be explained in an examination of the very personnel to be charged most viciously for the crimes of Andersonville at the end of the Civil War. Only one of these three men was directly responsible for Andersonville's creation, composition, and administration. The second, Jefferson Davis, President of the Confederate States of America, is implicated for having the ultimate responsibility for everything pertaining to the Southern movement, and the third, Henry Wirz, the last Commandant of Andersonville, did not even figure in Andersonville's history until late March, 1864, and did not assume full command of the prison and prisoners until

45 Henry B. Spark's Diary, (January 3, 1864 to December 30, 1864) Indiana State Library (Central Division), Indianapolis, unpublished, February 18, 1864, entry.

September, 1864. Only General Winder could be directly implicated as a major Southern administrator involved in all facets of the infamous Andersonville Pen (as prisoners so appropriately called it). These men were as diversified in political beliefs, environmental origins, and complicity in the claimed Andersonville crimes as the heterogenous representatives of the Union Army imprisoned there. The attempt by the acrimonious Northern press to group at the end of the hostilities Winder, Davis, and Wirz, as 'one-in-the-same' arch criminals is, by our standards today, ludicrous.

Of the three, there was first the sour, old Brigadier General John H. Winder with overall responsibility for Southern prisons. Adjectives such as 'mean,' 'treacherous,' and 'decrepit' were liked to his name in many Northern newspapers and contemporary novels dealing with that confinement facility in Andersonville, Georgia. Asa B. Isam, along with contemporary vindictive writers, held Winder ultimately responsible for this largest of all Confederate prisons:

General Winder was connected in the capacity of commissary-general of prisons. To him belongs the guilt of permitting the prisoners to starve and rot in filthy dens, under his own eye, and with his sanction . . .

And even more radical accounts feel that Winder was in the administration of prisons for additional profit at the expense of his charges. Ambrose Spencer in *A Narrative of Andersonville*

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depicts Winder as an entrepreneur, whose exploitative venture with the Andersonville sutler during camp inspections at Andersonville, literally stole from prisoners who had to pay the inflated prices the two thieves charged due to their monopoly of the market.49 Certainly, from the Northern viewpoint, little good was said of General Winder.

Exactly how well Winder conducted the prisons is difficult to determine. With the adversities already plaguing the prison system when he took control, it is very subjective to attempt to cite evidence of the general's positive or negative impact on the prison system. The commissary general himself pointed out that he had not had any experiences with prisoners of war and there was not a Confederate official in the land who had.50 Unlike the North, which had organized a prison system with the opening guns and appointed a commissary general shortly thereafter, the South did not evolve such a system until almost the end of 1864 and this, with General Winder as director, had virtually a negligible effect.51 Finally, the appraisal of General Winder by the Confederate bureaucrats varies from administrator to administrator. According to John B. Jones, a clerk in the Confederate Government and subordinate to Winder, the general was guilty of governmental graft by selling passports he controlled.52

51War, VII, 1150.
Jones also notes in his diary the accusations made by Colonel D. T. Chandler in one of the routine prison inspections of Andersonville. The 'ugly report,' which Chandler made, characterizes "Gen. W.'s treatment of the prisoners as barbarous, and their condition as a 'hell on earth.'" The report created a sensation in Richmond and, no doubt, hurt Winder's position even more dramatically than hundreds of charges made by the enemy.

Winder's foremost superior, Jefferson Davis, gave the general a very favorable appraisal. In fact, Davis makes a point of paying tribute to John Winder as truly a courageous, kind man; void of the nefarious traits his critics accuse him of possessing:

General John H. Winder . . . went to Andersonville in June (1864), and found disease prevailing to such an extent that, to abate the pestilence, he immediately advised the removal of prisoners to other points. As soon as arrangements could be made, he was instructed to disperse them to Millen and elsewhere, as in his judgment might be best for their health, comfort, and safety. . . .

General John H. Winder (was) a man too brave to be cruel to anything within his power, too well born to be influenced by low or sordid motives. I have referred only to a few facts illustrative of his kindness to the prisoners after he went to Georgia, and they were in keeping with his conduct toward the prisoners at Richmond. The latter fact, together with his sterling integrity and soldierly character, had caused his selection for the chief control of Confederate prisons.

For the Commander-in-Chief, the leader of the Confederacy, General Winder had most capably served as prison controller. However, Davis' sentiments would have motivated very little forgiveness from the

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53 Ibid., p. 455.

North. Undoubtedly, General Winder would have been executed as a war criminal had he survived the war. On February 8, 1864, General Winder died of apoplexy. In correlation to the hysteria of the epoch, Winder's death was believed to have been premature: a result of God's Will due to the old general's secular wickedness. The North would have to look to others for the burden of responsibility.

The second of the major individuals concerned with accountability from the Northern point-of-view was Jefferson Davis. Davis, naturally, was pointed out during and after the Civil war as the biggest agent of Southern 'atrocities,' being the President of the Confederate States of America. We know today that Jeff Davis was not brought to account publicly via any sort of trial, but he did spend a period of confinement at Fort Monroe, awaiting for the Federal Government to prepare a case against him which did not materialize. His role is amazingly slight, and he was ignorant to a great extent of the crimes committed and could not have been held responsible for prisons like Libby or Andersonville any more than Lincoln could have been held responsible for prisons in the North, such as Elmira or Johnson's Island.

The third man, Heinrich Hartmann Wirz, was, by comparison, the most controversial, ironic, and tragic, of the three. He was born in Switzerland and, by a series of very extraordinary coincidences, migrated to the Southern United States. Wirz was hardly the Machiavellian character he has repeatedly been portrayed as, but, rather, the obedient soldier, attempting to do
his duty as best he could, which is so often attributed to the Teutonic military man. Wirz was a unique figure in the annals of the Civil War for his fate. Despite cries of the Northern populace to 'hang Jeff Davis on a sour apple tree,' Wirz was the only Confederate administrator to be executed following the war. Wirz has been characterized in many different ways and it seems that the more years that pass and the more facts brought to light, the more subtle and reserved the characterization of Henry Wirz becomes. In addition, it becomes more obvious that his sentence was not just:

If the people of the North in the fall of 1865 had used the language of the late 1940's they would have said that Captain Wirz was a war criminal who had been properly convicted and then had been hanged for atrocious war crimes. Today, with the more sober perspective of nearly a century of peace, the business looks a little different. The language of the Old Testament would have been better; Wirz was a scapegoat, dying for the sins of many people, of whom, some lived south of the Potomac River, while others lived north of it.

Jefferson Davis, in a manner similar to his Winder tribute, feels that Henry Wirz' fate was totally unjust. The President of the Confederacy also attests to his 'honor and fidelity' in a contrast to his prosecutors of Southern hatred. In his memoirs, after Davis related the decision by General Winder to move the sick prisoners-of-war from Andersonville, the Rebel Executive ex-


pounded upon the merits of his Camp Commandant:

Major Wirz thereafter remained in command at Andersonville, and the testimony of Chief-Surgeon Stevenson of the hospital at Andersonville, bears testimony to the success with which Wirz improved the post, and the good effect upon the health of the prisoners. This unfortunate man—who, under the severe temptation to which he was exposed before his execution, exhibited honor and fidelity strongly in contrast with his tempters and persecutors—it now appears, was the victim of men whom, in his kindness, he paroled to take care of their sick comrades, and who, after having violated their parole, appeared to testify against him. 57

Of course, all this favorable testimony for Wirz came long after his execution. The comments made at his trial, except for Doctor Stevenson, were virtually uniform in condemnation of the little major.

The Union prisoners, in their anxiety and need to establish the person responsible for their suffering, paint the image of their jailer as almost inhuman. David S. Whiteneack relates that his first encounter with Wirz was not in any sense of the word, "favorable:" "In the meantime Wirz ([sic] was heaping abuse upon us, and vowing that he would have us shot as murderers, thieves and robbers." 58 One prisoner claims he was, "'Certainly the worst man I ever saw,' ... (and that) 'Wirz is walking about the prison revolver in hand, cursing and swearing.'" 59 Today,

57 Davis, Rise and Fall of Confederate Government, II, 597.


59 Hesseltine, Civil War Prisons, p. 142.
most historians believe it was Wirz' precarious position at the nadir of the camp's history which prompted his sentence more than the realism of 'alleged' accounts. 60

The maladministration exemplified by Andersonville was on a plateau of the first magnitude. Even today, it seems incredible that a stockade surrounded by tall, healthy Georgia pines was not able to utilize them for any type of shelter. The Confederate Government forbade the impressment of saw mills due to an unfounded premise that such an act would cripple the already defunct transportation system. The fact that the Rebels did nothing to secure the lumber resources on either side of the pen helped create the new-founded xenophobia against these 'non-Americans' by the Northern press. Undoubtedly, the ineptitude demonstrated in the area of logistical procurement was the most disastrous form of mismanagement the South showed a tendency toward. Ovid Futch devotes an entire chapter in his book, History of Andersonville Prison, and he is equally appalled at the ineptness of Andersonville management:

It is fairly obvious that part of the suffering and death at Andersonville was attributable to the paucity of developed southern resources. What may be less obvious, though no less important, is that some of it came as a result of short-sighted management and lack of administrative ability. On February 7, while the prison was under construction, Confederate Adjutant and Inspector General Samuel Cooper asked Brigadier General Howell Cobb, commander of the Georgia State Guard which had expired three days previously, to recommend an

60Bruce Catton and Ovid Futch are two notable examples.
efficient commandant for Camp Sumter, Confederate States Military Prison at Andersonville. Cooper thought the commandant should be a Georgian, a colonel or a brigadier general, unassigned because of wounds or some other disability. 61

Following a series of considered commanders, the job went to Lieutenant Colonel A. W. Pearsons. Within five months, he was to be replaced by Cobb himself. Prior to Cobb, Wirz was appointed by Pearsons as commander of the prison, but the appointment was not official until September. Constantly, the Confederates appointed and reappointed Camp Sumter commandants with little administrative success. Certainly this inability to retain commandants said something was wrong with the competency of the Confederate leadership. Even the subordinates, who remained the duration of the Rebellion at Andersonville, were plagued by doubts of their own effectiveness; an example was the 'pathetic case' of Captain Richard Winder.

By the time Andersonville reached the population of thirty-five thousand prisoners, the verbal picture of the camp was such that misery and suffering would be the only adjectives which could identify the inhabitants. Late summer of 1864, the sun beating down with no break in the intensity, day-after-day, saw the increase in mortalities rise considerably, and the filth, vermin, lack of water and food for sustenance, all intensified the anguish and death. The small creek, which passed through the camp, was by this time a gooey, putrid quagmire of human waste and maggots which generated a stench that would make the

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61 Futch, Andersonville Prison, p. 12.
prisoners and guards alike sick to their stomachs. To alleviate the crowding, the Confederates decided to enlarge the pen, but, Wirz himself acknowledged that had done little to help:

The prison, although a large addition has been made, is too crowded; almost daily large numbers of prisoners arrive, and before two weeks it will be in the same condition it was before the addition was made, and all internal improvements, which you are aware yourself are of the utmost importance, will come to a dead halt for want of room. . . .

However, this addition, making the size of the prison pen now about twenty three acres, would be the last to be made.

One of the fortunate occurrences of nature happened for the prisoners in mid-August. With water almost nonexistent from the prisoner-dug springs, "a spring of good, pure water broke out within the prison. From this time on we did not suffer from bad water or lack of water." This blessing, however, did not slow down the vermin and insects preying on prisoners hardly able to defend themselves against their numbers. The cries coming from within the pen were partly due to mosquitoes and, partly, as Samuel Boggs related, from other sources:

As the long scorching day closes and the air grows cooler, we lay on the unsheltered filthy ground trying to shut out with sleep some of the surrounding horrors. Million upon millions of mosquitoes come from the surrounding swamp to feast on our emasculated bodies; their buzzing hum added to the bedlam of the prison—with the hooting of the owls and the mournful notes of the

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62 OR, VII, 521-2.


whippoorwills--howled a requiem broken only by the crack of the muskets of the murderous guards, or the sound of their voices as they cry out the hour of the night from their perches on the pallisades. 65

Along with these insect oppressors, prisoner-of-war Devillez states that, "maggots and lice were the torments of the prisoners and I have seen men eaten up by them." 66

Two other aspects of the prison's interior control created added difficulty for the already problem-troubled camp administration. One of the two was somewhat effectively resolved, while the other would result in anguish for both administrators and prisoners until long after the conclusion of the war. The first was perhaps the only joint-effort demonstrated at Andersonville to correct a problem plaguing both groups. It was a Yankee criminal element that unintentionally caught up in battle as captives, while attempting to desert the units they had joined for bounty (i.e., large enlistment payments); hence, their name, 'bounty-jumpers.' These bad factors of the Union confinement society tormented the decent Union prisoners within the pen by stealing and robbing from them. The movement, as it progressed, became more pronounced and organized with an ultimate ruler, William Collins (referred to as 'Mosby'), and called by the other prisoners as simply the 'Raiders' or 'N'Yaarkers' by the Rebel guards. The final crisis was reached by the first

65 Boggs, Eighteen Months, p. 42.
66 Devillez, Indiana Magazine of History, p. 146.
part of July when the 'Raiders' were all but declaring total
was upon all their supposed comrades: looting, killing, and
sadistically beating prisoners methodically at night. For
survival the other prisoners 'secretly organized' a 'regulator'
force.66 And, by the third of July, prisoner civil war within
the stockade had broken out. The ironic conflict (i.e., a
prisoner civil war while captives during the American Civil
war) ended with the superior numbers of the 'regulators' win-
ning out: 'over a hundred' of the 'Raiders' were arrested and
prisoner courts were set up.67 Six were sentenced to hang
and the Confederate administration in the camp (Captain Wirz,
in particular) cooperated in holding the condemned men and
approved the legitimacy of the prison tribunals.68 Wirz
even gave the prisoners the lumber for the scaffold.69 The
six were hanged and the reign of these criminals met an abrupt
end with the unique cooperation of the decent prisoners and
the camp administration.

The second interior problem was never solved and this
probably is due to more to the inadequacy of the guard force.
The guards of Andersonville were quite erratic in the manner
in which they preformed their duties because of their extremes
in age. The Confederacy could not afford to tie up good troops

66Boggs, Eighteen Months, p. 42.
67Ibid., p. 43.
68OR, VII, 426.
69Futch, Andersonville Prison, p. 72.
guarding Union prisoners-of-war; consequently, they put the boys too young and the men too old to fight on the front lines in the guard details of the Confederate prisons. This was a calamity for many unfortunate Union soldiers imprisoned at Andersonville. The inability of the Rebel Administration at Camp Sumter to have their guard deal with the internal discipline of the pen allowed the 'Raiders' get as far as they did. Also, the large number of killings near the 'dead-line' tragically emphasize the ineffectiveness of guard force. Northern citizens were getting an idea of this 'dead-line' as a nefarious means of killing Union soldiers prior to the end of the Civil War. An article in Atlantic Monthly (March, 1865) depicted the 'dead-line' as:

The dead line: Drake drew back from a light railing running parallel to the pen.
"What the Deuce is the dead line?"
The new way to pay old debts, and put a Yankee out of the world cheap. Show so much as your little finger outside of that, and the guard nails you with a bullet . . .?1

As most other Southern stockades, Andersonville had her infamous 'dead-line.' It was speculated by a number of prisoners at Andersonville that the old General Winder had decreed that those guards who shot prisoners in the 'dead-line' would receive a furlough. The truth of the matter is that the guards were so unstable due to their mental status and age that they followed the order exactly and allowed for no exceptions (e.g., inadvert-

70 Heseltine, Civil War Prisons, p. 144.
71 "At Andersonville," Atlantic Monthly, XV (March, 1865), 287.
tent touching of the rail or sudden movement near the rail). Although both Winder and Wirz opposed these 'rash' acts, many soldiers were shot to death for such innocent mistakes.\textsuperscript{72} The guards were of little help aside of preventing escapes, and they did not always deter these.

Natural and geographic elements stopped the escapes from the interior of the pen and, also, the Rebels used dogs to locate escapees once they were aware of definite breaks from the interior of the stockade:

\begin{quote}
Escape was always foremost in our minds. Those who succeeded one way or another in passing the stockade limits found still more difficulties lying between them and freedom that would discourage ordinarily resolute men. The first was to get away from the immediate vicinity of the prison. All around were rebel patrols, pickets and guards watching every avenue of escape. Several packs of hounds formed efficient coadjutors of these and were more dreaded by possible jailors. Guards and patrols could be evaded or circumvented, but the hounds could not. Nearly every man brought back from a futile attempt at escape told the same story—he had been able to escape the human rebels, but not their canine colleagues.\textsuperscript{73}
\end{quote}

Even against these impossible odds, men were willing to risk their lives to escape from Andersonville. Death, they thought, would be an escape itself from their former existence.

As the end grew nearer for the Confederate States of America, prison administrators were compelled to make one last major revision of the prison. The 'surgeon in charge' of Andersonville hospital, Doctor R. Randolph Stevenson, organized 'a receiving and distributing division inside the stockade; which was an

\textsuperscript{72}Futch, \textit{History of Andersonville Prison}, p. 56.

\textsuperscript{73}McElroy, \textit{This Was Andersonville}, p. 49.
attempt to check inmates in a preliminary aid station to determine who should and should not go into the hospital. This coupled with Surgeon Stevenson's renovation of the Camp Sumter Hospital, enhanced the health of those suffering from disease, hunger, and exposure. The death rates were temporarily contained and, due to this effort by Stevenson and his assistants, undoubtedly a great mass of human anguish was sublimely healed. The tragedy that this was not done sooner and on a much greater scale weighed heavily upon the consciousness of the South's wartime guilt. Had the other Confederate officials portrayed such talent, perhaps Andersonville, as we know it, would not have existed. Certainly, Stevenson, Surgeon Isaiah H. White, and their staffs, given an almost impossible task of alleviating the medical problems of a prisoner-of-war camp destined to have inevitable sickness and death, did much to prevent the figures of mortality from rising above thirteen and a half thousand. This was a feat in its own right.

A phenomenon experienced by the citizenry of Richmond now gripped the administrators of Andersonville. The Richmond citizens feared the prisoners of Libby breaking out and revenging their Confederate-inflicted sufferings. Likewise, the executives of the prison compound began to suffer the 'mass uprising syndrome' in the closing stages of the prison's existence. As Sherman split the South with his gigantic thrust, excitement spread throughout the camp that the liberator had

\[74 OR, VII, 1076.\]
at last come to the South. General feelings and sentiments were exceptionally high and General Winder was determined that the prisoners must be reminded, at least for the time being, that he was in command and they were still prisoners-of-war. Winder and Wirz feared, with good reasons, that if the Union prisoners stormed all the gates simultaneously, the camp might actually fall into the prisoners' hands. It must be remembered that the camp administration was about as skeptical of the stability and moral fiber of the guards as the prison population. Consequently, Wirz warned the Union prisoners that he would 'open with grape and canister on the Stockade' if such an attempt were made. 75 It was not so much a question of the quantity of Union prisoners within the compound, but the quality of the Georgia Reserves; their reaction time was either too quick, killing prior to thinking (as was the case in the 'dead-line' fiasco), or far too slow, allowing the prisoner to get away prior to firing. Before the camp was liberated, even some of these reserves were taken--leaving only a 'skeleton force' to guard the prisoners.

By this time, the Confederates were moving their charges out of Andersonville due to the nearing proximity of Union raids. Some went to Florence, South Carolina, some went to Jacksonville, Florida (and returned due to the directive of a Federal commander not to allow General Scammon to receive them), for exchange, and some were simply paroled. In any event, the prison, on May 3,

75 McElroy, This Was Andersonville, p. 57.
1865, came to an end and the prisoners immediately raided the military stores. A demand for revenge was also sounded to all the prominent citizens of the North.

One might wonder why Major Wirz did not attempt to get himself and his family out of the country when it was apparent that the cause was lost and the Federals would be looking for him. Quite simply, it was a case of him not realizing that they would hold him responsible for the entire prison crime (which, was a crime in its own right) and being perhaps quixotic enough to think that he would be able to simply gather his things and leave in peace. Unfortunately, for Henry Wirz this was not the case. A delegation of Union officers was dispatched to Andersonville Camp by General James H. Wilson, commanding cavalry forces stationed in the Macon, Georgia, area. Their orders were to arrest Wirz as a war criminal and place him in confinement in Macon which is precisely what they did. On May 20, 1865, he was taken to Washington, D. C., to await trial.76

The hysteria of the post-war era had begun prior to the end of hostilities. The literature which 'fired the imagination' of the Northern reader came from accounts of the Southern prison system. Wirz, with his accent and small build, added to the portrait envisioned by some vindictive Americans as the foreigner coming to America to position himself with the Rebel Government to do his nefarious, sinister work within the framework of legality. Xenophobia was certainly a factor as the Northerners were building their semi-relevant allusions, associating him

76 Ibid., p. 290.
with another German-speaking criminal, George Atzerodt, a member of the conspirators to assassinate the President of the United States!

The trial opened on August 23, 1865, with Major General (Brevet) Lewis Wallace presiding in the case of 'The United States vs. Major Henry Wirz.' During the next two months, testimony from the higher echelons of the Union Army down to the lowest private pointed fingers of accusation at Wirz. By the time all the testimony had been presented, there seemed little doubt that Major Wirz was indeed a fiend and villain, specifically, a truly inhuman man. He sat alone, however, "as the apoplectic Marylander, General Winder, who had assumed a role not unlike that played in World War II by the despised Nazi, Heinrich Himmler," had died of old age shortly prior to the end of the war. The court found Wirz guilty on most of the thirteen counts cited against him in the original indictment and sentenced him to hang. President Andrew Johnson approved the sentence and, on November 10, 1865, Wirz was hanged. The unfair analogies about Wirz and Atzerodt, the presidential assassination plotter, had final significance. Wirz found his final resting place to be not his native German-speaking Switzerland, but next to Atzerodt (who had been hanged in July for his part in the assassination), in the Capital Prison graveyard in Washington, D.C.

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77 McElroy, This was Andersonville, p. vx.
Unfortunate as wirz' end seems, the North was not to allow him to rest in peace. When the Georgia Division of the Daughters of the Confederacy dedicated a memorial to Henry wirz in 1909, the Northern writers were outraged. The entire matter was enough to be an impetus for N. P. Chipman to write yet another vindictive account of the Wirz trial and his implicit guilt of wickedness, Chipman clinging to the charge of Wirz being motivated to kill. All this came thirty-five years after the end of the Reconstruction Period, with its vindictive hysteria quelled and forty-six years since wirz' hanging was 'fait accompli'.

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