

BRITISH CIVIL PRISONERS WHO ARE INTERNED AT THE RUHLEBEN CAMP HAVE FEW COMPLAINTS.

Improvement in Food and Increased Possibilities of Purchase of Additional Nourishment From the Outside Have Nearly Removed All Grievances

PERFORMANCES GIVEN EVERY NIGHT IN GRAND STANDS ARE ENJOYED BY ALL

Overcrowding Has Been Overcome by Construction of Extensive Additions—Prisoners Are Allowed Use of Grounds for Games—Plenty of Exercise

The British Government has received, through the courtesy of the United States Ambassador at Berlin, a report which will be read with great interest by Canadians. Ambassador Gerard in his covering letter to Ambassador Page in London, says:

"I have the honor to transmit to you herewith a triplicate copy of a report made by Mr. G. W. Minot upon camp conditions at present existing in the British Civil Internment Camp at Ruhleben, Spandau. In connection with this I beg to say that the devotion to duty and uniform kindness of all the camp authorities has been wonderful and the relations of our Embassy with them always most agreeable. It is impossible to conceive of better camp commanders than Graf Schwerin and Baron Taube."

The report which is dated at Berlin, June 3, follows:

Of the 4,500 British civil prisoners interned in Germany, approximately 4,000 are at this date held at Ruhleben, the remaining 500 being scattered in small detachments in various other internment camps. The German Government have arranged that all these detachments shall be absorbed by Ruhleben, so that within a few months all the British civil prisoners interned in Germany will be in Ruhleben. The difficulty of enlarging the facilities of Ruhleben and the necessary precautionary measures of quarantining have made the process of combination a long one, but there is every reason to believe that it will soon be completed.

Overcrowded at First.

The increase in the number of prisoners at Ruhleben has necessitated substantial additions to the barracks, most of which were overcrowded at the beginning of the war. Eight new barracks, of one story, have been erected (four being already occupied), affording accommodation for 120 men each. These barracks are substantially built of wood with well set floors and large windows. The roofs have been waterproofed with tarred paper and the walls stained to resist the rain. In the four new barracks which are now occupied a small room for the guard has been added, but in the new barracks this has been considered unnecessary, as it is hoped that the guards in the barracks at night may shortly be dispensed with.

The last new barrack has been built with a special view towards housing convalescent or delicate persons. Partitions have been erected so as to cut up the barracks into small divisions and two water closets have been installed. A new wash house for these barracks has been erected with shower baths and washing troughs.

Room to Play Games.

The construction of the new barracks, the transfer of some hundred persons to Dr. Weiler's sanatorium and the release of about a hundred persons have made it possible largely to reduce the crowded conditions of the obens or lofts, of the old barracks. Twenty per cent. of the occupants of these obens have been removed and it is estimated that when the new barracks are fully occupied, another fifty-five per cent. will be removed from the obens, so that only a quarter of the original occupants will be left there.

The most signal improvement which has been effected in the last few months has been the permission afforded the prisoners to use the ground encircled by the race track for the hours from 8 a.m. to 12 noon and from 2 to 5 p.m. The space thus gained is approximately 200 by 150 yards and affords a splendid field for all kinds of games. Materials for the various sports have been provided by the camp, including the laying out of a football field and a small golf course. This ground has provided a chance for every interned prisoner to take part in some form of good outdoor exercise, and for those who so desire, to move out their chairs to the field to watch the games.

Use of the Grandstands.

Permission to use the grandstands from 8 a.m. to 8.30 p.m. has further been obtained. As the stands are of modern brick and cement construction, a large enclosed hall is formed underneath the tiers of seats. In this hall a stage has been erected and a complete theatre installed, with scenery, dressing-rooms, orchestra, etc. Performances varying from Shakespeare to musical shows are given practically every night. The betting boxes have been boarded up to afford small rooms for study, musical practice, etc. In other parts of this building space has been allotted for a carpenter's shop, a tailor's shop, barber, and cobbler's shop. The grandstand tiers have been turned over to the Educational Department for schools and lectures which are systematically conducted. Blackboards and other materials have been provided for the department.

The overcrowding of the camp (camp infirmary) and the difficulty of affording proper treatment to many of the prisoners interned led to the establishment of an official infirmary at Dr. Weiler's Sanatorium, Nussbaum, Allee 38, Charlottenburg. This sanatorium, which is situated in a suburb of Berlin, has two divisions, one where 7 marks per day per person is paid, and the other where 10 marks per day is

paid. The men who are unable to pay for their treatment are provided with the least expensive treatment free, the expenditure being disbursed from the British funds held at the Embassy, while those men who have sufficient money may, if they choose, pay themselves for the more expensive class of housing.

Meals Are Sufficient.

The rooms are all very clean and well lighted, and the beds seem to be clean and comfortable. In the less expensive division there are five or six beds in a room, but the rooms are large and there is no hardship entailed in this connection. The patients have a small yard with one or two trees in it for exercise, but their chief complaint is that it is impossible for them to have the same freedom as in the camp at Ruhleben. The 10-mark patients have a much larger and more attractive garden of at least two acres in which to walk, and there are only two in each room. The patients are all given five meals a day, consisting of a first and second breakfast, dinner, tea and supper. These meals are not very large, but they certainly afford sufficient nourishment to men who are supposed invalids. The patients say that the quality of the food is excellent. The total number of men which the sanatorium can accommodate is about 100, and most of them express themselves as being quite satisfied with this treatment. The British patients are under the direct care of Dr. Schlomer, an able young doctor.

A System of Relief.

A system of relief has been instituted whereby those men who are destitute receive a weekly allowance of five marks with which to buy extra food, clothing, etc., according to their need. Of the 4,000 men interned at Ruhleben, about 2,500 are at present receiving this help. Relief has also been extended to Dr. Weiler's Sanatorium and to the city prison, in which prisoners are quarantined for two weeks during their removal to Ruhleben. Full outfits of winter and summer clothes have been provided for those men who have been unable to procure clothes from outside the camp. These sets can be purchased by the men for one mark, the price being asked in order to prevent unjustified demands, and the profits being deposited with the camp funds. The spring outfits consist of the following articles—One shirt, one pair trousers, one suit of underwear, one pair of socks, one pair of shoes, and three handkerchiefs. Of these spring outfits over three thousand have been provided, so that it can be safely stated that every man has a satisfactory outfit with which to begin the summer.

Other Improvements.

The following is a numbered list of some of the other improvements which have been instituted in Ruhleben:

1. **Erection of Boilers and a Boiler House for Hot Water.** By this men can purchase at all hours of the day hot water for five pfennig. The money thus gained is turned into the camp fund.
2. **Fitting Up of the Captain's Office.** The British captain of the Engländerlager has been given an office of two rooms with a safe, desk, etc., in which he can conduct his correspondence and business in a satisfactory manner.
3. **A New Parcel Office.** This office has been fitted with the necessary shelves, etc., so that an incoming supply of 1,000 to 1,500 packages daily can be systematically handled.
4. **Camp Regulated by Police Force of British Subjects.** This has greatly lessened the necessity for German soldiers in the camp. The police force consists of an inspector, four sergeants and fifty men.
5. **The Institution of a Public Library.** This library has now about 2,500 volumes which can be obtained by the prisoners between certain hours.
6. **Latrines.** New latrines with more modern construction have been built and completed, but are not yet in working order. Regular cleaning and disinfecting is conducted in the old latrines.
7. **Roads and Grounds.** New roads have been built for the cartage of supplies, etc., the holes in the enclosures have been filled in and improved drainage constructed.
8. **Kitchens.** The kitchens have been taken over from the contractor who previously operated them, and are now controlled and worked by the Kitchen Committee. They have been thoroughly cleaned and white-washed. The quality of the food has been greatly improved and the meals are served at regular hours.
9. **Canteens.** The canteens have been enlarged and have been taken over by the captains from the contractor formerly in control, and are now conducted at largely reduced prices. A greater variety of goods has been provided.
10. **Faigue Parties.** The men of the camp who wish to earn a small pay are employed in regular groups to undertake the following work: the regular removal of refuse, the regular cleaning of dust bins, the watering of the grounds and the cartage of food supplies, etc.
11. **Laundry.** A laundry has been provided in which each man has a chance properly to wash his clothes each week.
12. **Whitewashing of Barracks.** The barracks, kitchens and other edifices have been carefully whitewashed and cleaned for the coming summer. Better lighting has been installed in the barracks and measures are being taken for the exterminating of mosquitoes.
13. **Beds.** Beds have now been installed in all the boxes whereas formerly there were only a few pro-

vided. The mattresses have all been refilled lately with clean new wood fibre.

14. **Business Post.** Permission has been granted to men who were engaged in active business before their internment to write extra letters for the purpose of business when they require it.

15. **Camp News.** The camp has now a roneo machine upon which programmes and camp news have been printed. Beginning with this week a camp newspaper is to be printed outside.

16. **Extra Food for Growing Lads.** Growing boys are now provided with an extra portion of a glass of milk and an egg in the morning. Some forty to fifty lads receive this extra supply.

17. **Casino Facilities.** Persons of weak health, who are however not actually ill, are allowed the privilege of eating in the casino. This privilege has also been accorded to the men who work in the camp.

18. **Bed Hours.** The time for turning out the light has been changed from 9 to 10 p.m.

19. **Divine Services.** Divine service is conducted weekly by the Rector of the Anglican church in Berlin in the grandstand. Services are also conducted for the German Protestants and for the Roman Catholics. The Roman Catholic Priest resides voluntarily in the camp and has, with the help of the commandant, fitted out a small chapel.

20. **Special Provision for the Jews.** Provision has been made for special treatment of the Jews according to the demands of their religion. A weekly supply of kosher food is provided and a synagogue has been established.

21. **Regular Visit of Dentist, Oculist and Optician.** A properly accredited dentist, oculist and optician visits Ruhleben at regular intervals and treat those men who stand in need of their services. It has been arranged that men who are unable to pay the fees shall, with the approval of the captains, receive this treatment free, the expenses to be paid from the British funds held at this Embassy.

It can be seen from the above that very considerable improvements have been effected at Ruhleben. Graf Schwerin, Baron Taube, and the other camp authorities have done everything in their power to bring about these improvements and have been materially helped throughout by the camp captains. The effect produced has been a general improvement in the physical and moral condition of the camp. In general the health of the prisoners can be said to be excellent, practically no cases of contagious or infective diseases, barring a mild epidemic of German measles, having occurred. The improvement in the food, and the increased possibilities of the purchase of additional nourishment from the outside have nearly silenced all complaints. The work is still progressing, and it is fair to state that the conditions are steadily, if slowly, improving.

Accused Man May Testify at Inquest

Evidence as to Occurrence Leading to Youth's Death Contradictory

In order to enable F. S. Coombs to testify, the inquest into the death of Robert Montgomery, who died at St. Michael's Hospital last week following a fight with the former, was adjourned until to-morrow night. The accused comes up in the Police Court on Friday after a week's remand. Contradictory evidence featured the proceedings last night.

Chief Coroner Dr. Arthur Jukes Johnson stated that his examination showed that Montgomery's death was caused by pressure on the head, resulting in a blood clot. There were no marks of violence on the boy's skull. The injury might have been caused by a light blow.

There was considerable difference of opinion as to whether Coombs struck Montgomery. The trouble started when Coombs and the father of the deceased met in the prisoner's stable at 1101 Yonge street and had an argument about some money alleged to be owing to William Montgomery, brother of deceased. Later in the day, William and Robert went to Coombs and again demanded that he pay William the sum alleged to be owing to him. The latter testified that he had in no way offended Coombs and that the latter threw him to the ground. Robert came to his assistance and then Coombs is alleged to have struck the blow which caused the young man's death. William's evidence was supported by that of a friend, William Caddick, who was nearby at the time. Caddick stated that Robert started to fight with Coombs after the latter had knocked down William. Coombs struck Robert twice on the side of the head.

The statement made to Coombs by the police was that he had only pushed Robert away and had not struck him. Others denied this while there were some who said that there were no blows struck at all.

Coroner Dr. Cotton presided and he ordered an adjournment in order to allow Coombs to testify.

FIRE AT CARON, SASK.

By Canadian Press.
Caron, Sask., July 14.—Damage amounting to fifty thousand dollars was done to the premises of the Saskatchewan Trading Company's general store, and other buildings here, by a fire which started from smouldering fire crackers.

SAYS WIFE HAS FLED.

Guelph, July 14.—Isaac Ritchie, of Fergus, was in the city yesterday conferring with the police over the disappearance of his wife and a man named Harry Digby, who has been alleged with the family. They are alleged to have left on July 12th, while Ritchie was at the Orange celebration in Listowel.