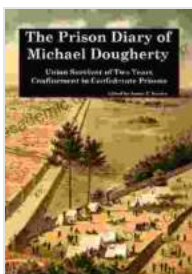


Union Survivor of Two Years Confinement in Confederate Prisons

In the tumultuous annals of the American Civil War, the plight of Union soldiers held captive in Confederate prisons remains a harrowing testament to the brutality and hardship that marked that conflict. Among those who endured these horrors was Sergeant John McElroy, a brave and resilient Union soldier whose two-year ordeal in the infamous Andersonville and Florence Stockade prisons tested the limits of human endurance.

Andersonville: A Crucible of Suffering

Established in 1864, Andersonville Prison was a notorious Confederate prison camp located in southwest Georgia. Overcrowded and unsanitary, the camp held an estimated 33,000 Union prisoners, of whom over 13,000 perished due to disease, starvation, and exposure.



The Prison Diary of Michael Dougherty: Union Survivor of Two Years Confinement in Confederate Prisons

by Sarah N. Randolph

★★★★☆ 4.6 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 839 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Screen Reader : Supported

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 94 pages

Lending : Enabled

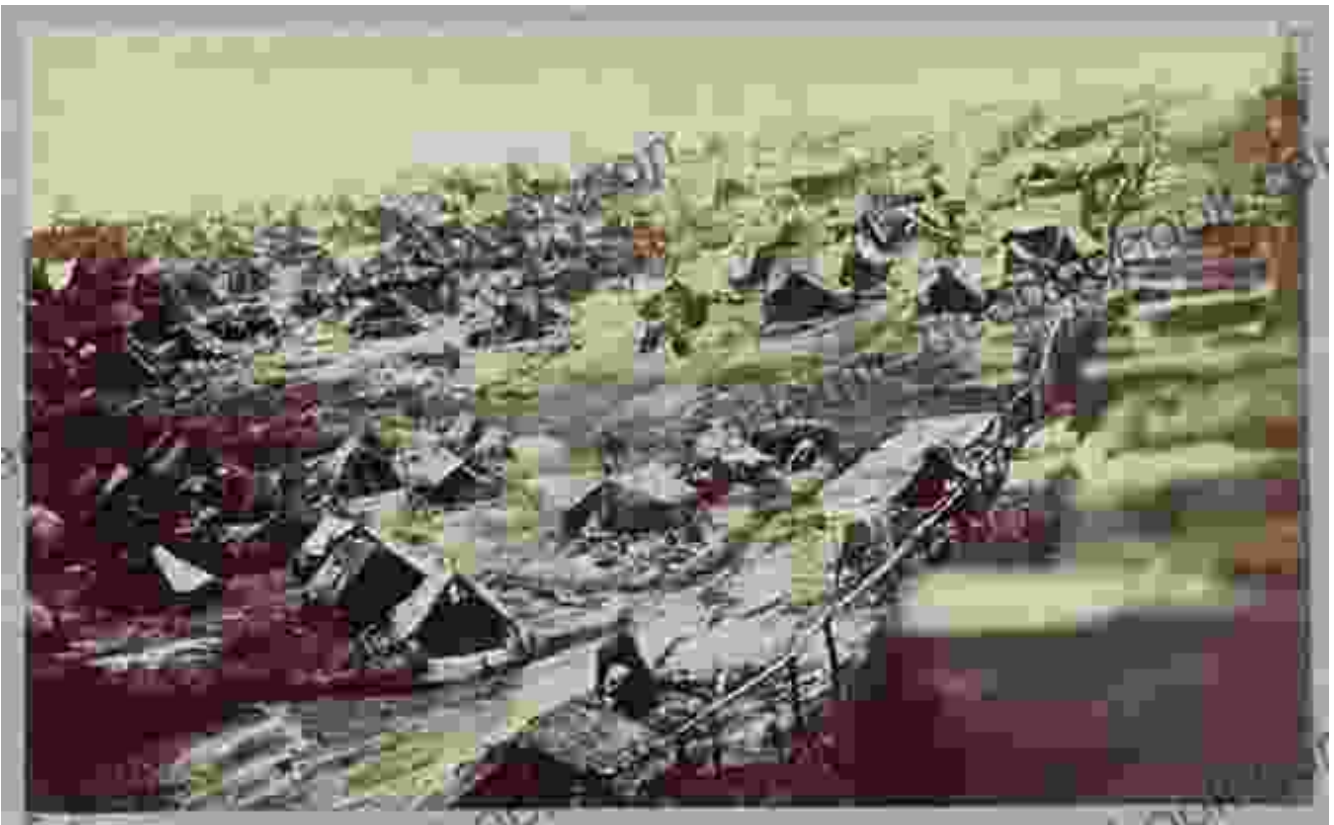
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Upon arriving at Andersonville, McElroy was shocked by the deplorable conditions he encountered. The prisoners were packed into open-air stockades, with little shelter from the elements. Rations were meager, and disease ran rampant. Dysentery and scurvy were common afflictions, and the stench of unburied corpses permeated the air.

Despite the horrors he endured, McElroy refused to despair. He drew strength from his faith and his unwavering belief in the Union cause. Together with his fellow prisoners, he formed a secret resistance movement, providing support and encouragement to those around him.

Florence Stockade: A False Hope

In August 1864, McElroy was transferred to the Florence Stockade in South Carolina, hoping for an improvement in conditions. However, the reality was no better. The stockade was equally overcrowded, and disease and starvation were rampant.



Florence Stockade prison camp, a place of despair and disease

At Florence, McElroy witnessed firsthand the horrors of Confederate retaliation. Union prisoners who attempted to escape were often brutally punished, and those who were captured while trying to return to Union lines were often summarily executed.

Undeterred, McElroy continued to resist his captors. He worked tirelessly to improve conditions for his fellow prisoners, scavenging for food and

organizing escapes. His indomitable spirit and resilience became an inspiration to those around him.

Release and Recovery

Finally, in March 1865, Union forces liberated the prisoners at Florence Stockade. McElroy and his fellow survivors were sent to Union hospitals, where they slowly began to recover from their physical and emotional wounds.



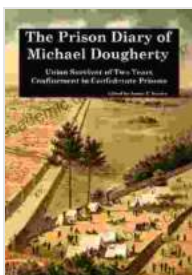
After returning to his home in Pennsylvania, McElroy struggled with the physical and psychological scars of his experiences. He suffered from nightmares and flashbacks, and the horrors he had witnessed haunted him for the rest of his life.

Despite the trauma he had endured, McElroy refused to let bitterness consume him. Instead, he dedicated himself to sharing his story and advocating for the humane treatment of prisoners of war. He served as a prominent member of the Grand Army of the Republic, a veterans' organization for Union soldiers, and tirelessly spoke out against the atrocities he had witnessed.

A Legacy of Resilience

John McElroy's story is a testament to the resilience and indomitable spirit of those who endured the horrors of Confederate prisons. His unwavering faith, his commitment to resistance, and his refusal to succumb to despair served as an inspiration to his fellow prisoners and continue to inspire generations today.

The legacy of Union survivors like John McElroy is one of courage, sacrifice, and unwavering hope. Their stories remind us of the resilience of the human spirit, even in the face of the darkest adversity.



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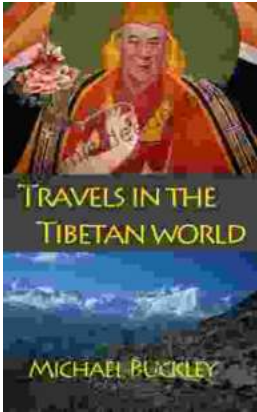
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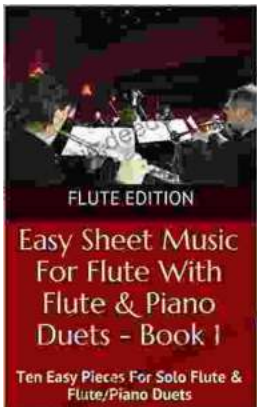
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