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with 'Statements' of Outrages upon Freedmen in Georgia, by Hamilton
W. Pierson**

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Title: A Letter to Hon. Charles Sumner, with 'Statements' of Outrages upon Freedmen in Georgia

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Release Date: September 9, 2009 [EBook #29942]

Language: English

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*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A LETTER TO HON. CHARLES SUMNER, WITH 'STATEMENTS' OF OUTRAGES UPON FREEDMEN IN GEORGIA ***

A LETTER
TO
HON. CHARLES SUMNER,
WITH "STATEMENTS" OF
Outrages Upon Freedmen in Georgia,
AND AN ACCOUNT OF MY
EXPULSION FROM ANDERSONVILLE, GA.,
BY THE
KU-KLUX KLAN.
BY REV. H. W. PIERSON, D.D.,
FORMERLY PRESIDENT OF CUMBERLAND COLLEGE, KENTUCKY;
AUTHOR OF JEFFERSON AT MONTICELLO, OR THE PRIVATE
LIFE OF THOMAS JEFFERSON; CORRESPONDING
MEMBER N. Y. HISTORICAL SOCIETY, ETC.

COMPLIMENTS OF THE AUTHOR.

**WASHINGTON:
CHRONICLE PRINT., 511 NINTH STREET.
1870.**

Table of Contents
[Lawlessness in Georgia.](#)

**Why I Was Ku Kluxed.
Appendix A.**

[Copy.]

NEW YORK, *November, 1861*

To the Rev. H. W. PIERSON, D.D.,
President of Cumberland College, Kentucky:

DEAR SIR: The undersigned beg leave respectfully to suggest to you the propriety of repeating your paper read before the Historical Society at a recent meeting, on the Private Life of Thomas Jefferson, and making public a larger portion of your ample materials, in the form of public lectures. The unanimous expression of approbation on the part of the Society, which your paper elicited, is an earnest of the satisfaction with which your consent to lecture will be received by the public at large.

We have the honor to be, very respectfully, yours,

GEORGE BANCROFT,
HAMILTON FISH,
WM. M. EVARTS,
FREDERIC DE PEYSTER,
BENJ. H. FIELD,
GEORGE FOLSOM,
L. BRADISH,

ISAAC FERRIS,
GORHAM D. ABBOT,
SAMUEL OSGOOD,
GEORGE POTTS,
HENRY W. BELLOWS,
JOSEPH G. COGSWELL,
HORACE WEBSTER,

And many others.

LAWLESSNESS IN GEORGIA.

[Pg 3]

WASHINGTON, D. C., *March 15, 1870.*

MY DEAR SIR: It would not become me to express an opinion upon any of the legal questions involved in the Georgia bill now before the Senate, but I respectfully call your attention to the following "statements" of facts. I certainly am not surprised that Honorable gentlemen whom I greatly esteem, should express their belief that the outrages committed upon the Freedmen and Union men in Georgia have been greatly exaggerated in the statements that have been presented to Congress and the country. I know that to persons and communities not intimately acquainted with the state of society, and the civilization developed by the institution of slavery, they seem absolutely incredible. Allow me to say, from my personal knowledge, and profoundly conscious of my responsibility to God and to history, that the statements that have been given to the public in regard to outrages in Georgia come far short of the real facts in the case. Permit me to add that I went to Andersonville, Ga., to labor as a pastor and teacher of the Freedmen, *without pay*, as I had labored during the war in the service of the *Christian Commission*; that I had nothing at all to do with the political affairs of the State; that I did not know, and, so far as I am aware, I did not see or speak to any man who held a civil office in the State, except the magistrate at Andersonville; that a few days after my arrival there I performed the first religious services, and participated in the first public honors that were ever rendered to the 13,716 "brave boys" who sleep there, by decorating the cemetery with procession, prayer, and solemn hymns to God, as described in [Appendix A](#).

[Pg 4]

My time and labors were sacredly given to the Freedmen. In addition to the usual Sabbath services I visited them in their cabins around the stockades, and in the vicinity of the cemetery, reading the Bible to them, and talking and praying with them. It was in the prosecution of these labors that I saw and heard more of sufferings and horrible outrages inflicted upon the Freedmen than I saw and heard of as inflicted upon slaves in any five years of constant horseback travel in the South before the war, when I visited thousands of plantations as agent of the American Tract society, the American Bible Society, and as President of Cumberland College, Princeton, Kentucky. As illustrations of the sufferings of these oppressed, outraged people, and of their utter helplessness and want of protection from the State or Federal courts, I give a few of the "statements" that I wrote down from

their own lips. I know these men, and have entire confidence in their "statements."

STATEMENT OF CANE COOK.

Cane Cook now lives near Americus, Sumter County, Georgia. I heard through the colored people of the inhuman outrages committed upon him, and sent word to him to come to me if possible, that I might get a statement of the facts from his own lips. With the greatest difficulty he got into the cars at Americus, and came here to-day. He says:

"I worked for Robert Hodges, last year, who lives about two and-a-half miles from Andersonville, Georgia. I had my own stock, and rented land from him, agreeing to give him one-third of the corn, and one-fourth of the cotton for rent. We divided the corn by the wagon load, and had no trouble about that. I made three bags of cotton, weighing 506, 511, and 479 pounds when it was packed. Mr. Hodges weighed it again, and I don't know what he has got it down, but that was the right weight; one-fourth was his, and three-fourths mine. He told me he would buy my cotton and pay me the market price, which was twenty-one cents that day, and I told him he might have it. I got some meat and corn and other things from him during the year, and he paid me \$50 in cash Christmas. I went to him last Friday a week ago, (January 29th, 1869) for a settlement. When he read over his account he had a gallon of syrup charged to me, and I told him I had not had any syrup of him. He asked me if I disputed his word. I told him that I did not want to dispute his word, but I had not had any syrup from him. He got up very angry, and took a large hickory stick and came towards me. I went backwards towards the door, and he followed me. He is a strong man and I did not want to have any trouble with him, and I gave him no impudence. I had a small piece of clap-board in my hand, that I had walked with. He told me to throw it down. I made no attempt to strike him, but held it up to keep off his blow. I went backwards to the door and to the edge of the porch, and he followed me. As I turned to go down the steps—there are four steps—he struck me a powerful blow on the back of my head, and I fell from the porch to the ground. I was not entirely senseless, but I was stiff and could not move hand or foot. I lay a long time—I do not know how long—but he did not touch me. Jolly Low was at work upon the house, and he came down where I was, and Mr. Hodges told him he might lift me up if he was a mind to. He lifted me up and set me on the steps. Mr. Hodges then sent about three miles for Dr. Westbrook, and he came and bled me in both arms; but I was so cold my left arm would not bleed at all, and my right arm bled but a very little. The Doctor then told me to go to my friend's house and let him take care of me. Two colored men—Anthony Dukes and Edward Corrillus—took me under each arm and carried me to Burrell Corrillus' house, about one hundred and fifty yards. I could not bear my weight upon my feet or stand at all. The Doctor rode by and told Mrs. Corrillus to take good care of me and keep me there a couple of days. I staid there until Sunday afternoon, when two men lifted me into a buggy and Mr. Corrillus carried me to my wife near Americus. My hands, arms, back, and legs are almost useless. I have not been able to lift a bit of food to my mouth. I have to be fed like a baby. I have not gone before any of the courts. I have no money to pay a lawyer, and I know it would do no good. Mr. Hodges has not paid me for my cotton, and says he will not settle with me, but will settle with any man I will send him. While I lay before his door he told me that if I died he would pay my wife \$50. I hope there will be some law sometime for us poor oppressed people. If we could only get land and have homes we could get along; but they won't sell us any land."

[Pg 5]

ANDERSONVILLE, GA., *Feb. 7, 1869.*

Mr. Cook is about fifty years old, has a large frame, has been an industrious, hard-working man, but is now almost entirely paralyzed and helpless. He is the most shattered, complete, and pitiable wreck from human violence I have ever seen. Mr. Hodges, I am told, owns about six thousand acres of land, and is one of the most prominent and respected citizens of Sumter County. He is a Methodist preacher, and Mr. Reese informs me, as I write, that he has heard him preach a great many times in the last twenty years to both white and colored people at camp-meetings and different meeting-houses in this region. He refuses to sell any of his land to the colored people, and will not allow them to build a school-house on it.

[Pg 6]

STATEMENT OF FLOYD SNELSON.

Floyd Snelson, foreman of the hands employed by the Government in the National Cemetery, Andersonville, Georgia, says:

"That in July, 1868, after the work was suspended in the cemetery, and the Lieutenant in charge had gone to Marietta, Georgia, and the schools for the

freedmen were closed, and the teachers had left for the North, Mr. B. B. Dikes notified all the colored people who occupied buildings on the land now claimed by him, formerly occupied by the Confederate Government, in connection with the Andersonville prison, that they must get out of their buildings within four days, or he would have them put out by the Sheriff, and they would have the cost to pay. Nearly all of these men had been in the employ of the Government, at work in the National Cemetery, many of them from the commencement of this work after the surrender. They all occupied these buildings by permission of the officer in charge of the cemetery, by whom they were employed. Many of them had built these houses at their own expense, and cleared, fenced, and cultivated gardens of from one to four acres, which were covered with corn, potatoes, and other vegetables, which, with their houses, they were required to leave without any compensation. Including these laborers and their families, about two hundred persons occupied these buildings. On account of the great difficulty of getting homes for so many on such short notice, most of these colored people applied to Mr. Dikes for the privilege of occupying their houses and paying rent, either in money or a part of the crops that they were growing. But he refused, and said they could not stay on any terms. On the day appointed by Mr. Dikes, (Wednesday, July 29th, 1868,) the most of the white people in from six to ten miles around, appeared in Andersonville, with their arms, and Mr. Souber, the magistrate of the district, and Mr. Raiford, the Sheriff of the county, accompanied by a party of some twenty-six or thirty armed white men, went to the houses of all these people, (except a very few who had vacated their premises,) and threw all their furniture, and provisions of every kind, out of doors. They then nailed up the doors of all their cabins, on the inside, and punched off a part of the roofs, and got out in this way. By about two P. M., all these people, with their furniture, bedding, provisions, and everything that they possessed, were turned out of doors.

[Pg 7]

"About four o'clock, the most violent rain storm, accompanied with the most terrific thunder and lightning ever known here, commenced and continued the most of the night. Every mill-dam and many of the mills in a circle of ten miles were washed away and so completely destroyed that but one of them has been repaired so as to be used. The women—some of them about to be confined—children and invalids were exposed to this storm during the night. Their beds, clothing, provisions, and themselves were as completely drenched as if they had been thrown into a brook. Some of these people got homes by working for their board. Some able-bodied men got twenty-five cents a day. Some of them, (Deacon Turner Hall, of the Congregational Church, Andersonville, among the number,) walked from ten to twenty miles a day, and could get neither homes nor work at any price at all. Many women and children lay out of doors guarding their things, and exposed to the weather nearly a week, before they could get any shelter at all—their husbands and fathers roaming over the country to find some kind of a home. The Rev. F. Haley, of the American Missionary Association, arrived the next day, to look after the property of the mission. His life was threatened, but the colored people rallied around him to protect him, and he left the next day unharmed. Large numbers of the white people, from the neighborhood, assembled at Andersonville every day until Saturday night, when they set fire to nine (9) of the buildings, that had been built by the colored people, and burnt them up, and tore down their fences and destroyed their crops. The colored people, supposing that they intended to burn the buildings occupied for the "Teacher's Home" and the "Freedmen's School," rallied and protected them. No one of the men engaged in these outrages, has ever been arrested or punished in any way, and no one of these freedmen has ever had any redress for his sufferings and losses. I will make oath to these statements."

[Pg 8]

ANDERSONVILLE, GA., *Feb. 12, 1869.*

STATEMENT OF GEORGE SMITH.

George Smith now resides five miles from Ellaville, in Schley County, Georgia. He says:

"Before the election of Grant, large bodies of men were riding about the country in the night for more than a month. They and their horses were covered with large white sheets, so that you could not tell them or their horses. They gave out word that they would whip every Radical in the country that intended to vote for Grant, and did whip all they could get hold of. They sent word to me that I was one of the leaders of the Grant club, and they would whip me. I saw them pass my house one night, and I should think there were thirty or forty of them. They looked in the night like Jersey wagons. I supposed they were after me, and I took my blanket and gun and ran to the woods and lay out all night, and a good many other nights. Nearly all the Radicals in the neighborhood lay in the woods every night for two weeks

before election. The Kuklux would go to the houses of all that belonged to the Grant club, call them to the door, throw a blanket over them and carry them off and whip them, and try and make them promise to vote for Seymour and Blair. The night I saw them they went to the house of Mr. Henry Davis and ordered him out. He refused to come out and they tore down both of his doors. He fired at them and escaped. I heard a good many shots fired at him. He lay out about a week in the woods, and then slipped back in the night and got his family and moved off. He had bought a place and paid \$250 on it but he could not get a deed, and he has gone off and left it. They then went to the house of Tom Pitman and Jonas Swanson, called them to the door, threw blankets over their heads, carried them off and whipped them tremendously. They told them that they were damned Radicals and leaders of the Grant club, and that they would whip every one that voted for Grant, and would not give any work to any but Democrats.

"Bob Wiggins, a preacher, was whipped all most to death because they said he was preaching Radical doctrines to the colored people. It was supposed for a good many days that he would die, but he finally recovered.

[Pg 9]

"I attended the election at Ellaville. None of the Radicals that had been Ku-Kluxed tried to vote; but a good many Radicals did try to vote, but the judges made them all show their tickets, and if they were for Grant they would not let them vote. I saw how they treated others and did not try to put my vote in. I went early in the morning, and the white and colored Democrats voted until about noon, when I went home."

ANDERSONVILLE, *February 7, 1869.*

STATEMENT OF RICHARD REESE.

Richard Reese, President of the Grant club of Schley County, confirms the statements of George Smith in regard to the treatment of the Radicals in Schley County. He says:

"When the Ku-Klux commenced riding about the country I was at Macon attending the colored convention. When I got home some white men, Democrats, who were friends of mine, told me that the Ku-Klux would certainly kill me if I staid at home at nights. I took my blanket and hid in the woods. I have never had a gun or pistol in my life. I lay in the woods every night until after election. Day times I came home and worked my crop. One day, as I was in my yard, Mr. Jack Childers, a Democrat, came along from Americus, and said to me, 'Where is old Dick, the damned old Radical?' I said, 'Here I am.' He said, 'Well, you will be certain to be killed.' I said, 'Well, if they kill me they will kill a good old Radical, and I haven't got much longer to live noway.' He then started to get out of his buggy and come at me, but the man with him held him in and drove on. I had the Grant tickets in my house, and went to the Bumphead precinct, but there were more Radicals than Democrats there, and they would not open the polls at all. We staid there till twelve o'clock, then started for Ellaville. The white and colored Democrats were voting, but they would not let a Radical vote until about two o'clock, when Charley Hudson got upon a stump and said no man could vote unless he had paid his taxes. He then got down, and he and nearly every white man there went around to the colored voters and told them that if they would vote the Democratic ticket their tax was paid. I offered my ticket, and they said my tax was not paid, and if I put in my ticket they would put me in jail, and send me to the penitentiary. I had already agreed with a white man, who owed me \$50, to pay my tax, and he said he had done it, but when I found him, and he found what was the matter, he said he had not paid it. They demanded \$4.50 poll-tax, and I paid it and put in my vote. They were determined that I should not vote, and I was determined that I would vote for Grant any way, as I was the president of the club. They told me if I would vote for Seymour and Blair I need not pay my taxes. After I got my vote in I took all my Grant tickets and scattered them among the crowd, and told my club they need not try to vote, it would do no good. Grant would be elected without Schley County, and we all went home.

[Pg 10]

"Last spring we built a school-house, and hired a white lady to teach our school for several months. We held meetings and schools every Sunday. Friday night, February 5, 1869, our school-house was burned up.

"Last night we had a meeting to see what we could do about building another house. We have a deed of one-and-a-half acres of land, but there is no timber on it, and the owners of the land around have put up a paper forbidding us to cut a stick on their's, and see how tight they have got us. We want the Government or somebody to help us build. We want some law to protect us. We know that we could burn their churches and schools, but it is against the law to burn houses, and we don't want to break the law or harm anybody. We

want the law to protect us, and all we want is to live under the law."

ANDERSONVILLE, *Feb. 7, 1869.*

STATEMENT OF REV. CHARLES ENNIS.

Charles Ennis informs me that he was sixty-two years old last June; that he was the slave of Mr. G. C. McBee, who kept the ferry on the Holston river, fifteen miles from Knoxville Tennessee; that he has often ferried the Hon. Messrs. Brownlow and Maynard over the river; that he learned to read when a small boy, and that he is now a preacher and teacher. He is the most intelligent colored man I have seen at Andersonville. He says:

"My wife has been a midwife for many years, and has attended upon a good many white and colored women in child-birth. Last year we lived in Mitchell County, and Mr. Henry Adams, of Baker County, sent for her to attend his wife, who was about to be confined. The child was born and did well. After the riot at Camilla we were afraid to remain in Mitchell County. I lived within three miles of Camilla, and a good many of the dead were very near me, but I did not see any of them. I was afraid to go from home. Dr. Sanders, who attended upon those who were shot, told me that more than fifty were killed and wounded. Mr. Adams said his wife liked my wife so well that he wanted us to go to Houston County with him, and he would pay our expenses there; and then he would certainly get me a school, and I could live on his place with my wife, and he would pay her \$50 a year wages. I told him we would not engage by the year, but only by the month, so long as we could agree. Mr. Robert Adams, his uncle, was his partner, and managed the plantation. On the 19th of January, 1869, he told my wife he wanted breakfast very early, as he was going to attend the burying of his nephew's wife next morning. She got up before day and got it, and I carried it to him and he ate it by candle light. After breakfast, as my wife was going to milk, he came out doors, and when he saw her he said: 'O you d—d old b—h, I have catched up to you, you G—d d—d old rogue,' and a good deal more of the same sort. I was surprised at this, as I knew she had got the breakfast all right, and I had carried it in to him. I went out and asked him in a mild manner, 'Mr. Adams, what is the matter? what has she done?' He made no reply at all, but rushed at me and caught me by the hair and commenced beating me. He struck me several times on the head. I made no resistance at all, but said, 'Mr. Adams, I will make you pay, for this.' This made him still worse, and he took out his knife and said he would give me something to make him pay for—he would kill me.

[Pg 11]

"Henry Ottrecht, a German, and a colored boy named Wash caught him and begged him not to kill me, and told me to promise him that I would not report him. He held on to me until I promised him that I would not report him, and then let me go. He told these men that he would have killed me if they had not prevented him. As he started away to attend the burying of his nephew's wife, he said to me, 'Now you may go to Perry,' (the county seat,) 'and report me if you want; but if you do I'll be d—d if I don't kill you.' At night my wife heard him tell Charles Evert, a freedman, about the scrape, and he said he would have killed me if they had not held him, and he would kill me anyway, if I reported him. I was a slave until freed the by war, but I never received such treatment during all my life as a slave. I waited on officers in the Confederate army from 1862 until the surrender. The last six months I was with Lt. Col. Jones, Second Georgia Reserves, at Andersonville. I never received a blow or a harsh word from one of them. I have traveled a great deal before and since the war. I know that the colored people are more brutally treated now than they were in slavery times. A great many more are beaten, wounded and killed now than then. I know a great many cases where they have been beaten to death with clubs, killed with knives and dirks, shot and hung. We have no protection at all from the laws of Georgia. We had rather die than go back into slavery, but we are worse treated than we ever were before. We cannot protect ourselves; we want the Government to protect us. A great many freedmen have told me that we should be obliged to rise and take arms and protect ourselves, but I have always told them this would not do; that the whole South would then come against us and kill us off, as the Indians have been killed off. I have always told them the best way was for us to apply to the Government for protection, and let them protect us."

[Pg 12]

ANDERSONVILLE, GA., *February 10, 1869.*

[Pg 13]

WHY I WAS KU KLUXED.

Mr. B. B. Dikes, referred to in the foregoing statement of Floyd Snelson, is not the only claimant who has endeavored to secure possession of the grounds in and around the stockades at *Andersonville, Georgia*. I should have said that he has entered a suit in the U. S. Court for the possession of these lands, but in the absence of the military he judged the ejection of the freedmen, and getting possession in the manner I have described, as more sure and speedy than the "law's delay."

A Mr. Crawford claims that the land which lies within and around the south stockade, in which are the hospital sheds, where so many of our soldiers died, where even now the bare ground upon which they lay shows the indenture made by the bodies of our suffering dying soldiers, belongs to certain heirs, and he, too, has been endeavoring to get possession of these grounds. My pastoral visitations led me to the cabins in and around the stockades, that have been built upon the land now claimed by Mr. Crawford. As was most natural, they poured into my ears the sad, the almost incredible, accounts of the wrongs they have suffered "since freedom came," or, as they more frequently expressed it, "since the surrender came through." One of these men came to me in January, in great distress, and told me that the day before he had been notified by Mr. Souber, the magistrate of the district, that he must leave his house by the next Monday night, or he would bring the Sheriff and turn him out. Mr. Souber told him that he had charge of the land for Mr. Crawford, *and that he was going to fence it in, and raise a cotton crop in and around these stockades*. There are thousands who know how this soil has been ensanguined and enriched. I had frequently walked over these grounds, and seen evidences of what is both too indelicate and too horrible to be described. I confess that my indignation was roused to the highest degree. I sat down immediately and wrote a statement of these facts to Hon. J. M. Ashley, and begged him to call on General Grant, and see if there was any power in the Government to prevent these outrages.

[Pg 14]

The Lieutenant in charge at Andersonville called upon me some days later, and informed me that my letter to Congressman Ashley had been referred, by General Grant to General Meade, who had referred it to him. I furnished him the facts upon which it was based, and also wrote General Meade as follows:

[Copy.]

ANDERSONVILLE, GA., *January 30, 1869.*

GENERAL: I send you the accompanying "statements" in regard to the matters referred to in my letter to the Hon. J. M. Ashley, M.C. My letter was based upon *part* of these statements. Those additional to what had then been communicated to me are the result of investigations made since Lieutenant Corliss informed me that my letter had been referred to General Meade and to himself.

I have been acquainted with colored people in the South more than twenty-five years I know the difficulty of getting at the truth in such matters. But I think these "statements" can be depended upon.

With great respect, yours very truly,

H. W. PIERSON.

To MAJOR GENERAL MEADE.

STATEMENTS OF ALBERT WILLIAMS, MARTHA RANDALL, JANE ROGERS, AND BENJAMIN WESTON.

Albert Williams states to me that in January after the surrender he was employed by the Government to work in the cemetery, and worked there until last spring. That Mr. Van Dusen, Supt. of the cemetery, gave him the privilege of moving into the house he now occupies, near the stockade that enclosed the hospital buildings; that afterwards Captain Rensch gave him the privilege of clearing off the ground east of the stockade and raising a crop; that he hired hands and cleared and fenced about fifteen acres; that his wife and children helped to raise a crop; that after it was "laid by," Mr. Crawford, who claims the land, called on him and demanded rent, that he also called on Lewis Williams, Howard Ingraham, and Butler Johnson, who were raising crops around the stockades by permission of Captain Rensch, and demanded rent, that Mr. Crawford called upon us four, with Mr. B. B. Dikes and Esquire Souber, and compelled us to sign a written contract, which they had prepared, that each of us four would pay forty bushels of corn each for rent; that he (Williams) was unable to pay the forty bushels of corn, but did pay ten dollars in money, ten bushels of corn which he gathered and hauled to Mr. Dikes' crib, for which he was allowed

[Pg 15]

fifteen dollars in rent. None of the four men were able to pay the forty bushels of corn; but Mr. Crawford brought the Bailiff, John Law, and took what corn he could, and a sow and pig from Howard Ingraham. All these men but me have left their places that they had cleared and fenced, because they could not pay such rent, and Mr. Crawford has put the places in charge of Mr. Souber, and brought him two males to cultivate the grounds. Mr. Williams states that twice the stockade has been set on fire in the night, and he and his boys have toted water and put it out.

Mr. Williams states that Mr. Souber came to his house some two or three weeks ago, and told him he must get out of the house and leave the place, that he had charge of it now, that he was going to fence in the grounds and raise a crop in and around the stockade, and that he would not let any body live there but those that worked the place. That some time after this Mr. Souber sent him word by Bob Stevens that he had rented the place to him, and that he must get out or Mr. Souber would have him put out by the Sheriff, Mr. Raiford; that Mr. Stevens and his wife have both been to his house several times with this message from Mr. Souber; that last Saturday (January 23, 1869,) his wife told him that Mr. Souber came to his house while he was away and told her we must get out by Monday night or he would bring the Sheriff and have us put out. Mr. Williams says he will make oath to these statements.

[Pg 16]

Mrs. Martha Randall and Mrs. Jane Rogers live very near Mr. Williams. They state to me that they occupy the house by permission of Mr. Souber, as they have agreed to work for him. They both say to me that they heard Mr. Souber tell Mrs. Williams, last Saturday, that "they must get out of the house or he would have the Sheriff put them out."

NOTE—You will see that there are three witnesses to these statements of Mr. Souber. I saw each of them "separate and apart" from the others, and no one knew what the others had said, and their statements agreed in every particular.

Benjamin Weston states to me that Major Anthony gave him permission to raise a crop east of the stockade, where the small-pox hospital was located. That he cleared and fenced about six acres; that there was no clearing on the land—only some of the underbrush was cut out; that there was not a rail on the place; that he cut and split all the rails and made a good fence, and raised a crop of corn; that about the first of August Mr. Crawford came to him and said the land was his, and demanded thirty-five bushels of corn for rent, and required him to sign a contract and give security for that amount; that the place only yielded about twenty bushels, of which his family and stock used ten bushels, and he gave ten bushels for rent.

Mr. Weston states that he heard that Mr. Souber had charge of the land, and about the first of January he applied to him to rent what he had cleared and fenced. Mr. Souber told him that he had charge of the land but it was not for rent; he was agoing to tend it himself. He then asked me what Mr. Williams was agoing to do. I told him I did not know. He said well, he had better hunt him a house, for I am agoing to tend that place myself. Mr. Weston says he has never had any pay for clearing and fencing the land, only about ten bushels of corn, as above stated. He says he will make oath to the above statements.

January 29, 1869.

[Pg 17]

GENERAL: I do not know the boundaries of the land claimed by Crawford, but as far as I am able to learn, the mob that burnt the buildings here last summer, and threats and treatment like that detailed above, have driven off all the families that occupied these grounds by authority of officers of the United States Government, except Mr. Williams, and Mr. Rhodes who occupies a building in the large stockade, which he tells me he has been warned to leave. Through the means above detailed Mr. C. has very nearly secured possession, which is nine-tenths in law.

With great respect, yours, very truly,

H. W. PIERSON.

TO MAJOR GENERAL MEADE.

On the 10th of February, 1869, Captain Bean called on me and introduced himself as a member of General Meade's staff, and said he had come from Atlanta to Andersonville by order of General Meade to make investigations in regard to the matters referred to in my letters. I went with him to the stockade and pointed out the new fences made and the grounds claimed by Mr. Souber. At his request I went with him to the office of Mr. Williams, the superintendent of the cemetery, and in my presence he told him *to notify Mr. Souber to suspend all work upon these grounds.*

I confess that I was exceedingly gratified at this complete success of my efforts. I felt that these historic grounds, this Gethsemane of the nation, had been rescued from what I could but esteem a sacrilegious use and possession, and that the flag that floated over the dead at

Andersonville had been honored by this order. When I told the Freedmen the result of Captain Bean's visit their joy was great. In describing to me, as they often had, the suffering and losses they had endured when they were driven from their homes, and their cabins were burnt last summer, they always, in their simplicity, spoke of it as the time "when the Government busted up." And this truly described the condition of the Government from that time to the present, so far as they were concerned, for these facts show that no matter how horrible and brutal the outrage and personal violence committed upon them there had been no punishment to the perpetrators and no redress to the Freedmen. Now they felt that the Government would again afford them some protection.

[Pg 18]

But great as was my joy, and the joy of the suffering Freedmen, it was nothing to the *rage* of those who, after so long a struggle, had been defeated in their efforts to get possession of these grounds just as they were about to become completely successful. Captain Bean visited and left Andersonville on the 10th. On the 12th I received a Ku-Klux letter, of which the following is a true copy:

* Skull and *

* cross-bones.*

"FEBRUARY 12, 1869.

"Dr. PEARSON (so-called).

"SIR: For your especial benefit I am instructed to write you this special communication of warning and instruction.

"The citizens of this place are aware of a few facts relative to yourself that I will proceed to designate: In the first place, they know you to be a wandering *vagrant carpet bagger*, without visible means of support, and living at present on the earnings of those who are endeavoring to make an honest living by teaching. You have also proved yourself a *scoundrel* of the deepest dye by maliciously interfering in matters which do not in the least concern you, to the detriment of some of our citizens.

"This, therefore, is to warn you to LEAVE this county forthwith. Twenty-four (24) hours from the above date is the time allowed for you to leave. If after the said time your devilish countenance is seen at *this place or vicinity your worthless life will pay the forfeit*. Congressional reconstruction, the military, nor anything else under Heaven, will prevent summary justice being meted out to such an incarnate fiend as yourself.

"By order of committee."

I should do great injustice to Mr. Dikes, Mr. Souber, and Mr. Crawford, and their sympathising friends, the author and inspirers of the above letter, were I to say, or convey the impression, that they were worse men than their neighbors. From what I have seen and heard of them I am sure that in *mental culture*, in *kindness of heart*, in *loyalty*, and in *Christian civilization* they are decidedly *above* rather than *below* the over-whelming majority of their fellow citizens. They represent not the *lowest* but the *highest* type of patriotism, philanthropy, and Christianity prevailing in that region. I challenge their late Congressional representative, the Hon. Nelson Tift, to go before his constituents and deny my statements in regard to the social standing of these men.

[Pg 19]

The above letter states my offence: "You have proved yourself a *scoundrel* of the deepest dye, by maliciously interfering in matters which do not in the least concern you, to the *detriment* of some of our citizens." But General Grant, General Wade, and Captain Bean interfered far more potentially than I did. If I am a "*scoundrel* of the deepest dye" what must they be?

The "skull and bones," the insignia of the Ku-Klux Klan and not the stars and stripes, represent the dominant power in that region. "Congressional reconstruction, the military, &c.," are successfully defied. The power of the United States Government is not felt or feared. They only know it as powerless to prevent the atrocities enacted before their eyes during and since the war.

The flag that I had united with others to honor with procession, songs, and cheers, was powerless to protect me, and floats dishonored above the graves of the 12,848 martyr heroes who suffered and died in the stockades at Andersonville, as prisoners of war never suffered and died before.

I need hardly say that with my knowledge of the condition of things around me, as presented *only in part* in this communication, I left Andersonville as desired by the *Ku-Klux Klan*. I knew that human life—that my life was not worth as much as the life of a chicken in any law-abiding, law-governed community, for should any evil disposed person there maliciously kill his neighbor's chicken he would be compelled to pay some slight fine or endure some brief imprisonment; but no one of all the perpetrators of the crimes I have named has suffered or

has dreamed or suffering any fine, imprisonment, or punishment whatever. I knew that in their own language my life was "*worthless*." I went South to reside in 1843, and there are few who know it as thoroughly. As agent of the American Bible Society, and in other capacities, I have traveled tens of thousands of miles over different States on horseback before the war. Bishop Kavanaugh, of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, in introducing me to the Louisville Conference in 1858, told them that though a Presbyterian I had "out itinerated the itineracy itself." And yet I have never seen or heard as much of outrage and personal violence upon the colored people in any five years of slavery as I heard and saw at Andersonville, Georgia, from December 22, 1868, to February 12, 1869. I have never known crime to be committed in any community with such perfect impunity. I have yet to learn of a *single* instance where the civil courts in that part of the State have rendered any punishment or redress for outrages like those I have detailed. The fact that such crimes have for years been committed with perfect impunity—that the men who perpetrate them have not the slightest fear or thought of ever being punished—that the Freedmen who have suffered outrages such as these, and others entirely too gross for me to repeat, have not the faintest shadow of a hope that their wrongs will ever be redressed, has reduced these poor people to a state of almost utter hopelessness and despair.

Turner Hall, a freedman, a deacon in the Congregational church in Andersonville, under whose black skin beats one of the most patriotic and noble Christian hearts I have ever known, writes: "We seem to be forsaken of God and man."

I have talked with many of these men, who in the late Presidential election, with a spirit as noble as ever beat in the heart of a martyr, slept in swamps for weeks, were hunted like wild beasts, and perilled all means of livelihood for their wives and children, and their own lives, that they might vote for General Grant for President. Those of them that were employed in the National Cemetery at Andersonville, Georgia, were threatened with dismissal in case they voted for General Grant. Notwithstanding this threat some of them went to the polls, voted for General Grant, and were immediately dismissed by Henry Williams, superintendent of the cemetery. This was done to deter the others, but they went forward and executed a "freeman's will" by voting for General Grant. (Mr. Williams has since been removed.) And what to this hour has been their reward from their friends? I forbear to press this question.

But with facts like these in mind can anyone suppose that a fair election—an election in which the thousands of Freedmen in Georgia shall give expression to their political wishes—can be held in that State in 1870. The thing is simply impossible. Until these ignorant, outraged people shall have some demonstration that there is power, either in the State or Federal Government, to afford them protection, and punish such outrages as that of Rev. Robert Hodges upon Cane Cook, the Freedmen cannot be expected again to risk their *livings* and their *lives* in voting for those whom they know to be their only friends.

It will be proper for me to add that I did not come to Washington at the suggestion or with the knowledge of any party in Georgia. I belong to no "delegation." I came here at my own charges, in the interests of patriotism and suffering humanity, to lay these facts before Congress and the highest officers of the Government. All my self respect and honor as a man, all my regard for the rights of *American citizenship*, all my toils for the triumph of the starry banner, all my labors for the education and protection of the ignorant and outraged Freedmen, and all the emotions stirred in my soul as again and again I have walked amid the graves of the nation's martyred dead at Andersonville, compelled me to the performance of these unsought labors. *I ask that these Freedmen may be protected and their wrongs redressed. I ask for the vindication of the rights of American citizenship in Georgia and everywhere beneath our own flag upon our own soil.*

With great respect, your obedient servant,
H. W. PIERSON.

Hon. CHARLES SUMNER,
United States Senate.

APPENDIX A.

Emancipation Day in Andersonville, Ga.

JANUARY 1, 1869.

BY REV. H. W. PIERSON, D.D.

This day so full of interest to the freedmen, so identified with the name and fame of the lamented Lincoln, and so glorious in the history of our country, was duly celebrated in

Andersonville, Georgia.

If called upon to state what have been the instrumentalities at work among this people that have led to what I think all must esteem a most appropriate and beautiful celebration of the day, I must name as first and most efficient the *School for Freedmen*, established here by the American Missionary Association, in the fall of 1866, and successfully carried on up to the present time. Its first teachers were Miss M. L. Root, of Sheffield, Ohio, and Miss M. F. Battey, of Providence, R. I., who labored here for two years, with a Christian heroism, wisdom and success that have left their names indelibly engraved upon the grateful hearts of all those for whom they toiled. During the second year, Miss M. C. Day, of Sheffield, Ohio, aided them, and was a worthy and efficient co-laborer.

For reasons unknown to the writer, none of these ladies returned the third year, but were succeeded by Miss Laura Parmelee, of Toledo, Ohio, and Miss Amelia Johnson, of Enfield, Conn., who are carrying forward the work so successfully inaugurated with undiminished success. The colored people have become so impressed with the value of the school that they are contributing to its support with increasing liberality and enthusiasm.

As the schools for the freedmen are all suspended during the Christmas holidays, a number of teachers and their friends, in other places, had availed themselves of this opportunity to visit Andersonville. At a social gathering at the "Teachers' Home" it was found that, including the visitors, the clerks in the service of the government, and the teachers here, there were present representatives of seven northern States, and all were ready to unite heartily with the freedmen in the celebration of Emancipation Day. They were Miss Russell, of Maine; Miss Champney and Miss Stowell, of Massachusetts; Miss Johnson and Misses Smith, of Connecticut; Mr. Pond, of Rhode Island; Mr. North, of Indiana; Mr. Haughton, of New York; Miss Parmelee, of Ohio, and Rev. Dr. H. W. Pierson.

[Pg 24]

The committee appointed to make arrangements for the appropriate celebration of the day, anxious to make the fullest possible exhibition of the loyalty of all who were to unite with them in its celebration, determined that it should include (1st,) Services in the Freedmen's Chapel; (2d,) The decoration of the Cemetery; and (3d,) The Salutation of the "Dear Old Flag," at the depot.

All entered with alacrity and delight upon the work of preparation for these services. The colored people ranged the woods to find the choicest evergreens, and the young ladies, with willing hearts and skillful hands wrought the most elaborate and beautiful wreaths from the Magnolia, Bay, Holly, Cedar, and other boughs with which they were so bountifully furnished. Songs were rehearsed, and all arrangements were duly completed.

On New Year's morning a deeply interested audience met in the room occupied both for school-room and chapel, and at 10 a. m., Mr. Floyd Snelson, (colored) President of the day, called the meeting to order, and services were conducted as follows: (1.) Singing—"From all that dwell below the skies." (2) Reading the Scriptures, by Miss Johnson, of Enfield, Connecticut. (3.) Prayer, by Deacon Stickney, (colored.) (4.) Reading of the Emancipation Proclamation, by Miss Parmelee, of Toledo, Ohio. (5) Singing—"Oh, praise and thanks,"—Whittier. (6) Address by Rev. Dr. H. W. Pierson. This programme having been carried out, the entire audience was formed into a procession and marched to the Cemetery, about half a mile north of us, under the direction of Mr. Houghton, of Brooklyn, New York, Marshal of the day. That procession, embracing so many happy Freedmen and representatives from so many States, moving with so much order, and bearing such beautiful wreaths, was certainly one of the most impressive and beautiful I have ever seen. I am sure the sight would have melted tens of thousands of hearts could they have looked upon it. Onward they marched upon their sacred mission, singing at times most appropriate and beautiful songs: winding down the hillside, crossing upon a single scantling the muddy stream that furnished water for our own prisoners, passing near the rude cabin where the blood-hounds were penned, in full view of the stockades where so many thousands yielded up their lives, moving onward and up the gentle elevation with slow and solemn tread, they at length reached the front (south) entrance of the Cemetery, where the procession halted. On the right (east) of the gate is a post and tablet in the form of a cross, bearing this inscription: "National Cemetery, Andersonville, Georgia." On the left (west) of the gate is a similar post and tablet, bearing this inscription:

[Pg 25]

"On Fame's eternal camping-ground
Their silent tents are spread,
And Glory guards, with solemn round,
This bivouac of the dead."

A young lady, designated for the purpose, left the procession and hung one of our most beautiful wreaths upon the cross above this inscription.

The gates were then thrown open, and the entire procession entered the Cemetery. But how shall I describe the scene spread out before us as we entered this solemn, silent city of the nation's dead? The Cemetery contains forty-three acres, which are enclosed by a high board fence. It is divided into four principal sections by broad avenues, running north and south, and east and west, intersecting each other at right angles at the center of the grounds.

There is a sidewalk and row of young trees on each side of these avenues. And then on either side of these avenues and walks, what fields, what fields of white head-boards, stretching away in long white parallel lines to the north and south, each with its simple record of the name, regiment, and date of death of him who lies beneath it. So they sleep their long sleep, lying shoulder to shoulder in their graves as they had stood together in serried ranks on many a field of battle.

Resuming our march, and moving up the broad avenue, with rank upon rank, and thousands upon thousands of these solemn sentinels upon either side of us, we find on the left (west) side of the avenue, a tablet with this inscription:

"The hopes, the fears, the blood, the tears,
That marked the bitter strife,
Are now all crowned by victory
That saved the nation's life."

We paused, and hung a wreath above this inscription, and then moved on to a tablet on the right (east) side of the avenue, with this inscription:

[Pg 26]

"Whether in the prison drear,
Or in the battle's van,
The fittest place for man to die,
Is where he dies for man."

We hung a wreath here, and again our procession moved forward and halted on the left (west) side of the avenue, at a tablet bearing the inspired words:

"Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was; and the spirit shall return
unto God who gave it."

Here we placed another wreath, and moved onward to a tablet on the right (east) side of the avenue, where we read—

"A thousand battle-fields have drunk
The blood of warriors brave,
And countless homes are dark and drear,
Thro' the land they died to save."

Another wreath was placed here, and we marched to the last tablet in the north of the Cemetery, standing in the midst of a section of graves numbering thousands, and inscribed

"Through all rebellion's horrors
Bright shines our nation's fame,
Our gallant soldiers, perishing,
Have won a deathless name."

After hanging a wreath here, we marched to the center of the Cemetery, and hung our last wreath upon the flag-staff from which the stars and stripes shall ever float above those who died in its defence.

It was no place for speech. The surroundings were too solemn. Our only other services were to unite in singing "My Native Country, Thee," (America,) and Rev. Dr. Pierson offered prayer. And so we decorated the National Cemetery at Andersonville, Georgia. It was little, very little, we did, but we could not do more, and we dared not do less. Here are the graves of 12,848 "brave boys," who died as prisoners of war in the stockades. Eight hundred and sixty-eight other soldiers have been disinterred and brought here from Macon, Columbus, Eufaula, Americus, and other places in Georgia, so that now this Cemetery numbers 13,716 graves. We could not decorate them all, and we dared not decorate those of the States we represented, or of any particular class. We dared not single out any for special honors. We felt that all were worthy of equal honor from us, and from the nation they died to save. And so we decorated the Cemetery as a whole, as best we could, and our tribute of affection was bestowed equally upon each one of all these 13,716 hallowed graves. And most earnestly did we implore the blessing of Almighty God to rest upon our whole country, and upon all the fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, widows, and orphans, whose "dead" we thus attempted to honor.

[Pg 27]

It will gratify the relatives and friends of all those buried here, to know that the nation is watching over their dead with pious care. Hundreds of men have been employed in making the improvements already mentioned, and many others I have not time to notice, and a number are still at work. They are planting trees, making and improving walks, placing sod

upon the graves, and otherwise beautifying the grounds.

But I am detaining my readers too long from what I have already indicated as the third and final part of our programme.

Day after day the starry banner, the banner of peace ("Let us have Peace") is thrown to the breeze from the flag staff in front of the office of First Lieutenant A. W. Corliss, near the Andersonville depot. This is the most beautiful sight; indeed, almost the only beautiful sight that greets the vision of a lover of his country here.

We wished to give expression to the warm feelings of our own hearts, and also to make a demonstration of our loyalty and love for the flag in the presence of the unusual concourse of people assembled at the station for the business or pleasure of New Year's day.

Our procession was re-formed in the Cemetery, and taking the broad avenue that has been constructed by the government from the depot, a distance of about half a mile, we marched slowly back in the same order, and singing beautiful songs, as when we came. A part of the way our procession was in full view of the residents of the place, and the visitors there. Fortunately, as we reached the depot, the passenger train arrived from the south, and witnessed our loyal demonstrations. Arriving at the flag-staff, the entire procession formed in a circle around it, and sang with enthusiasm Mr. William B. Bradbury's "See the flag, the dear old flag," with the heart-stirring chorus—

"Wave the starry banner high,
Strike our colors, never!
Here we stand to live or die,
The Stripes and Stars forever."

[Pg 28]

Mr. Snelson, the President of the day, then proposed three cheers for the "Dear old Flag," which were given with a will. Three cheers were then proposed for Lieutenant Corliss and others, which were given in the same hearty manner. Other patriotic songs were then sung, and after a brief prayer and the benediction, by Rev. Dr. Pierson, the audience quietly dispersed.

So we celebrated Emancipation Day in Andersonville, Georgia. To all of us who participated in it, it was a joyful day. We also hope our services may gladden and cheer many other hearts all over our broad land.

NOTE.—I may be mistaken in the name of the Captain who made the brief visit to Andersonville, February 10, 1869.—See page 17. I shall regret if I have not properly honored one whose bearing was so gallant and gentlemanly. H. W. P.

Transcriber's Notes:

Additional spacing after some of the quotes is intentional to indicate both the end of a quotation and the beginning of a new paragraph as presented in the original text.

When referring to a specific county, the "c" in the word "county" has been capitalized for standard presentation.

The Table of Contents, which did not appear in the original text, was generated as an aid for the reader.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK A LETTER TO HON. CHARLES SUMNER,
WITH 'STATEMENTS' OF OUTRAGES UPON FREEDMEN IN GEORGIA ***

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