*Springfield Illinois Mar 5th 1885
Mr. Rockafeller
Cleveland, Ohio*

*Dear Sir,
You may consider this rather a strange letter coming from a stranger as it does, one whom you never met.*

*I am not quite forty years of age, was a soldier in the late war, where I was when I should have been at school, studying a proffession, or learning a trade, and while in the service of my country I was taken prisoner and was confined at Andersonville and other prisons for about 10 months, the history of which is known to every one, I might better explain my case by quoting from a letter I wrote to Genl. Lagan in 74 in an appeal to Congress, "There are to day thousands of men whoes constitutions are broken down and are not the same and never will be the same, men who are apparently well, yet whose systems are entirely wrong, who are young in years yet have all the symptoms of old men whose race is about run. Let every man put himself in his (the Prisoner's) place, turned into a pen like cattle with no shelter, nothing to protect one from the storm's blast, or the heat of the sun, filth and vermin surrounding him on every side, starvation staring him in the face day after day, week after week, and month after month, what would compensate you for such a life as this, yet thousands did it," and I was one of them barefooted, shirtless, through winter storms, sickness, no Doctor, no kind nurse, no bed but hard mother earth, such sir was a part of my lot, and to day I am feeling the effects of these fearfull months of starvation.*

*I have struggled along to try to get a little ahead, but have failed. I have taken an active part in politics in hopes of getting some lucrative position by which I could keep myself and family, but have been unsuccessfull, and so I thought I would write this letter to you, knowing that you had enough and to spare. I felt that it would do no harm to ask even if I did not succeed, for if one does not ask how does one know his needs, for it is written "ask and yea shall receive," "seek and yea shall find," "knock and it shall be opened unto you." I don't know why I wrote the above quotations for I am not a professor, but they came into my head and I wrote them, I am poor but have so much desired to get something ahead so that I might open a small suburb grocerie store where I might hold my own and make enough to live on, and for this reason I write to you hoping that you might be able to help me poor Andersonville boy…*

*Yours Respectfully,*

*John R. Campbell
308 W. Jackson St.
Springfield Illinois*