THE Prisoner of War

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The Editor Writes —

IT has always been evident that as the Allied ring tightened round Germany the situation of our prisoners there would, for various reasons, become more difficult. Prison camps near the frontiers would tend to be moved into the interior—and this must mean leaving well-organised permanent camps and probably moving into improvised and over-crowded quarters. Moreover, under the increasing weight of our bombing attacks the transport position inside Germany was bound to become more and more disorganised. Both these processes have already started, though not as yet on a large scale. The latest figures as to stocks in camps bring us up to September 15th and indicate that until then, at any rate, Geneva were still managing to get our parcels through. Clearly, the seriousness of the situation will depend on whether the Germans fight all the way back to Berlin or whether organised resistance ceases fairly quickly.

Four Ships at Lisbon

There is good reason for hoping that the Lisbon-Marseilles-Geneva route will very soon be re-opened, though on a limited scale, owing to the reduced capacity of the Marseilles-Geneva railway. In anticipation of this four of our ships, fully loaded, are waiting at Lisbon. In addition, there is an accumulation in our warehouses in Lisbon and elsewhere that it will take some time to work off, so that it may be some time, too, before despatches from this country can be resumed.

Christmas Parcels

The suspension of shipping made it impossible to despatch the Christmas parcels, which were ready at the end of July, so that I am afraid that the chance of their arriving in time is not great. Efforts are now being made to give them priority, but I wonder if it is realised that one week's food parcels for 160,000 prisoners weighs about 800 tons. The prisoners will, of course, be disappointed, but will appreciate the reasons, of which they have been informed. In contrast with this I am glad to be able to record that we have managed, in spite of recent difficulties, to get through to Geneva a not inconsiderable quantity of urgent supplies, mostly medical.

Planning Their Return

With victory approaching hopes are centred on the speedy liberation of prisoners of war and their quick return home. The problem is, of course, one for the military authorities and not for the Red Cross, although the Red Cross will have a hand in it, and I understand that plans are being worked out in great detail with the object of bringing them home with the least possible delay. But obviously 160,000 prisoners scattered in innumerable camps and labour detachments cannot be assembled and brought home in a few days.

Back from Switzerland

The 1,000-odd officers and men who arrived back from Switzerland so unexpectedly, recently, were in exceptionally high spirits and good health. During their two days in a pleasant dispersal camp just outside London they were entertained by continuous films and E.N.S.A. shows. After that, they all went on six weeks' leave.

Service at Belfast

Nearly 1,200 next of kin of prisoners of war recently attended the special service of intercession at St. Anne's Cathedral, Belfast, arranged by the Ulster Gift Fund. The Governor and the Prime Minister of Northern Ireland were present, and the service was conducted by the Dean, the Very Reverend W. S. Kerr, B.D., the Rev. R. J. F. Mayston, M.B.E., Deputy Assistant Chaplain-General for Northern Ireland, being the preacher. The collection on behalf of the Red Cross was taken by six officers from the three Services, the Naval officer being an ex-prisoner of war. Realistic plans for the building up of our national and home life were urged by Mr. Mayston

A rugger team at Stalag XXB.

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in his address. He said that when prisoners were welcomed back at the end of the war their active co-operation would be needed to help in the reconstruction of society.

Improved Conditions

Last month we published an official report on conditions in Oflag 79 to which, at the beginning of May, the 1,893 officers and men from Oflag VIIIF at Marisch Trubau were transferred. It appeared that the camp was not ready to receive the prisoners, and that in many respects facilities were inadequate for the number of prisoners as they were then housed. Next of kin and relatives to whom this report may have caused anxiety will be pleased to know that we have much better news from the father of a prisoner at Oflag 79. His son, he tells us, has written "in a letter dated August 10th, that the long-promised extension to the camp has at last taken place, and they are very much more comfortable in a very good building, ten in a room, with excellent wash rooms, showers and lavatories, with two-storey wooden beds, a couple of tables, stools and cupboards. And they have much more room for walking and games. . . ."

Flourishing Law Society

Also from Oflag 79 comes news of a flourishing Camp Law Society. This Law Society was originally formed in the Italian camp at Chieti in November, 1942. The prisoners were subsequently removed to Germany, and the Society was refounded in Oflag VIIIF in December, 1943. The Society was refounded for the second time in May, 1944, when the prisoners were removed to Oflag 79. Membership of the Society includes 15 English solicitors and 18 articled clerks, and there is a very active Law School. The president and committee of the Society are elected every three months. Six of the articled clerks passed (two with distinction) the Law Society's Final Examination, for which they sat in Oflag VIIIF in April.

There and Back

"Is this a record?" asks Capt. G. H. Cook, a repatriated prisoner of war in a letter reporting the arrival at his home on September 30th, 1944, of a parcel that turned out to be the next-of-kin parcel which his wife had despatched to him at Oflag IXA/H on August 3rd, 1943. The parcel was intact and had been to Germany and back, as was made clear by the writing on the wrapping. It should be added, perhaps, that the credit for the safe delivery in Germany and the return to this country of the parcel in question, is, of course, due to the G.P.O. and to the postal authorities in the other countries.

Mail from Germany

I am sorry that I cannot give any definite information about a resumption of the normal mail services to and from Germany. So far as concerns the outward mails, which were formerly covered by German aeroplanes from Lisbon, alternative and more direct routes have been found, and these services have been maintained without appreciable breaks and generally with improved efficiency. But the gaps in the arrival of mail in this country have been much longer. The problem is being energetically tackled by the Post Office, and I can go so far as to say that I am hopeful of an early improvement. Many of our readers will be glad to know that 11 tons of medical supplies which were held up at Lisbon have been brought back to England to be dispatched by a more expeditious route, in spite of the changed conditions brought about by the liberation of France and heavy bombing of Germany.

The Tale of a Box

Red Cross boxes, tins and string have by no means exhausted their usefulness by the time they arrive at prison camps. The senior British officer in Stalag VIIB has sent us a list of 97 different articles made in the camp workshop from these rough-and-ready materials. It includes 44 cooking stoves (described as "highly efficient"), 12 flag posts, four mah jongg stands, one cake drier, one beehive, 14 card tables, 150 lipsticks, and 31 coal boxes. String from the Red Cross parcels has apparently been transformed into 266 floor brushes.

Eton v. Harrow

Capt. Harris, a recently repatriated medical officer of the original 51st Highland Division who was captured after Dunkirk, tells the story of an Eton v. Harrow cricket match played in his camp. The Harrovians were one short so, by virtue of the fact that his practice is in Harrow, Capt. Harris played for them. Their bat was made out of Red Cross cases, while their ball was of string, coated with plaster from the hospital. Similarly the Eton toppers and Harrow boaters were all made from Red Cross cartons; the stumps were chalked on another carton. One old Harrovian had lost a leg, but he insisted on playing, so he kept wicket sitting on a box, which his batman carried to the other end after each over.

Sporting Gesture

More topical than cricket at this time of the year is the account of the football "internationals" received from a prisoner of war at Stalag XI-A. He writes, "I captain the English side here against the Belgian, French, Italian and Jugoslav football teams. We won the league and I got a flag from each of the countries we played. . . ." This exchange of gifts is a sportsmanlike gesture that might with profit be adopted in international sports after the war.

Parcels' Day Faces

"Good luck to the Red Cross and to the rest of my friends who are still 'behind the wire' and who depend so much on you and your great work." When I visited Southampton I was shown this tribute which had reached the Red Cross and St. John headquarters there from a local man who had come home after escaping from a camp in Italy. One of his first actions was to return thanks "for the very many favours extended to my family and myself." The best recompense that Red Cross workers could see, he added, would be "the faces on 'Parcels' Day,' and, believe me, we did receive our parcels regularly."

He Enjoys the Journal

Another Italian escapee—from P.G.53—in a long and grateful letter, remarks that he has been reading through back issues of this journal with great pleasure, and says that some of the letters bring back vivid memories. "I am grateful that they will be still coming to this address." (The explanation of that sentence is that a brother had the bad luck to be transferred to Germany, where "I know that he will be well looked after by the Red Cross.") He had arrived in Italy from Africa in a very weak condition, and the receipt of a share of real chocolate, real jam, and real tea from a Red Cross parcel was "like a dream."

The majority of "Charsies" club men at Stalag 383 who number sixty. The word "Charsies" is derived from "Char," Hindustani for four, as the men in the picture all belong to the 4th Hussars.

THE FOOD THEY LIKE

FOOD rationing has made people begin to think more about the nutritive value of what they are eating. Everyone knows now that certain things, such as vitamins, are absolutely necessary to keep them in good health, but the department of the Red Cross responsible for planning the contents of the food parcels for prisoners of war had to delve into the subject much deeper than this. Much thought and care has been necessary to ensure that the food parcels contain the maximum possible nourishment. The "hidden value" of the parcels is perhaps the most important thing of all.

Naturally, their first idea was to get the best expert advice on this complex question, so they consulted three different authorities—a well-known dietitian, the Scientific Adviser's Section of the Ministry of Food, and the Medical Department of the War Office. All these experts gave their advice most generously and unstintingly as to the kind of food which the parcels should contain. That is, they studied the rations given to the prisoners in the camps, noted the important things in which there was a deficiency, and told the Red Cross that these must be put into the parcels.

This was not easy, because the parcels were not allowed to exceed a certain weight, and the dimensions of the box had to remain the same throughout; also, it was no use sending the prisoners food which they would not enjoy because it was dull or monotonous. What they should get in the parcels had to be, as nearly as possible, the sort of things they liked and that they were accustomed to eat at home. At the same time, nutritive value had to be as high as possible.

As a general rule the meals which the ordinary housewife provides do consist of the most nourishing foods, even if she does this quite unconsciously. Every woman knows in a general way that she must feed her family on milk, butter or margarine, cheese, meat, fish, eggs, fruit, vegetables, and so on, if they are going to keep fit and have enough energy to do their work and enjoy their leisure. These had to go into the parcels. Then there were certain things that everyone knew without being told that the prisoners would want—chocolate, tea, jam, biscuits, good satisfying puddings and other articles.

Next came the big problem—did this mixed parcel contain sufficient vitamins, calcium, iron, protein, etc., and was there enough energy-giving food? The experts added the nutritive value of the parcel to that provided by the camp rations, compared the total with the quantities which a man is known to require daily, and reported that there was a shortage of protein and calcium. They also said that the quantity of certain vitamins must be increased somehow, especially those known as A, B1 and C. So they advised that some of the foods should be "fortified"—that is, the necessary vitamins, etc., added. The taste would not be affected, and the prisoners would not know that anything had been put in.

Vitamins could not be added to just any article, but only to particular foods. Everyone knows that there is a great deal of "swopping" carried on in the camps, so the Red Cross had to try to make sure that the really important additions were put into those foods which the prisoners were least likely to exchange.

Practically every man ate his own ration of biscuits, so the required calcium was put into the flour of which the biscuits were made and also into the oat-meal, which the prisoners liked for making porridge. Vitamin C, which is important in preventing scurvy, was added to the jam. And as most prisoners do not give away their chocolate, vitamins A, B1, and other necessaries were put into the weekly quarter-pound packet. The protein was provided by a generous allowance of cheese, milk, meat and fish in every parcel; the weekly half-pound of butter or margarine supplied enough fats, and the fruit, vegetables and other foods made up other deficiencies.

There was also the important question of preventing the parcels from being monotonous, as far as it could be done, for if a man was going to get the same parcel week after week for years he would obviously become so sick of the food in it that he would not be able to eat it with the same enjoyment and benefit. The Red Cross determined always to have a number of different parcels being packed and to change the whole set every few months.

Not all parcels had cocoa in them, but a large number had. Some had pancake batter, which most of the prisoners love, and though it did not supply much nourishment it was so popular that a little was always sent. Bacon was alternated with sausages and dried fruit with puddings. After some time dried eggs came along. Quite apart from the fun which prisoners get out of making all sorts of dishes which are only possible with eggs, the nutritive value is exceedingly high.

In this way food parcels were achieved which gave the prisoners as much nourishment as could be fitted into the box, and at the same time supplied food which was of the highest quality that could be procured. As Canadian, New Zealand and British parcels are pooled for distribution, the weekly diet was varied still further and the standard of nourishment increased.

As a result of these efforts medical advisers have said that men can, in an emergency, live for a considerable time without serious danger to their health on half a parcel a week, and this has been confirmed by more than one returned prisoner of war.

Above: Parcels being expertly packed by Red Cross workers. Left: Contents of a typical food parcel.

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The Brighter Side

August Bank Holiday, Sports and Carnival at Stalag 383.

THERE has been plenty of international football at Stalag IVB. At soccer, England lost to Scotland, while the amateurs triumphed over the professionals. And South Africa has beaten Wales at rugby after first defeating the Anzacs.

Shows put on recently have included *The Barretts of Wimpole Street*, *The Man Who Came to Dinner*, and *The Petrified Forest*, and one soldier writes: "If you could see the Empire Theatre, I am sure it would shake you more than somewhat." The camp has enough good musicians to supply a theatre orchestra, two dance bands, a light classical orchestra and a brass band. Several pieces of music have been composed.

An Unholy Noise

Music is also composed at Stalag 357, but in a rather more original way. Not is it apparently always received with rapturous applause. Thus one letter relates: "My mucker has taken to playing the flute, and what an unholy noise. Paddy, our Irish mucker, says it reminds him of a banshee howling in an Irish bog. I can't even get a squeak out of the thing. Another weapon they have here is a Sousaphone—it looks like a ship's ventilator and produces a sound like an air-raid siren with a cold. Apart from this, we're a happy family . . ."

Camp Club Life

From Stalag IVB comes news of the formation of two new clubs. One is a Birmingham club, known as the "Forward Club," and the other is the "Devon and Cornwall Club," the membership of which is already well over the hundred mark, and one prisoner has written to say that he has been chosen to enter an Empire Day carnival dressed as Sir Francis Drake. They will probably be looking around for club mascots soon. In one hut a cat gave birth to five kittens in a parcel box under a bed and these are now used as mascots for the football team.

There are plenty of other camp pets for them to choose from. One man shaking his mattress found a nest of mice inside it, and the camp dog has just presented them with her third litter. There are also nine baby sparrows that were accidentally ejected from their nest when they were about a week old. No one thought they would live, but they managed to survive on a diet of parcel food, and two have already made a test flight and returned to the box in which they live.

English Films

They had a pleasant surprise in Stalag VIIIC when instead of the usual German film they saw an American one called *Orchestra Wives* with Glenn Miller's orchestra. And a captain at Oflag VIIB writes that it was a big event when they saw their first film in English at the camp; it was a Fred Astaire-Ginger Rogers' musical comedy, *Shall We Dance*, which he says they all enjoyed tremendously.

Triangular Sports

They took advantage of a spell of really hot weather to organise a triangular sports meeting at Oflag VIIC. A military band provided the musical entertainment, and "the Dominions just beat Scotland with England a poorish third."

A brass band complete with banner played gallantly all the afternoon at the sports meeting organised at Luft III and the events were run off like clockwork. Away to one side were the side shows, "coconut" shies, roulette, darts and many others. Most popular of all was the show organised by "a gentleman with a red nose" who implored everybody to roll up and see his troupe of native dancers, brought straight from the Zambesi.

A Change of Air

A private writes from Sonder Kommando 517 that he has been having a "change of air and a change of scenery" for four or five weeks helping to provide entertainment for the two hundred-odd men there for a rest. The majority had been working in the mines and hadn't seen a show for a long time.

There were forty in the concert party, including twenty or so of the camp orchestra who went to play during the shows and who also gave band concerts of their own. Our correspondent writes of his own part, "I myself am doing the stage setting, make up, looking after the costumes and wigs and learning up my lines for the next show in my spare moments."

The paragraphs on this page are based on letters from prisoners of war. Most of them refer to activities in the big base camps and it should not be assumed that they are typical of conditions in all camps or in outlying working detachments where facilities for sport and amusement are much fewer.

The Lambeth Walk

The latest entertainment at the theatre at Stalag 344 was provided by the *Lambeth Walk*, based on Lupino Lane's famous show at the Victoria Palace, *Me and My Girl*. It was a great success, and one of the audience writes to say that they laughed for a solid two hours. Nor do they have all their fun indoors. The struggle to win the "P.o.W. Association Cup" provided plenty of thrills. The final was eventually won by Manchester, who beat the London team, West Ham, by 3 goals to 1. And their carrots, onions, lettuce and cucumbers are almost ready. So everything in the garden appears to be fine.

They are proud of their vegetables at Ila VIIIZ.

The Letters They Write Home

Prison Test Match

Stalag 383. 22.8.44.

THE Test Match resulted in a draw, but we had our fill of excitement. Aussie put England to bat on a drying wicket and they made 242. Aussie were put out for 225. England second innings, 220 for 8, declared, leaving Aussie 24 hours' batting. Appreciating the sporting gesture, they went out for runs and we saw some of the best cricket ever.

A quick wicket at 8 runs; the next fell at 201 (!) and left half an hour to go, and then the fireworks really started. In the last over, having previously lost two more wickets, they lost four more trying to get 25 runs to win. A 6, a 4 and 2 singles left 4 runs to make sure, off the last ball, but a really magnificent piece of fielding got a run out, and everybody was very, very pleased by a splendid effort by both sides to force a decision.

From a Hospital Chaplain

Stalag VB. 17.7.44.

SINCE it is not yet possible to return home to you and to the children, I am immensely grateful for the privilege of being here at this military hospital. I find that those who have suffered most are often the most cheerful. The fellows are a real tonic and it is a joy to seek to serve them.

The new chapel we have created on the top floor looks lovely, decorated in white and two tints of pale blue with three "port-hole" windows above the altar, and the men have manufactured the electric fittings with a concealed light above the little sanctuary. Best of all, the interest of the men in the services is, I believe, very real; the room is filled to capacity at night. Some come on crutches, others on stretchers.

I walked for 2 hours to-day with medical orderlies and German sentry. There are glorious pine forests and hills, reminding me of holidays in Switzerland and in Canada.

I cannot tell you how happy I am to be here. Words seem too paltry, too feeble to say what I am feeling—the joy of experiencing the love of Christ reaching out to others who have suffered so much; the joy of seeing the love of Christ in so many who have found Him in their suffering.

Men from Camp O at the Military Internment Camp, Bornhausen. Most of the internees from Switzerland are home now.

Hard Work Suits Him

Stalag IVF. 14.8.44.

MY time is well filled. Work from 6 a.m. to 7 p.m., then wash, eat, bath and bed. This for six days, and then our "day of rest" with washing and a 101 other jobs. Never a dull moment, eh!

My hands are as corny and hard as any navvy's, engrained with dirt, and my nails are broken and disgraceful. I've certainly developed a lot more muscle and am very brown and fit-looking as we work stripped to the waist.

We are surrounded by lovely country, with rabbits, squirrels, etc., and wild raspberries all round us (the strawberries are finished).

I am quite happy in the camp. They are very friendly lads and our working gang of 14 are a fine set of fellows, and considering the hard work and graft we keep amazingly cheerful. What I don't know about plate-laying isn't worth knowing! I am more at home with a pick and shovel, too, as you will see by my writing.

Life of Variety

Oflag 79. 21.8.44.

ANOTHER move has brought me to this, my permanent address—a much larger place, highly organised.

This evening I could have seen *Sweeney Todd the Barber* or a German film, but it is a joy to write a letter for a change. There are two theatres in the camp with stages most cunningly contrived from Red Cross packing cases. I saw a nostalgic London revue the other night—the pre-war London, of course, with elegant masculine dancing damsels and the literally flickering lights of Piccadilly—an advertisement for Veno's drugs and for Bovril. "Girl Crazy," starring Judy Garland, was on view last night, but as the cinema gets a bit hot with the windows shut, I preferred a gramophone concert—overture to "Die Meistersinger," and a piano concerto by Brahms.

Education comprises five faculties: languages, engineering science and maths., commerce, agriculture, law.

My German classes have necessarily lapsed and I am pleased to be able to concentrate on a little purposeful reading.

Three boys from school are here—I am meeting them for a morning drink to-morrow. One came to make my acquaintance this evening. I could hardly recognise him, so bald are some of my generation becoming.

Don't imagine life is one riot of pleasure, or that I shall be sorry to leave such entertainment.

Fit and Tanned

Stalag Luft 3. 11.7.44.

ALL our spare time is spent outside. We sunbathe and even go out in a thunderstorm with hardly anything on, and I am getting a nice tan. I can even say that I am fitter now than when I was shot down.

We have had a nice lot of fresh vegetables sent in, and the other day had a good feed of onions. We have also had food from our own garden.

A Day in IVB

Stalag IVB. 2.8.44.

THIS is a brief summary of a day in the camp: Reveille, 6 a.m.; roll call, 6.30. Brew of tea and breakfast (usually few biscuits or toast). Wash and tidy up and then stroll round compound while hut is being swept. The distance right round the two larger compounds together is approximately three-quarters of a mile. Drink of tea again at 10 o'clock. Weight-lifting class, 10.30 till 11.30 a.m. German potatoes and vegetables issued next, but we keep

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Camp building at Stalag IVD/ZW Heilag on Queen Ann of Saxony's Estate, from which many repatriations take place.

the spuds and re-fry them about 4 o'clock with something from the parcel and another brew.

At 8 p.m. comes the second roll call, followed by a free-for-all fight to be first back in the barrack for supper, which is usually the same as breakfast. We usually manage five brews a day from one packet of English tea per week! The in between time is easily filled.

Raisin Wine and Other Brews

Oflag 79. 19.7.44.

OUR food situation has improved at the eleventh hour. English parcels are arriving to-day—and more to come.

We play a variety of squash rackets here now in a room in the basement with wooden rackets and a tennis ball, and it is very good exercise, but more important, it is a change.

I am experimenting with a raisin wine this week. Some people have had remarkable results with brews.

The Next Holiday . . .

Stalag XXID. 24.7.44.

OUR holiday is nearly over and we go back to our own camp this week. It has been grand—English, pictures, sport, swimming and excursions to the Olympic Sports Stadium and to Potsdam. A real holiday in every sense of the word. I can go back in the hope that the next holiday will be with you and the kiddies.

Everything has been done to make us feel that we were human beings and not criminals. I shall always remember this three weeks, and now I am ready to go back to work feeling fitter and fresher than I have been for the last four years.

All-English Camp

Stalag VIIIB. 19.7.44.

THIS is an all-English camp now. We are having quite a sort out of Colonial troops, the New Zealanders going to one camp, Australians to another, and South Africans to another, leaving our camp only 300 strong—all English.

I have been very lucky by being put on a staff job in my own trade (joiner).

A recent photograph of the hospital staff at Stalag IVA.

So you will see I have stopped working down under and hope to be on top for good now. We haven't used the basement yet which I helped to build, but we have had one or two black-outs.

Flying Cucumbers

Stalag XXB. 1.8.44.

THE weather is very warm and sultry here, but my garden is doing fine. Tomato plants are 4ft. high and cucumbers about 4in. long. I had to fix a new fence to-day—two cucumbers took wings.

Six nationalities in my village, and my brain is in a whirl trying to speak one at a time. I made macaroni to-day with tuition by *the* experts.

Summer Pursuits

Marlag und Milag Nord (Marlag "O"). 14.8.44.

CRICKET rather restricted through lack of bats and balls, but we have some good games.

I had another parole walk last week, my second, and thoroughly enjoyed the change. We walked through some lovely woods and picked blackberries, and the workers in the fields gave us some peas.

I am due to go to the holiday camp in Bavaria in a fortnight's time for a month—eight officers go at a time from here and seem to enjoy themselves, so I am looking forward to it and am keen, too, to see a bit more of Germany.

We had an arts and crafts exhibition yesterday; there is a naval war artist here. Some of his paintings and sketches were first-class. There were also wood carvings, ship models and knitting.

Red Cross parcels coming in well and mail has improved.

The "New" 357

Stalag 357. 12.8.44.

AFTER a decent train journey we arrived here three days ago. When it is completed and things get organised a bit I reckon it will be quite a good camp. We are seventy-two to a big room and we all have beds, good cooking facilities and, of course, Red Cross food parcels—so things are not too bad.

We went for a swim yesterday. We have a good swimming pool but it is rather dirty, not having been used for a long time. It will be fine when it is cleaned out.

Some of the chaps have received mail here—quick work, eh?

Repatriation Camp

Stalag IVD/ZW, Heilag.

Recent, but undated.

I AM working on the staff at a repatriation camp. The camp here is definitely the best I have been in since a prisoner of war. The accommodation

Interior of hut at Stalag XXB.

is very good and treatment is fine—the whole atmosphere seems entirely different from anywhere else, and I feel a lot more contented knowing I am doing something for these lads.

His Spanish Class

Stalag Luft I. 6.7.44.

OUR garden is doing fine. We have already had one lot of mustard and cress and one lot of radishes. The lettuces have scarcely done anything since we planted them a month ago as little plants; but they haven't died, so perhaps they were waiting for the warmer weather which we are now having.

We had two films last week: one with Richard Dix — "The Iron Road" — with plenty of riding and shooting. The second was Judy Garland in "Presenting Lily Mars," and it gave us many laughs.

My Spanish class has suffered the fate of most classes and dwindled considerably, but six have stuck it out. We have just done all the grammar absolutely necessary and a couple are expressing themselves quite well. As we only have two periods a week it is really quite satisfactory as there have been interruptions. It says a lot for them that they have kept on.

Improving His Russian

Oflag 79.

I WAS very pleased to be able to borrow a copy of Pushkin's "Captain's Daughter" the other day from a brilliant young linguist who has just come into the camp. To try and get my Russian a little more accurate I am starting to try and teach three lads who want to learn it. I have been helping another lad for an hour every day for the last six weeks, in which time we have finished the first part of Vol. I, "War and Peace."

Posing with a smile at Stalag XIA.

Full Programme

Stalag 357. 28.7.44.

LIFE is not as bad in a prison camp as you think. This is how I fill in my time: 6.45 p.m., get up; 7.15 a.m., breakfast; 8.15 a.m., roll call; 9 a.m., take sick parade. Then either do some washing or darning socks till 12 noon. 12.30, dinner; 2 p.m., rugby; 3 p.m., cold shower under pumps; 4.30, tea; 6.30, basket ball; 7 p.m., supper; then a walk around the camp; 9 p.m., bed.

Half a pint of the "best" at Stalag IVG.

Invalid Diet

Stalag 344. 13.8.44.

I HAVE been ill with the old complaint but, thanks to the medical side of the Red Cross, I have been living on Ovaltine, Horlick's, rice pudding, jellies and fruit. I feel in the pink again now.

A prisoner of war's life would be most miserable if it were not for the splendid aid of the Red Cross.

Tomatoes Better at Home

Stalag Luft III. 15.7.44.

WE are getting through the summer and our garden has started producing. So far we have had some lettuce, onions and radishes. Amongst other things not yet ready are peas, beans, cabbages, Indian corn, cucumber, marrow and tomatoes. It is very useful being able to grow tomatoes out of doors, but I think our own climate is better. This goes too much from intense heat to torrential rain with a lot of thunder. I'd give a lot to see some good old-fashioned Scottish weather.

American Independence Day on July 4th was celebrated in style at Ilag VII where many Channel Islanders are interned.

Harvest Time

Stalag IVF. 17.8.44

CORN harvest is in full swing, and on a walk lately we watched six binders at work in quite a small area. The miles of corn fields are a lovely sight. There are a few tractors, but most farms use horses, and I saw a bullock reinforcing a pair of horses in a binder! Cattle in the waggons are common, of course.

SEND US YOUR PICTURES AND LETTERS

TEN SHILLINGS will be awarded each month to the senders of the first three letters from prisoners of war to be printed. Copies instead of the originals are requested, and whenever possible these should be set out on a separate sheet of paper showing the DATES on which they were written. The Editor welcomes for other pages of the journal any recent NEWS relating to prisoners of war.

Ten Shillings will also be awarded for photographs reproduced across two columns, and five shillings for those under two. Photographs should be distinct, and any information as to when they were taken is helpful.

Address: Editor, "The Prisoner of War," St. James's Palace, London, S.W.1. The cost of these prizes and fees is defrayed by a generous friend of the Red Cross and St. John War Organisation

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Official Reports from the Camps

B.A.B. 21. Marching, and (below) other prisoners resting.

In every case where the conditions call for remedy, the Protecting Power makes representations to the German authorities. Where there is any reason to doubt whether the Protecting Power has acted, it is at once requested to do so. When it is reported that food or clothing is required, the necessary action is taken through the International Red Cross Committee.

STALAG LUFT IV, TYCHOW

Another new camp situated in "safe" country about 30 miles from the sea in the north of Germany. At present the camp is still being built but when finished and various minor adjustments have been made it will be a good camp. When completed there will be five compounds—one to be used for administrative offices, storehouse for Red Cross parcels, camp lazaret, delousing plant, etc. The other four will be living accommodation for 6,400 British and American prisoners of war—1,600 in each compound. At the time of visit only one was completed and inhabited. The following report, therefore, is based on one-quarter of the camp only.

Each compound is composed of 10 living huts for 160 prisoners each, and will consist of a separate camp. The barracks are of the usual new type of German wooden huts with a central passage and five sleeping rooms on either side for 16 prisoners. The rooms are furnished with double-tier beds, one or two tables, and enough stools for all the prisoners. Each prisoner has two blankets.

Lighting (day and night) is adequate and coal stoves will be installed in each room. Ventilation at night is bad owing to the wooden shutters. Lights out at 11 p.m.

Washing and toilet facilities are not at present adequate, but the Camp Commander will issue more basins, etc. Water has to be drawn from a pump outside the huts. There is hot water, but no showers. A delousing plant is under construction and when this is completed showers will be available.

Prisoners of war do their own cooking in a large well-appointed kitchen. The food issued appears good and sufficient—no complaints received. At the moment there are no facilities for cooking individual Red Cross parcels (a consignment was received from Geneva and a stock is held), but a large stove has been ordered and will be installed in the main kitchen for this purpose. In the meantime certain items such as meat and fish are extracted from the Red Cross parcels and cooked in the main kitchen for the whole camp.

Each compound has its own sports field, but at present there are no organised recreational facilities. The Y.M.C.A. have promised to send sports gear, games, books, etc. There is no canteen so far in the camp. The position with regard to clothing, laundry, mail and religious activity will be greatly improved when the camp is completed and thoroughly organised.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)

STALAG 344, LAMSDORF

Since the last visit in February, there has been a slight reduction in the number of prisoners of war in the camp. At present there are 9,525 British and 121 Americans in the main camp, 9,658 British in the 237 work detachments, and 576 British in hospital. This reduction at the main camp has resulted in a lessening of the overcrowding, and none of the lower bunks are now used.

The chief deficiency at present is the water supply, which is still quite inadequate for a camp of this size; consequently bathing and toilet facilities are also bad and insufficient.

No complaints were made on the food, but the potato ration has again been cut and substituted by millet or barley.

A new barrack is being constructed in the camp infirmary to be used as consulting rooms. This will greatly relieve the overcrowding in the sleeping quarters of the M.O.s. There are 18 M.O.s and three dental officers. The situation in the camp hospital is much better, there being no overcrowding. The supply of drugs in the infirmary and hospital has improved lately.

The clothing situation is still bad and stocks held are only sufficient to clothe new prisoners of war. The installation of the new laundry is now completed; 250 men are able to do their washing every day.

Recreational facilities are better than ever before. Soccer and Rugger teams from work detachments are able to visit the main camp. The standard of the theatrical shows remains high and is well supported by the Camp Commandant. Mail has improved.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)

WORK DETACHMENTS DEPENDENT ON STALAG 344

Detachments 117 and 118, Bolka.—38 prisoners of war form Detachment 117 and 37 prisoners of war Detachment 118. Both detachments work in factories, the former making concrete and the latter linseed-cake.

The living quarters at Detachment 117, which are in two buildings of the factory, are rather overcrowded. A wooden barrack is under construction which will improve the position and also enable the men to be out of doors after working hours. At present they are locked into their living quarters except for two hours' recreational time, which is spent by the nearby river Oder swimming or playing ball games.

At Detachment 118 the men live in a small stone house near the factory. At present there is no overcrowding. Swimming in the Oder and ball games in the courtyard of the factory are allowed.

Mail is satisfactory but slow. A padre from Stalag 344 visits both detachments. Cooking and laundry is satisfactorily done by German women. There is no canteen at either detachment, but there are stoves at both for the cooking of private parcels. Washing and bathing and toilet facilities are adequate. Medical attention is good.

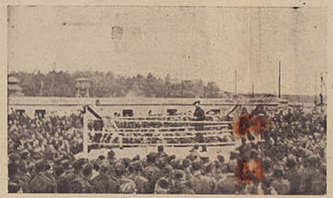
Detachment E.165, Oppeln Oderhafen.—This is not such a good detachment. 64 prisoners of war are engaged in loading and unloading barges in the harbour. The living room is unsatisfactorily situated in two old barracks. A new and better barrack is, however, being built. There is no overcrowding. Washing and toilet facilities are inadequate. German women are not cooking the prisoners of war food satisfactorily. The prisoners of war do their own laundry.

Recreational facilities are meagre but will be improved when the new barracks are finished, affording a larger compound.

Detachment E.196, Oppeln Hafen.—66 British prisoners of war are working in a cement factory. This detachment is quite good, the prisoners living in a large stone building belonging to the factory. A new kitchen is to be installed which will enable the men to cook their own food.

Detachments E.275, Gross Stein; E.100, Tarnau; E.428, Dershau; E.770, Ottmuth; and E.132, Gogolin, were also visited. The men are engaged in work of various kinds, chiefly in factories. The conditions in these camps are reasonably good with the exception of E.275, which at present is very unsatisfactory.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)



A Boxing match at Stalag VIIIB draws a large crowd.

STALAG VIIIB, TESCHEN

There have been few changes here since the last visit. The camp is still merely an administrative centre for the surrounding labour detachments and is very satisfactory. There are at present 724 prisoners in the camp, of whom 20 were in the infirmary. There are three M.O.s and two chaplains in camp. With regard to mail, letters are bad and parcels good. The Man of Confidence is able to visit the work camps whenever he wishes.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)

TOST HOSPITAL

This is a new hospital intended to serve the coal-mining area in Upper Silesia (Stalag VIIIB). It is situated in the former civilian internee camp at Tost which is being converted into a hospital. There will be three separate compounds for British, Russian and Italian prisoners of war. The British section when completed should prove to be entirely adequate with all the necessary facilities for comfortable wards, operating theatre, laboratories, X-ray room, etc. At present there are only 16 British patients, but the compound will have a capacity for 200.

Fourteen British M.O.s (of whom 13 have recently arrived from Italy), one dentist and one padre are already at the hospital. There are also 133 medical orderlies, all of whom may not be required. When completed this should be a very satisfactory hospital. The German General commanding the prisoners in Wehr VIII seems very anxious to do all he can to improve conditions for all prisoners.

CIVIL PENITENTIARY, WARTENBURG

Treatment of the four British prisoners of war here is satisfactory. There were no serious complaints.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)

B.A.B. 21

The only change at this camp since the last visit has been the replacement of the dental officer. There were no complaints from the 1,157 prisoners. The chief difficulty, which is common to all camps in Germany, is the shortage of materials for working overalls. The best musicians and entertainers from this camp are being sent to the holiday camp at Genshagen.

Air-raid precautions are adequate.

The football team at Stalag 344

The men manage to smuggle fresh eggs into the camp on their return from work, although the guards search each prisoner in turn.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)

MILITARY PRISON, GRAUDENZ

There has been some improvement in the conditions at Graudenz since the last visit in March. 315 British and two American prisoners are at present undergoing detention, 250 of whom will be shortly transferred to a special labour detachment near Wormditt, in East Prussia, to work in the forests.

Bulk food from Red Cross sources is sent from Stalag XXA which increases the proportion of parcels to four per man per month. Medical and dental treatment is good. A padre from Stalag XXA visits the prison regularly, but is not allowed to give Holy Communion. Until they are moved to the special labour detachment the men are engaged on digging air-raid shelters in the town. Books are exchanged regularly with Stalag XXA.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)

WORK DETACHMENTS DEPENDENT ON STALAG VIIIB

Detachments E.72 and E.411, Beuthen.—E.72 is badly overcrowded. There are 597 prisoners here, and 41 at E.411, which is a better camp. Both detachments are working for the same firm.

There has been little change at **Detachments E.209, E.580** and **E.538** since the last visits. The men at E.538 are expecting to be moved shortly. **Detachment 746, Königshütte** is still under construction, but when completed should

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Fourteen of the prisoners at Stalag 398. General conditions at this camp are satisfactory.

be a good camp. A new camp is also being built for the prisoners at **E.724**; conditions in the existing camp are fairly satisfactory.

193 prisoners at **E.734** are working on the railway line from six to eight hours daily. They have a day and a half free each week. There were no serious complaints at this detachment.

Detachment E.587 was visited for the first time and found to be an excellent camp. The 297 British prisoners of war work in the coal mines. There are two shifts—the day shift from 6 a.m. till 2 p.m., and the night shift from 2 p.m. to 11 p.m. Every other Sunday is free.

Both working and living conditions are satisfactory. The men have a hot shower daily at the mine. There is a large stock of Red Cross parcels—the prisoners can cook their own food. Football is played daily outside the camp.

643 prisoners at **E.715** are engaged on constructional work for a local firm. Their living conditions are satisfactory.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)

STALAG 398, PUPPING

There are only 15 men in the camp at Pupping, the remaining 586 are in the surrounding work camps. Stalag headquarters is accommodated in a large and airy barrack. The men have single beds and the general conditions are satisfactory.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)

Work Detachments Dependent on Stalag 398.—All detachments visited gave a good impression and general conditions were satisfactory.

The ten prisoners at **Detachment C.2797/L, Aschach,** are well accommodated in freshly whitewashed rooms in the Castle of Aschach facing the Danube. The prisoners are engaged on forestry work.

Detachment C.2813/L, Haag, is situated in a former monastery. The ten prisoners do forestry and agricultural work. The hunting box belonging to the Duke of Brunswick-Cumberland, is the headquarters of **Detachment C.2789/L,** near the small Alpine lake of Almsee. The 20 prisoners work in the forest. The 15 prisoners at **C.2811/L** also do forestry work and are happily accommodated on the first floor of a concrete building.

Prisoners at **Detachments C.2810/L, and C.2535/L** are all engaged in forestry work; living accommodation in these camps is good. To reach **Detachment C.1278/L** at Schwarzer See, two hours' mountain climbing is necessary. These prisoners of war also work in the forests.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)

STALAG XVIIA, KAISERSTEINBRUCH

There have been few changes in this camp since the last visit. There are still 608 prisoners in the camp, chiefly non-working N.C.O.s, and consequently the overcrowding has only decreased slightly.

There are two prime movements, one is the inauguration of a large new recreation room and the other is the installation of extra showers so that each man has one every week.

Books continue to arrive daily and a good library is being built up. The clothing position is still poor and the mail situation is deteriorating. Dental treatment is unsatisfactory.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)

Work Detachments Dependent on Stalag XVIIA.—The three detachments visited were all reported to be good. They were **A. 7013/L** (strength 20 prisoners of war), **A/941/GW** (strength 68 prisoners of war) and **A/E1498** (strength 121 prisoners of war). All these prisoners of war are engaged on surface work.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)

HOSPITAL IIA, VIENNA

Five British and eight American prisoners receive excellent medical treatment at this lazaret, which greatly impressed the visiting inspector.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)

FREISING HOSPITAL

Medical treatment at this hospital is also excellent. At present there are 72 British and 79 American patients. The medical staff is assisted by one American doctor with three American and two British medical orderlies.

(*Visited June*, 1944.)

A large group gathers for a photograph at Stalag 344, which is one of the biggest camps in Germany.

CAMP LIST
STALAG 357 AND STALAG 355

We are now informed that Stalag 357 has *not* been closed, but that the camp has been moved from Thorn to Oerbke, near Fallingbostel (Map Square C. 4).

So far as it known at present, there are no British prisoners at Stalag 355.

Please add the following to your Camp List: STALAG IIIC, ALT DREWITZ. Map Reference F.4. (Camp reopened for Indian prisoners.)

Please delete: STALAG 6.

We understand that civilian internees previously at Giromagny, Belfort, France, are now at a camp in Germany, the address of which is: ILAG WESTERTIMKE, Bei BREMEN, GERMANY. Map Reference C.3.

Green Howards' Fund

5,743 clothing parcels, 1,543,800 cigarettes, and 1,600 lb. of tobacco have been despatched to prisoners of war in Germany by the Green Howards' Comforts and Prisoners of War Fund which helps men of the regiment.

The Fund has received many individual requests of a special nature from prisoners, and in response to these has been instrumental in supplying books of all kinds, gramophone records, water colours, spectacles, etc.

A gift of £2,620 has been sent by the Fund to the British Red Cross Society.

SCENES FROM CAMP SHOWS

"The Ghost Train," of which scenes are illustrated below, was produced by internees at Civilian Camp, Ilag Kreuzburg, Germany. Later, they were allowed to perform it at Stalag 344, which is a neighbouring prisoner of war camp, where it ran for 14 days and was seen by an audience of 9,000 men. An extra matinee was given at the end of the run to meet the demand.

"Charley's Aunt" was produced by a theatrical party from Stalag 344 (formerly VIIIB) who were allowed to show it at the Civilian Camp, Ilag Kreuzburg. The Camp captain's comment on the "ladies" in this party was: "the ladies were too good to be true, or perhaps too true to be good.'

Notes on Oflag VA

LIVELY ACCOUNTS BY TWO OFFICER P.O.W.s

You ask what the camp is like, so here is a description. Situated in a small valley amidst hilly country, thickly wooded and very beautiful. View of approximately two miles one way and 400 yards the other three; a hill at one end with farm, vineyard and a civilian swimming pool; Sugar Loaf Hill the other end, surmounted by a picturesque old castle, with quaint little village nestling at its foot.

Aspect that of any barracks the world over—acres and acres surrounded by all the paraphernalia one expects round a prison camp! Contains 15 army wooden huts. Double-berth beds, two tables and a stool and cupboard in each.

In the space outside, of 400 × 50 yards, there are a few small trees, one baseball field, two basket ball, three hand ball, five tennis quoits, and slit trenches for all of us. In the evening it's like Oxford Street on Saturday morning! Recently, we get the walk to a sports field 1½ miles away in the woods and one ordinary walk per two weeks.

Usual pastimes are watching farming ops., trains pass and the local fair sex in the pool. After two years one develops telescopic eyes even at 400 yards—or imagination!!.

"Cabaret Balalaika"

We have just opened the "Cabaret Balalaika." Nightly at 6 a huge crowd gather outside the "Empire Theatre" to watch guests arriving to dine—nearly all arrive in fancy dress or smart uniform. Famous Bill Millet, D.S.O., is the brilliantly dressed commissionaire ushering in the diners. They gasp as they see for the first time the transformed theatre.

The whole ceiling is a light baby blue, the walls treated in graded shades of blue ranging from light to royal—single-line animal décor fill the large dark panels in apricot to match the other furnishings, brilliant white napery, glittering silver and glass, and bowls of brilliant flowers fill the tables. Smartly uniformed waiters, maître d'hotel and head waiters in immaculate tails strut the floor shepherding diners to their reserved tables. The males seek the bar, their ladies gossip together admiring their dresses. On the stage a large accordion bands plays lively music.

"Dinner is served," a five-course dinner commencing with iced soup, to coffee and *petit fours*, during which the accordions are replaced by a Gipsy Orchestra, the leader serenading the ladies on his violin. Then the Cabaret Dance Orchestra, immaculate in white monkey jackets with blue lapels, bow ties and cummerbunds, play. The guests dance, the wine flows freely, a beautiful iced cake is raffled nightly and each night £35 or so goes to the Y.M.C.A.

In a spot-lit semi-circle on the floor comes the first turn of the floor show.

All the best features of London clubs have been hired to entertain—"Ranson and Rossita," dancing divinely, "The Masqueraders," a Russian trio in excellent voice; "Bubbles," that famous child impersonator; the "Western Brothers," as British as ever; a fencing dance to rumba rhythm, and a musical mime "Hey Taxi."

The floor show over, the diners dance—the iced cake is presented to the lucky ticket holder—the guests depart. Three hours of London night life have been brought to every officer in Oflag VA.

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This three-year-old of Westcliff-on-Sea collected £1 14s. 11½d. for her uncle a prisoner of war for 4 years.

How They Help

In addition to those mentioned below, we wish to thank the many kind readers whose help to the Fund; this month we cannot find room to record here individually

THE magnificent sum of 1,000 guineas was recently accepted by Dr. Shaw from the Northampton and County Master Butchers' Association on "cheque" night. Mr. A. E. Smith, treasurer of the Association, recalled how he had suggested a few months before, at the time when his nephew was taken prisoner, that a subscription list should be opened. £100 was granted by the Association, and it was decided to aim at £250. This amount was very quickly raised and the target continually increased until the final sum was achieved.

A gymkhana, horticultural exhibition and fête in aid of the Red Cross, organised by well-known members of the High Wycombe Furniture Trade, was attended by 3,000 people and yielded the splendid total of £712. The gymkhana events, which attracted a large number of entries, included some of the best horses in the county. H.M. Queen Geraldine of the Albanians presented the prizes and a guard of honour was formed by the Buckinghamshire Constabulary, the British Red Cross and St. John Ambulance Brigade.

Belfast Helps P.O.W.s

There has been a lot of activity in Belfast in aid of prisoners of war. More than £500 was raised and nearly all the goods offered were sold in the first hour at a sale of fruit, vegetables and groceries held at Wandsworth House by "F" Group of the Civil Defence Authority. The children's fancy dress parade which was held on this occasion showed great variety and ingenuity. A prize for the most original costume was awarded to Elizabeth McClure, who carried a lamp and represented the time when the lights "go up," and Corry Little, who was dressed as an Eskimo, won the prize for the most handsome costume. "G" District also organised a fruit and vegetable sale.

Shirley Hewett has written to the Solihull Regional Officer of the C.H.S.S. describing how she and her friend Nancy gave a play and a fancy dress parade and served refreshments so that they could send a special contribution of their own. Shirley and her friends are among the many children of Solihull who have contributed in various ways to the regular support given by their town.

Special Efforts of Sportsmen.

News reaches us that sportsmen in many parts of the country have been making special efforts to swell the funds. The Southampton Touring Club have now played their last cricket match of the season and have reached the sum of £400, and, in spite of a very heavy thunderstorm on the morning of the event, the Fund has benefited to the extent of £18 4s. 1d. from a match organised by the Blackpool Cricket Club and played between Jack Hilton's XI and George Duckworth's XI. A wrestling tournament with four contests was held in Portsmouth in aid of prisoners of war, the chief of which was a co-minute heavyweight bout between George Finnie, of Portsmouth, the heavyweight champion of the Royal Navy, and Stan Jackson, of Hammersmith.

More Successful Sales.

Hard work and careful preparation by supporters have produced many more successful sales of work. As the result of a casual suggestion made around the fireside, the family of John Barker, who is at present in Burma, including his mother, sister, and two cousins, set to work "to make something for the Red Cross." As time went on, more relatives and friends gave assistance, and the church the family attend allowed the use of the men's club for the sale. The sequel came a week later when the seven ladies handed in their takings—£247 9s.

With the help of her friends, Mrs. Gudgin held a very successful sale of work in her garden, which raised £115. Almost everything was home-made and all the goods were sold in double-quick time, as also were the teas at 1s. each.

The women of Tynedale Road and Readhead Savings Group have sent £114, the result of a sale and whist drive held at St. Paul's Hall, South Shields, organised by Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Perry and opened by Mrs. Wilson. The Women's Auxiliary of the Nottingham Boy Scouts' Association held a bring-and-buy sale and the proceeds of £150 were for the Red Cross and the British Sailors' Society. Pamela Haith has given £7 16s. 7d., which she has made by holding a jumble sale.

Among the many pleasurable evenings which have been held with the object of helping prisoners of war was a dance organised by Holy Village Hall Committee, which realised £77; and Mrs. A. Brown, at Oxted, whose son has been a prisoner since Dunkirk, has raised over £100 from a series of small dances and whist drives.

The Secretary of the Institute of Certified Grocers has forwarded £10 10s. and a further gift of £100 has been received from the Cheltenham Masters' Cake Bag Fund.

Appreciation from Germany.

It is only possible in these columns to record a few of the many ways in which people have been helping the funds, but a letter from Mrs. Harrison's son (by showing which in Liverpool she has collected £10) expresses the appreciation the men who are prisoners of war feel toward those whose hard work and enterprise enables the Red Cross to help them:—

"Congratulations on your collections for the Red Cross. You may tell your subscribers from me that there is not a more deserving organisation. The work they do is terrific. I never dreamed that an organisation could do so much. I think it takes a prisoner of war to realise just how much they do accomplish. It is beyond the comprehension of people who do not come under its direct influence. Good luck to your effort!"

Mr. Day an old age pensioner of Cwmbran, who, with his wife, raised £45 by selling garden produce and flowers.

Three Men of the Spearhead

GEO. H. GRIMALDI, Red Cross and St. John War Organisation, tells how he met three prisoners of war on the road to Arnhem

IT was late afternoon when, as I stood in the courtyard of a hospital in a liberated town in Holland, the first of the three men spoke to me.

This hospital had been in enemy occupation only a few hours before. Now it was the location of a Field Dressing Station of the R.A.M.C. Outside, along the divisional axis road of the Second Army's "corridor," endless double-banked convoys of supplies were racing in the wake of armoured columns for the bridge at Nijmegen.

The ceaseless rumble of wheels and clatter of tracks on the cobbled road deadened the ear-drums until one became conscious of the din only by contrast with the serenity of the flower-bordered quadrangle formed by the hospital buildings of mellow Dutch brick and tile. Above the thunderous bass of the advancing army soared the treble overtone of the cheers of throngs of wildly happy children.

At intervals ambulances swung smoothly through the arched entrance gate to Reception, where alert R.A.M.C. orderlies sprang to co-ordinated action, in which training had welded speed, efficiency and an infinite tenderness.

A little to my left an R.A.S.C. driver was loading a truck from a chaotic mass of abandoned effects of German wounded, so recently evacuated that dark red patches on discarded garments were not yet dry. . .

Details of the pitiful trash heap focussed themselves as I drew closer. Here was the epitome of the enemy's descent from victorious confidence to defeat and despair—dirty uniforms ripped to rags by shell fragments; steel helmets torn as if they had been the paper caps of a boisterous party; a woollen sock standing erect its foot and top stiff and dried with blood, a grotesque hole in the toe; a flashy book ironically open at a page from which frowned the heavy-browed face of Rudolf Hess; a photograph-case holding a stained picture of a stolid round-faced matron and two small boys; an Easter greeting card embellished with a daintily etched sprig of snowdrops and beneath, like the trail of a slug, the signature "Seyss-Inquart"; a bundle of rain-soaked letters tied with an old shoe lace; an empty Luger holster caked with bright yellow mud. . .

As I stared at this macabre war museum, repellent yet fascinating, a surprised voice close beside me suddenly exploded into "Good Lord!" Without looking up I said, "Yes. It's quite a mess, isn't it?"

"Oh, I didn't mean that," said the voice. "I meant your shoulder-flash, Red Cross and St. John."

I turned to find an R.A.M.C. officer smiling at me.

"Why the surprise?" I asked.

"It was more pleasure than surprise," he said. "If you knew all that those two little symbols on your flash have meant to me you'd understand and—but hold on a minute. You look about all in. Come on up to the mess. They've just brewed up. I'm the Quarter-Bloke, and you're our first guest."

I made no objection. By aircraft and jeep, for four days, I had been chasing the spearhead of the Second Army. Tomorrow's daybreak and another ten hours on the road loomed too close. "Fair enough," I said, "Lead on."

The mess room, barely furnished with two trestle tables and a half-dozen chairs, was refreshingly clean and quiet. The C.O. uncoiled his lean Scottish length from a wicker chair, and I introduced myself by presenting the magic letter from a distinguished R.A.M.C. General which had been my *laissez passer* through France, Belgium and Holland. It explained my mission and called for co-operation.

"Right," said the C.O. "What can we do for you?"

"Could I have a corner somewhere for my bedroll for the night, a couple of meals and a car and driver at daybreak?"

"Nothing easier," he replied. "Q here will lay 'em on for you, and nobody better pleased, eh, Q?" The Quarter-Bloke grinned. I relaxed. The tea was hot, sweet "compo" poured from an enormous enamelled iron pot into thick earthenware mugs. There was no bread, and the biscuits in substitute would have made my dentist tremble for the security of his recent handiwork. Jam, "marge" and cheese completed the fare. Medical officers hurried in, snatched a sup and a bite, and hurried out. Twice the room emptied in response to urgent calls and I was left alone.

The second time I was just on the point of falling asleep when the Quarter-Bloke returned and dropped with a relaxed grunt into the chair beside me. He put out a hand and touched my Red Cross and St. John shoulder-flash. "You know," he said, "if there's one place in the corridor where that would serve you as well as the Big Chief's letter, it's here.

You see, the C.O. and I were both prisoners of war for nearly three and a half years. Those two little symbols coming to us every week on food parcels are things that no prisoner of war will ever forget. They were the symbols of a service that brought us out alive from behind the wire."

"It's good to hear you speak like that," I said.

"Me!" he answered. "Wait till you hear the C.O. on the subject!"

Late that evening over a glass or two of cognac from a stone jug (into whose former ownership I did not enquire) I did hear the C.O. And, if the cognac contributed its warmth to the bed which had been made up for me in a quiet corner, the C.O.'s words sent me to rest with an even greater glow at the heart—of pride in the privilege of serving the organisation whose symbols my battle-blouse bore.

(Contd. next page.)

This barn between Nijmegen and Arnhem was used as a field dressing station

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EXAMINATION RESULTS

The Successes on this Page are Reported by the Educational Books Section of the Red Cross

THE list of examination results for the period January to June, 1944, which has been prepared by the Educational Books Section provides fresh evidence of the enthusiasm of prisoners of war for this opportunity to acquire qualifications that will enable them to obtain good peacetime jobs. In the words of the official report, "the results represent a magnificent achievement of concentration and perseverance on the part of the candidates—of all the candidates not only the successful ones."

Outstanding Honours

Many obtained high honours and distinctions in their examinations. Among these were Lt. F. T. G. F. C. Fletcher and Lt. C. H. W. Troughton, both in the same camp, who obtained First Classes and Certificates of Honour in the Bar Final Examination. Sgt. R. T. Stirling qualified for the Members' Certificate of the Institute of Bankers in Scotland with honours and was awarded prizes to the value of £8. And no less than twenty-four candidates in Oflag VIIB obtained distinction in various papers of the Institute of Industrial Administration, while three more in the same camp passed the Final Examination of the Law Society and were awarded distinction. Capt. G. T. Ward secured the highest number of marks and was awarded the Pickup Medal, which is given annually to the most successful candidate in the final examination of the Incorporated Sales Managers' Association. W/O. G. M. Wright, Lt. E. C. Lynch and Lt. Sir H. J. L. Leslie, Bt., all obtained prizes in the examinations of the Chartered Institute of Secretaries. These are only a selection from the many honours gained by prisoner of war candidates.

London Matriculation

In the first batch of results received from the University of London for prisoner of war candidates who took Matriculation in the camps in January of this year, 168 names appear, from 14 camps. Fifty-two have passed the whole examination, and 47 either Part A or Part B. Twelve passed in supplementary subjects, having previously matriculated; 15 have failed in both parts, and 40 in one part.

The best results in this batch are from Stalag Luft III (East), of the 28 candidates from this camp 10 passed the whole examination (including the Camp Education Officer, a Squadron Leader, who passed in the First Division), 7 passed one part, and 9 passed in supplementary subjects; only two failed in one part.

The entries for supplementary subjects indicate that matriculated students are adding further subjects to their certificates, sometimes for Intermediate purposes, or in some cases testing their progress in additional languages.

Results are still due from nine other camps, including Stalag Luft VI, which sent in a very large number of candidates. This camp obtained very good results at the last Matriculation examination.

Lists Still Available

The list of examination results for the period January to June, 1944, will be sent to next of kin or any others interested. Applications to:—

The Director, Educational Books Section, The New Bodleian, Oxford.

Where possible, 3d. in stamps should be enclosed to cover postage.

Some copies of the list for July-December, 1943, still remain, and can be had on application.

Three Men of the Spearhead

(*Continued from previous page*)

I left them at daybreak—two men who, by the miracle of Red Cross organisation, had been kept fit enough in body and mind to be able to minister to the wounded of an army invading the enemy land where their long years of captivity had been spent.

Two days later I caught up with the Regimental Aid Post of a famous armoured unit just south of Arnhem, at which point my mission really began.

By late afternoon I reached a large private hospital in the Nijmegen area where a Field Dressing Station and a Casualty Clearing Station were in operation.

There were about a hundred casualties in the long bare ward in which I laid out my bedroll that night. All had been documented, examined, dressed and bandaged, docketed, fed and bedded down, and now, but for the incessant shelling, the sedatives they had been given would have brought sleep.

The ward, empty of furniture except for a few chairs, trestle tables and panniers in the orderlies' corner, where food, drugs and dressings were kept and issued, grew thick and heavy of atmosphere when the black-out screens were put up. Walls trembled and the windows shivered as the long-range shelling of the German heavies continued through the night. Few could have slept. Many must have been comforting themselves with the thought of being evacuated next day. The burden of pain silently borne hung heavy on the air.

As dawn came a fury of shell-fire ripped the dark mantle of night and flung its fragments in the face of the day. But the misty September sun mounted the sky, and for a time the guns were stilled.

Black-out screens were taken down. Orderlies sped from stretcher to stretcher with mugs of tea. "Wonder what time they'll start moving us this morning?" said the man by my side.

"I'll find out when I go down to the mess for breakfast," I answered.

The night-long shelling had seemed purposeful, and there was doubt in my mind. It was only too well confirmed when I went below. No casualties were evacuated that morning nor the next. Between us and Eindhoven the "corridor" had been cut in two places and heavy fighting to restore the situation was still going on.

It was the third morning before we ran the gauntlet with an ambulance convoy to an airfield near Eindhoven. All the afternoon aircraft shuttled between it and Brussels with casualties.

It was on that third morning that the paratrooper called me to his stretcher. I had noticed him several times before, lying very quiet reading a tattered book. His leg wounds were hidden by the blankets which he had thrown from above his waist to reveal a torso as magnificent as any in a Raphael sketch. Muscle rippled swiftly from wrist to shoulder and waist as he moved. The lower ribs opened and closed like great bellows to his deep steady breathing.

I bent over him and asked what he needed. He smiled and pointed to my shoulder-flash. "I thought it was," he said. "Good old Red Cross and St. John. I just wanted to make sure."

Two medical orderlies had told me previously told me that they had been St. John members before the war, and I asked him if he was another.

"No," he replied. "I was a prisoner of war for two and a half years and escaped. **I could never have made it if those Red Cross parcels hadn't kept coming. There's not a man who has made a 'break' who didn't owe his freedom to 'em. You've just got to have strength and stamina to duck out of a fiery prison camp and keep out and get home. Whoever made up those parcels knew what a man wanted to keep him up to scratch. You can tell 'em so from me.**" He put out his hand and grinned, and I hope I did not show how I felt when he gripped. A few hours later I saw him into a Dakota bound for Britain. I've no doubt he told the smart young W.A.A.F. medical orderly that *he* liked his tea hot and sweet, but also *strong!*

Servicemen's Gloves

EASILY KNITTED ON TWO NEEDLES IN 4-PLY WOOL

Reproduced by courtesy of Harrap Bros. (Sirdar Wools) Ltd.

MATERIALS.—2 oz. 4-ply wool. One pair knitting needles, No. 12. One pair knitting needles, No. 11.

TENSION.—8 st. equal 1 inch.

THE RIGHT GLOVE

Using No. 12 needles, cast on 60 st.

1st Row.—Sl. 1, k. 1, *p. 1, k. 1. Repeat from * to end of row. Repeat the first row 29 times. Change to No. 11 needles and proceed as follows :—

1st Row.—Sl. 1, knit to end of row.

2nd Row.—Sl. 1, purl to the last st., k. 1. Repeat the 1st and 2nd rows for 4½ins., ending with a purl row. Break off the wool. Continuing in st. st., divide the st. for the fingers as follows :—

THE FOURTH FINGER.—Slip the first 22 st. on to a thread knit across the next 16 st., cast on 2 st., slip the remaining 22 st. on to a thread.

Commencing with a purl row, work 27 rows in st. st.

SHAPE THE TOP.—**1st Row.**—(K. 2 tog.) nine times.

2nd Row.—Sl. 1, purl to the last st., k. 1.

3rd Row.—(K. 2 tog.) four times, k. 1.

Run a thread through the remaining st., draw up and fasten off.

THE THIRD FINGER.—With the right side of the work facing, knit the last 7 st. from the front of the glove, knit up 2 st. from the 2 cast on st. at the base of the fourth finger, knit the first 7 st. from the back of the glove, cast on 4 st. (20 st.).

Commencing with a purl row, work 33 rows in st. st.

SHAPE THE TOP.—**1st Row.**—(K. 2 tog.) ten times.

2nd Row.—Sl. 1, purl to the last st., k. 1.

3rd Row.—(K. 2 tog.) five times.

Run a thread through the remaining st., draw up and fasten off.

THE SECOND FINGER.—With the right side of the work facing, knit the last 7 st. from the front of the glove, knit up 2 st. from the 4 cast on st. at the base of the third finger, knit the first 7 st. from the back of the glove, cast on 4 st. (20 st.).

Commencing with a purl row, work 37 rows in st. st.

SHAPE THE TOP.—Work exactly as given for the third finger.

THE FIRST FINGER.—With the right side of the work facing, knit the remaining 8 st. from the 4 cast on st. at the base of the second finger, knit up 4 st. from the 4 cast on st. at the base of the second finger, knit the remaining 8 st. from the back of the glove, cast on 4 st. (20 st.).

Commencing with a purl row, work 33 rows in st. st.

SHAPE THE TOP.—Work exactly as given for the third finger.

THE LEFT GLOVE

Using No. 12 needles cast on 60 st.

Work exactly as given for the right glove until the fingers are reached. Break off the wool.

THE FOURTH FINGER.—Slip the first 22 st. on to a thread, cast on 2 st., knit across the next 16 st., slip the next 22 st. on to a thread.

Work as given for the fourth finger of the right hand glove.

THE THIRD FINGER.—Cast on 4 st. with the right side of the work facing, knit the last 7 st. from the back of the glove on to the end of the same needle, knit up 2 st. from the 2 cast on st. at the base of the fourth finger, knit the first 7 st. from the front of the glove.

Work as given for the third finger of the Right Hand Glove.

THE SECOND FINGER.—Cast on 4 st. with the right side of the work facing knit the last 7 st. from the back of the glove on to the end of the same needle, knit up 2 st. from the 4 cast on st. at the base of the third finger, knit 7 st. from the front of the glove.

Work as given for the second finger of the Right Hand Glove.

THE FIRST FINGER.—With the right side of the work facing, knit the remaining 8 st. from the back of the glove, knit up 4 st. from the 4 cast on st. at the base of the second finger, knit the remaining 8 st. from the front of the glove.

Work as given for the first finger of the Right Hand Glove.

THE THUMBS (both alike).—Using No. 11 needles, cast on 1 st.

1st Row.—Increase once in this st.

2nd Row.—Sl. 1, p. 1.

3rd Row.—Increase once in each st.

Proceed in st. st., increasing once in the first and last st. in every following 3rd row until there are 22 st. on the needle.

Work 28 rows without shaping.

SHAPE THE TOP.—**1st Row.**—(K. 2 tog.) 11 times.

2nd Row.—Sl. 1, purl to the last st., k. 1.

3rd Row.—(K. 2 tog.) five times, k. 1.

Run a thread through the remaining st. draw up and fasten off.

TO MAKE UP THE GLOVES

Sew up the rib and continue for ½in. above the rib. Leave a 2½ins. opening for the thumb and sew up the remainder of the seam.

Sew up each finger. Sew up the thumb seam and sew in position. Press the gloves on the wrong side under a damp cloth with a hot iron.

ABBREVIATIONS.

K. knit ; p. purl ; st. stitches ; tog. together ; sl. 1 slip one stitch knitways ; t.b.l. through back of loops ; p.s.s.o. pass the slip stitch over ; st. st. stocking stitch (1 row knit, 1 row purl).

Always knit into the back of the first row of st. unless the thumb method of casting on is used, when it is not necessary.

TENSION.

NOTE.—It is very important that the gloves are worked at the given tensions in order to produce the same measurements. If the needles stated do not produce this tension, try other sizes until it is obtained.

Please Note

CHRISTMAS LETTERS

Ban on Greetings Cards and Calendars

THE Postmaster-General announces that the Government Departments concerned with the welfare of British prisoners of war and internees in enemy hands have regretfully decided that the ban on the sending to them of Christmas and New Year greetings cards and calendars, which was instituted last year, must be renewed this year.

The reason is that experience shows that if greetings cards and calendars are sent congestion is caused in the enemy censorship, resulting in delay to ordinary letters over the Christmas period. The decision is, therefore, in the interests of the prisoners of war themselves, some of whom after last year's ban wrote appreciatively of the improvement in the letter service at Christmas time, as compared with previous years.

Relatives will appreciate for the same reason the importance of not sending additional letters in place of greetings cards.

Air Mail Service to Switzerland Restored

THE Postmaster-General has announced that the air mail service to Switzerland, by air to Lisbon, thence by surface route, has been restored.

The air postage rates are the same as those in force before the recent suspension, namely, 5d. for the first ounce and 3d. for each additional ounce for letters and 2½d. for postcards.

Ilag Wurzach, Wurttemberg

THE Camp Senior of Ilag Wurzach, Wurttemberg, has written to the Chairman of the Red Cross giving an account of the camp. In July, when he wrote, he said that conditions were "reasonable and normal." He goes on:

"Our kitchen arrangements are excellent, and a willing internee staff cook meals which will equal or surpass those in most camps, in addition to the private cooking of large quantities of Red Cross food for families.

"The hospital is now most efficient, and two South African doctors are resident in camp and are always available. The health of this camp is excellent.

"Recreation is sufficient. For five days per week we have a football field available two hours daily. Three walks are allowed weekly. The authorities have recently extended the camp to embrace a very fine wooded park.

"The internees are as content as it is possible to be under the circumstances of internment. . . . Thanks to the Red Cross we lack nothing."

Any Questions?

When sending in questions will next of kin kindly always give their name and address so that their letters may be answered by post if, for any reason, it is not possible to reply in this Journal

P.o.W.s Working

My son is one of the new prisoners recently captured in Normandy. What are the rules about prisoners of war working?

Prisoners under the rank of N.C.O. may be employed by the detaining power on work not directly connected with the ... N.C.O.s may volunteer to work, or be employed as supervisors of the work of other prisoners.

Clothing Supplies

My son, who was recently taken prisoner, tells me he has lost all his kit. Is there likely to be any clothing in the camp with which he can be fitted out, as we are now advised not to send parcels?

Yes, most camps have a reserve of clothing from which a new prisoner can be equipped; and the Camp Leaders can ask for supplies of clothing to be sent to them from Geneva to meet their requirements.

Next-of-Kin Packing Centres

Are the next-of-kin packing centres remaining open until we can send next-of-kin parcels again?

Some centres may have closed temporarily, but they will no doubt re-open at once if the normal next-of-kin parcels service is resumed.

Stalag Luft IV

What does the word "Belaria" mean after Stalag Luft IV? Is it part of Sagan?

Belaria is the name of a place a few miles from Sagan, where a section of Stalag Luft III, known as "Stalag Luft III (Belaria)," is situated. When the new section was first opened it was sometimes called "Stalag Luft IV, Belaria," but this is no longer correct.

Repatriation of Protected Personnel

Are all protected personnel eligible for repatriation?

Yes, but a certain number have to remain to look after the sick and wounded prisoners of war; and, in the case of chaplains, to organise their religious life.

NUMBER, PLEASE!

PLEASE be sure to mention your Red Cross reference number whenever you write to us. Otherwise delay and trouble are caused in finding previous correspondence.

Sending Photographs

Am I permitted to send a snapshot to my brother, who is a P.o.W. in Stalag VIIIC.

Yes, snapshots or unmounted photographs of a personal nature may be sent as enclosures in letters to prisoners of war. You should write your name and address, and that of your brother, on the back.

Bringing Personal Luggage Home

Will my husband be allowed to bring all his personal belongings home when he is finally repatriated, or will his baggage be limited to a certain weight?

We regret that we have as yet no information on this point.

"Bath House" Staff

My son, in his letters, refers to the Bath House staff. What does he mean?

Some prison camps are provided with bath huts which contain the washing facilities and baths, and usually a boiler for heating water. Prisoners are employed as staff of these Bath Houses.

Blind P.o.W.s

To which camp have the blind prisoners of war, transferred from Italy to Germany, been sent?

Most of them appear to be in Stalag IXB at Bad Soden.

Sending Books

Can I still send a new novel to my son through the bookseller?

Please see the Postmaster-General's statement in the August journal.

American P.o.W.s

Are American prisoners of war sent to the same camps as the British, or are there any special camps in Germany for Americans?

There are special camps in Germany for American prisoners of war, but there are some camps in which there are American as well as British prisoners.

FREE TO NEXT OF KIN

THIS journal is sent free of charge to those registered with the Prisoners of War Dept. as next of kin. In view of the paper shortage no copies are for sale, and it is hoped that next of kin will share their copy with relatives and others interested.

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