

November 24, 1864 - "The Refugees."



From the *Chattanooga Gazette*, Nov. 22.

The number of these poor people arriving in our city continues large. They arrive here without being able to bring any food with them to subsist upon, and very little household stuff. A couple of beds, or mattresses, a few blankets, some cooking utensils and a chair or two generally comprise their whole supply the comforts of life. The great body of the refugees have arrived here during the last two weeks and in that time we have had the worst weather that has visited Chattanooga for years, cold rains falling everyday and making the streets almost knee deep in mud. At first, the arrival were so numerous that all could not be accommodated in the camp, and as the cars in which they came from Georgia were needed, they were compelled to move their things out of them and do as best they could for the time; many of them stopped between the tracks, just where their baggage was put out, others found places in the different warehouses and houses along the railroad and in the car shed and building in the depot yard. At present, nearly all of them are gathered into a camp around the "Refugee House," on the railroad, near the depot. During the week ending Saturday, Nov. 19th, the following number were received and reported at the camp.

Men, 596; women 1,115; children, 1,690; total, 3,401. During the same time the following have been sent North to Nashville: men 225; women, 312; children, 544; total 1,081. The number remaining in camp on Saturday [19th] night was 4,330. The whole number of rations issued to them during the week amounting to 14,496. Several of them have died after their arrival here, some of whom suffered from exposure, but we understand that the deaths are not near so numerous as might be expected from the privations which they are unavoidably forced to endure. Everything done by the military authorities than can be done to relieve their distresses, but it is impossible to relieve all suffering. Many of the poor creatures were sick before they left their homes, and the recent wet weather has caused many of them to shake with the ague. The cold of Sunday night, and yesterday was so great that no amount of fire-living almost in the open air as many of them are compelled to do-will keep them warm. Some are despondent and gloomy, while others take the matter philosophically and even verily, making light of their discomforts. In one of the buildings in the depot yard we saw one group composed of two young men, six women and ten or twelve children, huddled together amid a pile of beds and quilts, and appearing to have a fine time, shouting and laughing over their troubles.

A woman from Calhoun, named Thomas, died in the building in the depot yard known as the "Repair Shop."

On Sunday night the number of refugees reported in the camp was 4, 198. Every effort is being made to send the North, or give employment to the males

of the different families, many of them engaging as wood choppers in the Government service on the railroads.

Nashville *Dispatch*, November 24, 1864.

