

"THROUGH THE EYES OF AN ARTIST"

The Rock Island Barracks was a prison camp that held 12,192 Confederate prisoners during the Civil War. One of the prisoners, John Gisch, painted different scenes inside the prison. Discover the daily life of a Civil War prisoner by looking at his paintings.

The prison camp opened the beginning of December in 1863 and closed the end of July in 1865. How many months was the prison camp open? _____

There were 84 barracks buildings inside the prison and each prisoner was assigned to a building. How did the prisoners tell which building was theirs? _____

Which barracks building was John Gisch assigned to? _____

How were the barracks buildings heated? (hint: look at the top of the buildings)
_____ electric furnace _____ coal burning stove _____ solar panels

Were the barracks buildings made from wood, brick, or river stone? _____

Where did the prisoners get water for drinking and cooking food?
_____ river _____ pump & well _____ drainage ditch

How did the prisoners get the water back to the barracks buildings? _____

There is a horse-drawn covered wagon in the prison. What do you think was in the wagon?

The prisoners played games to pass the time. What game is being played in both paintings?

Some prisoners worked for extra money. What work tools can be found in the paintings?

Did the prisoners wear uniforms while in the prison? _____

What stopped the prisoners from escaping? _____

How are the titles of the two paintings different? _____

What year did John Gisch paint the paintings? _____

Did John Gisch paint the buildings or the trees first? _____

Turn over for answers.

Answers

(no peeking until the front side is completed)

The prison camp opened the beginning of December in 1863 and closed the end of July in 1865. How many months was the prison camp open? **20 months**

There were 84 barracks buildings inside the prison and each prisoner was assigned to a building. How did the prisoners tell which building was theirs? **They were numbered**

Which barracks building was John Gisch assigned to? **Building 17**

How were the barracks buildings heated? **Coal burning stove (hint: smoke from chimney)**

Were the barracks buildings made from wood, brick, or river stone? **Wood**

Where did the prisoners get water for drinking and cooking food? **Pump & well**

How did the prisoners get the water back to the barracks buildings? **Buckets and kettles with carriers**

There is a horse-drawn covered wagon in the prison. What do you think was in the wagon? **The prisoners were allowed to purchase items from the prison's sutler including stamps, buttons, tape, pins, scissors, pens, syrup, lard, smoked beef, cornmeal, canned fish, apples, and lemons.**

The prisoners played games to pass the time. What game is being played in both paintings? **Marbles**

Some prisoners worked for extra money. What work tools can be found in the paintings? **Wheelbarrows and shovels**

Did the prisoners wear uniforms while in the prison? **No, they wore their own clothes.**

What stopped the prisoners from escaping? **A 12 foot high fence and armed guards.**

How are the titles of the two paintings different? **One is in English, one is in French.**

What year did John Gisch paint the paintings? **1864**

Did John Gisch paint the buildings or the trees first? **The buildings, you can see the buildings through the trunks of the trees which shows he painted the buildings first.**