

CHOSE ODD PLACE TO FIGURE BILLS

German Calculating Laundry
Account on Victoria Bridge
Arrested as Spy

SENTRY KNEW NO GERMAN

Man Later Freed on Parole—
Other Prisoners Refuse Lib-
erty, Preferring Free
Board

Lack of knowledge of the German language and system of writing led to an arrest on the Victoria Bridge yesterday which seemed to have interrupted a deliberate attempt upon the safety of that structure. In the end it turned out to be rather an opera bouffe affair, the suspected document found on the arrested man proving to be merely an attempt on the part of the prisoner to figure up his week's laundry, while he chose the somewhat unusual place of the centre of the Victoria Bridge to pursue his mathematical studies.

For some time the German had been watched by the sentries on the bridge. He looked like a foreigner, and loitered along the structure, examining it with apparent interest. The guard at the St. Lambert's end did not interfere with the man, and he passed along until he came within the observation of the sentry patrolling the middle of the bridge.

After studying the work of the big span with interest for some time the German pulled out a bundle of papers and started making notes. That was about as far as he got. Long before he had added up his first row of figures a sentry from the Victoria Rifles, with fixed bayonet hailed him and demanded to know what he was doing.

"Frie Gaetz?" replied the German, who was pretty well used to seeing uniformed men.

"You're under arrest," briefly responded the sentry. "You can come along with me."

"Sprechen sie Deutsch?" demanded the German.

This proved too much for the sentry, but the German speedily understood that he was being arrested. He tried to explain that he was doing nothing wrong, and that he had merely been calculating how much he owed for his week's washing. A crowd gathered around, and he flourished his papers to prove that he had not been making hostile diagrams of the railway bridge. This exhibited his cuffs, which were also covered with cabalistic figuring in German script, and presented a highly suspicious appearance.

The man was promptly placed under arrest and marched to the officer in charge of the guard, who ordered him sent to the immigration offices on St. Antoine street, where the Provost Marshall, Major Date, has charge of the prisoners of war.

Some excitement was caused amongst the crowd by the fact that immediately after his arrest a rifle shot was heard in the marshy ground just above the bridge. A moment later a man appeared with a double-barreled gun, but he explained that he had shot at a hawk.

The whole matter was solved at the war prison, where Lieut. Blackader, of the Highlanders, was on duty. The suspected German spy was examined, and claimed that he had only been figuring up the details of his laundry bill, which seemed to be a rather complicated process. Examination of the papers showed this to be correct, and after a little further examination the man was freed on parole, which he was glad to give.

HAVE MANY PRISONERS.

If a number of the other German prisoners would also give their paroles and get away from the military prison the authorities would be very pleased, as the growing number of men there is proving an expensive embarrassment. There are about 80 prisoners there, most of them probably harmless enough. But under the rules, they cannot be freed, since they were arrested for cause, either under suspicion of being spies, or else as having attempted to leave the Dominion in order to join hostile armies as reservists during the progress of the war.

A good number of these men are out of work, and they steadfastly refuse to give their parole that they will not engage in any hostile acts or attempt to leave Canada without permit during the war. They evidently know that times are hard and that Germans are not likely to get work in Canada at the present. Their quarters at the immigration building are comfortable enough, and they are given all they need to eat, so they find it to their advantage to pose as hostiles, and get free board and lodging at the country's expense.

With the increasing numbers it is apprehensible that some more permanent place, such as the old prison building, will be secured for their accommodation while some effort may be made to induce the prisoners do something for their living, if such procedure comes within military law.