D’où vient l’expression deadline? on m’a parlé de la guerre de Sécession…

Réponse apportée le 11/08/2010 par PARIS Bpi – Actualité, Art moderne, Art contemporain, Presse

Bonjour,

Cette piste de la guerre de Sécession semble validée par ce que nous avons pu lire dans les documents suivants, les dates et les sources coïncident :

Oxford Reference Dictionary
orig. = the line around a military prison (at Andersonville, Georgia, USA; c. 1864) beyond which a prisoner was liable to be shot down

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deadline Look up deadline at Dictionary.com
http//www.etymonline.com/index.php?term=deadline>

« time limit, » 1920, Amer.Eng. newspaper jargon, from dead + line. Perhaps influenced by earlier use (1864) to mean the « do-not-cross » line in Civil War prisons, which figured in the Wirz trial.

« And he, the said Wirz, still wickedly pursuing his evil purpose, did establish and cause to be designated within the prison enclosure containing said prisoners a « dead line, » being a line around the inner face of the stockade or wall enclosing said prison and about twenty feet distant from and within said stockade; and so established said dead line, which was in many places an imaginary line, in many other places marked by insecure and shifting strips of [boards nailed] upon

the tops of small and insecure stakes or posts, he, the said Wirz, instructed the prison guard stationed around the top of said stockade to fire upon and kill any of the prisoners aforesaid who might touch, fall upon, pass over or under [or] across the said « dead line » …. [« Trial of Henry Wirz, » Report of the Secretary of War, Oct. 31, 1865]
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Oxford english dictionnary volume IV/XX

Deadline
2 a) Militaire
A line drawn around a military prison, beyond which a prisoner is liable to be shot down. origine US

Je vous copie les deux premiers exemples cités dans ce dictionnaire encyclopédique

*: 1864 in Congress. rec 12 Jan
the deadline beyond which the prisoners are not allowed to pass
*1868 Lossing : Hist civ. war US
Seventeen feet from the inner stockade was the « dead-line », over which no man could pass and live.

Cordialement,

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