

THE CANADIAN PRISONERS OF WAR RELATIVES ASSOCIATION

NEWS

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Editor — HAZEL WANKLYN

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CHRISTMAS MESSAGE TO CANADIAN PRISONERS OF WAR



*Canadians everywhere join me
in sending to you heartiest Christmas
greetings and the best of good wishes
for the New Year.*

W. L. Mackenzie King
Prime Minister

1944

EDITORIAL NOTES

All Correspondence to the Association should be addressed to the Secretary, Mrs E. I. Barott, C.P.O. W.R.A., 150-A Sun Life Building, Montreal. Requests for educational books and copies of prisoners letters should be written on a separate sheet of paper. Relatives are invited to submit their problems and difficulties which will receive prompt and sympathetic attention.

TEXT OF PRIME MINISTER'S MESSAGE

Enclosed with the Prime Minister's card, which is reproduced on the front page, going to Canadians in Germany is a message announcing the sending of personal and camp presents from the Government of Canada. The text of the message follows :

"This year as last the agencies of Government charged with the protection of your interests have been very glad, on behalf of all the people of Canada, to take the opportunity offered by the Christmas Season of sending to you a small Christmas present for your personal use and also some books as a collective gift for the general enjoyment of those in your camp.

"In the expectation that continental transportation facilities will be subject to greater strain this year than hitherto, steps have been taken to send off the parcels well in advance, and it is hoped that they will reach all camps in good time for Christmas.

"Following last year's practice Christmas cards from individual persons in Canada will not be sent. This decision was taken, as you may perhaps remember, because prisoners generally expressed the view that they would rather receive their ordinary letters promptly than have them delayed through the arrival of large numbers of cards. The Prime Minister therefore hopes that you will regard the enclosed card, not only as coming from himself, but also as representing those which you might ordinarily expect to receive from your friends in Canada."

BRITISH P.O.W. MAIL

During the month of March, 53,647 letters destined to British prisoners arrived at Geneva; 13,000 having been sent from India. At the time when British prisoners were being trans-

ferred from Italy to Germany, an enormous amount of mail was directed to the I.R.C. agency; in one month 132,689 letters were re-addressed and from a total of 867,558 letters, accumulated from October to March, 493,756 have been sent to their destination in Germany, Switzerland and France.

About 100,000 parcels that were waiting at Bâle have been re-directed.

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS NEWS OF AMERICAN P.O.W.

Germany

A list containing nearly 3000 names of prisoners was received in Geneva by the International Red Cross from the Man of Confidence in a camp in Germany. This was the first information received regarding these men.

The agency also received, from another German camp, 1000 capture cards giving information about recently captured American airmen. These cards arrived before the telegraphed notices sent by the German Military authorities.

Japan

The official Bureau of Tokyo has forwarded to the I.R.C. numerous radiograms containing 1500 new names of interned American civilians in the Philippines.

At the end of May, the American Service of the I.R.C. agency was able in a single day to despatch to the United States information concerning 2538 prisoners of war as well as American civilian internees located in Europe and the Far East.

U.S. AIR MAIL

American prisoners of war who were captured when serving with Canadian or British Forces may now be sent the American airmail forms according to a new regulation issued by U. S. postal authorities.

ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY EXPRESSES APPRECIATION

In a letter received at C.P.O.W.R.A. Headquarters, dated 10th October 1944 from the Royal Horticultural Society the following message of thanks is contained : "My committee desires me to convey to you its cordial appreciation, not only of the generous offer made in your cable of August 9th, but also of the splendid way in which your Association has cooperated in the past. They feel it is quite in keeping with the magnificent part which the Canadians are playing in the fighting forces on land, on the sea, and in the air. We in the homeland are most grateful to you all."

Due to the present situation in Europe only a very limited number of seeds are being despatched this autumn.

BELARIA

The Camp Belaria is about 5 or 6 miles from the main Airforce camp Stalag Luft III, at Sagan. Conditions at Belaria are better than those at Luft III owing to the fact that prisoners are less crowded.

Y.M.C.A. VISITORS TO CAMPS

Charcoal-driven automobiles are used by seven Swiss and Swedish "Y" secretaries who constantly visit our men in German prison camps. These cars are carefully equipped for the needs of the particular camps each worker serves. For example, the car used by Gunnar Celander when he visits the surgical-orthopedic hospital in Germany, and a special camp for prisoners who have suffered eye injuries, is loaded with short-wave apparatus, a special motor for diathermy, transformer bulbs, and modern Swedish instruments for the blind. All other available space within the car is crowded with hospital games, handicraft materials, braille books, masseur books, pipes, pencils, note-paper, and a hundred miscellaneous items. On the roof, ten sacks of charcoal provide Mr. Celander with an ever-present filling station !

A total of 1770 such personal visits were made by representatives of War Prisoners Aid of the YMCA from February 1940 to December 1943 in order to promote and establish religious, educational and recreational activities for our men

in German prison camps. During the present year this work has intensified.

D-DAY IN GERMAN PRISON CAMPS

The Christian Science Monitor has recently published an extremely interesting account of the manner in which our boys who are prisoners of war received news of the invasion. We quote in part :

"We first heard at 2 o'clock in the afternoon of June 6. The High Command communique came through the loudspeaker on the cookhouse wall, in German, stating the bare fact of the landing, time and location.

"Looking out into the camp you could tell that the day had come. Men were streaming from doors and through windows, running silently over the sand to join the knot of men by the cookhouse that soon fanned into a semi-circle of a thousand men, assuring one another that it was true... Someone read a translation of the communique and the men dispersed to the barracks, walking slowly, smiling with relief and gratitude, and yet most of them serious in their soldiers' knowledge of the sacrifices to come."

SUGGESTIONS FROM REPATRIATED P.O.W.

Canadian Airmen recently repatriated from German prison camps discussing the contents of personal parcels, mentioned the following food articles as being the most popular : chipped beef, peanut butter, and dehydrated soups. Chocolate and cigarettes, they said, were always in great demand and it was not possible to send too much of either. Pipes also are appreciated and may be included in personal parcels. Playing cards are scarce in almost all camps; in view of this the C.P.O.W.R.A. is shipping 50 packs of playing cards to all camps where there are 100 or more Canadian prisoners, and 25 packs to every camp where there are less than 100 Canadian prisoners.

Shoes are always needed, both leather-soled and running shoes. The latter may be sent in sports parcels together with sweat shirts which are very necessary and all other shoes must be sent in personal parcels or uniform parcels.

THE GOVERNMENT'S PROGRAM- ME OF REHABILITATION

The question of re-establishing members of the services in civilian life is one of national importance. It is also of tremendous personal interest to the families of service men, consequently we will try briefly to bring to relatives of prisoners of war some of the main features which the Government proposes to adopt in helping our ex-service personnel to get back to the normality of peacetime living.

The programme of rehabilitation, issued by the Hon. Ian Mackenzie, Minister of Pensions and National Health, covers a wide field, its object being to give discharged service personnel the necessary training and financial security to help themselves that each may be in a position to earn his own living. Medical treatment will be supplied for those who need it and compensation by way of pensions provided for those handicapped in civil life as a result of war service. Young men and women of the services will be encouraged to continue their education which was interrupted by enlistment. University fees are paid on their behalf in relation to length of service. If, however, a student is outstanding and on the recommendation of University authorities, financial assistance may be extended to the completion of his university course or even to post-graduate studies.

Vocational training has also been arranged for and funds are to be available to assist in suitable courses which will enable discharged personnel to fit themselves in whatever trade they are best suited. Maintenance grants and dependents allowance will be paid for 52 weeks but may be extended to complete training providing the full training period does not exceed the length of service. Reports from the YMCA and other educational organizations show that many of our prisoners of war have utilized their time in prison camps to continue with study courses which will be of great benefit to them on their return to civilian occupation.

Preference to ex-service men and women will be given in all Civil Service Commission appointments. According to the "Reinstatement in Civil

Employment Act", it is the duty of employers to re-instate a bona fide permanent ex-employee who applies within three months of discharge for his previous job on no less favourable terms than would have prevailed had the period of employment not been interrupted by war service.

Free treatment will be given to men who are hospitalized for pensionable disabilities, with allowances for themselves and families. Artificial arms, legs etc., are supplied free with provision for special clothing grants to those veterans whose clothes are subject to extra wear through the use of artificial aids.

Health and Occupational Centres are being planned across the Dominion to assist in the rehabilitation of neuropsychiatric and other cases.

Pensions for disability will be awarded not on length of service but for the loss or lessening of normal abilities.

The Veterans Land Act, which is administered by a Director under the Minister of Mines and Resources, provides assistance to ex-servicemen to buy and own a farm to be operated on a full time farming basis, or to buy and own a rural or semi-rural house when the main income is earned from other forms of employment. Encouragement will be given to sustain the "family farm" as a Canadian institution.

For the veteran whose normal occupation is in the commercial fishing industry provision is made to assist him to purchase a comfortable home, a plot of ground and fishing equipment required for his occupation.

A Basic gratuity of \$7.50 for each month of service will be given to all ranks who have served in the Western Hemisphere and \$15. — for each month of service overseas or in the Aleutian Islands with a supplementary gratuity of 7 days pay and allowances for every 6 months service overseas or in the Aleutian Islands.

Primarily for those members of the Forces who do not elect to take educational, vocational or technical training, or to avail themselves of the benefits under the Veterans Land Act, a re-establishment credit is provided which may be used at any time within a period of ten years for the purpose of :

- (i) The acquisition of a home, to an amount not exceeding 2/3 of the equity as determined under the act;
- (ii) the repair or modernization of his home, if owned by him;
- (iii) the purchase of furniture and household equipment for his domestic use, to an amount not exceeding 2/3 of the cost;
- (iv) working capital for his profession or business;
- (v) the purchase of a business, to an amount not exceeding 2/3 of the equity fund required for the purpose;
- (vi) the purchase of tools, instruments or equipment for his trade, profession or business;
- (vii) payment of premiums under any insurance scheme established by the Government of Canada;
- (viii) the purchase of special equipment required for educational or vocational training;
- (ix) any other purpose authorized by the Governor-in-Council.

Government insurance for veterans on discharge has been arranged by Parliamentary legislation.

Finally, all ranks who have completed 183 days of service and have been honourably discharged will receive a clothing allowance of \$100. — and a rehabilitation grant of 30 days extra pay and payment to dependents of one month's allowance.

CIGARETTE SHIPMENTS

The following number of shipments, each consisting of 300 cigarettes were sent to all Canadian P.O.W. in Europe from May to September, by the Overseas League (Canada) Tobacco and Hamper fund and the Canadian Prisoners of War Relatives Association.

May 3	— 3,965
June 4	— 4,027
July 4	— 4,045
August 4	— 4,206
September 4	— 4,486

Contributions towards sending cigarettes to our Prisoners should be marked "Cigarette Fund" and addressed to C.P.O.W.R.A., 150-A Sun Life Building, Montreal.

BLIND PRISONERS OF WAR

According to the International Red Cross Review British blind prisoners are cared for in a hospital situated in a beautiful locality. Other badly disabled British prisoners, mostly amputation cases, are also interned in this hospital. The War Prisoners Aid of the Y.M.C.A. has devoted itself to the problem of re-educating the blind and of procuring the necessary material and special machines for this purpose. Most of the blind prisoners have learnt to write again through the method current at the British St. Dunstan's Institute so that on returning to their own country they will be able to take care of themselves. At the request of the Y.M.C.A. a German doctor, himself blinded in the last war, is responsible for this teaching.

Musical instruments including one piano have been provided by the War Prisoners Aid, much to the delight of the blinded men, some of whom have expressed their desire to become professional musicians.

A visit to one of the exhibitions of work in this hospital is convincing proof that despair can be cured by occupation. All manner of work is produced by these sadly disabled men, and their handiwork expresses both beauty and ingenuity.

A theatre has been built, by the blind prisoners, using wood from Canadian food boxes. Theatrical performances, both dramatic and musical are performed here with great skill amounting at times to brilliance.

To these prisoners the loss of liberty is by no means the most important of their hardships and yet they refuse to let themselves be beaten. One sign of this was in the amazing sight of ten young men, with no legs, lined up in two teams who were playing ball.

All are preparing in many different ways to fit themselves for a future life by learning some type of craft or profession compatible with their physical handicaps.

NEWS FROM ENGLAND

We are indebted to the Scottish Branch B.R.C.S. and the B.P.O.W.R.A. for the following information.

NEW GLASSES FOR PRISONERS OF WAR

Optical Service for Camps in Germany.

What happens when a prisoner of war breaks his glasses, or finds he cannot study or read for enjoyment because he needs different lenses? The problem concerns only a proportion of the men in the camps, but to those who are affected the absence of glasses may be a major disaster. About the middle of 1942 the question was tackled successfully by the optical industry and profession of Great Britain, working with the Red Cross and St. John War Organization. To-day, there is a smoothly running system which ensures that any British prisoner of war in Europe who needs spectacles receives a pair made to fit his precise needs. In the camps a British Medical Officer or an optician-prisoner tests the man's sight and then sends the "prescription" for the glasses required to the Red Cross Prisoners of War Department in London. They in turn pass them to the Joint War Emergency Committee of the Optical Profession, who allocate the prescriptions among the sixty or so firms of manufacturing opticians in Great Britain. The cost of providing the new glasses is borne by the firms, and in order to reduce to a minimum the waiting period for the men in the camps, the firms give the highest priority to the work. Despatch of the new glasses, each pair in a strong case, is arranged by the Red Cross, who use the quickest possible route to the camps. Since the scheme began over 1500 pairs have been sent, and in one of the largest camps more than 600 men have been supplied. In some of the biggest prisoner of war camps there are Medical Officers who are themselves practising oculists, and when the spectacle scheme came into operation the opticians and oculists in this country supplied them with a considerable amount of sight-testing apparatus. This is in use, not only in the camps, but also can be taken by the oculists and opticians to remote working parties, often many miles from the camp.

RETURNED WAR PRISONERS
FIND BETTER JOBS

Repatriated men from Stalag 344, who used their time of captivity to study various subjects, have been writing to their old "school" in the Stalag to describe their progress since reaching home. According to the latest report sent to Red Cross by the Educational Officer in this camp, several of them have been able on their return to get jobs superior to those they held before the war.

One N.C.O., who had lost a leg, had realised while in camp that he would not be able to resume his peace-time job as a hod carrier. "Consequently, he was advised to study building with a view to obtaining a post with an architectural firm," says the report. With justifiable pride it continues: "We proceeded to train him with such satisfactory results that he was successful in passing the City and Guilds Building examination. He now holds a post with a building firm in the south of England".

THERMOMETERS FOR HONG KONG

A packet containing 100 clinical thermometers bound for Hong Kong just left England by air via Lisbon to Geneva.

The thermometers have been sent by Red Cross and St. John in response to an urgent request from the International Red Cross delegate in Hong Kong.

PENICILLIN FOR PRISONERS OF WAR

Some £125—worth of penicillin is on its way to German prison camp hospitals where our wounded men captured in Normandy are being received. First supply of this precious drug to be released for prisoners of war, it has been sent by Red Cross and St. John, who hope to arrange for the despatch of regular monthly consignments.

FAR EAST NEWS

JAPANESE SHIP TO CARRY
RELIEF CONSIGNMENT TO P.O.W.

After repeated efforts at negotiation between the Allied and Japanese Governments, arrangements have at last been completed whereby a Japanese freighter will pick up relief supplies, which have been accumulated at Vladivostok, and transport them to Allied prisoners of war in the Far East.

This good news is most encouraging and satisfactory and will be received with thankfulness by all Canada, whose 1600 prisoners will benefit by the distribution of the much needed relief consignment consisting of food, clothing and medical parcels.

FREE CABLES FROM JAP-HELD PRISONERS
MAY COME BY CHRISTMAS

Wartime Information Board

A ten-word-cable service between Japanese-held prisoners-of-war (including internees) and their Canadian next-of-kin has been arranged by the International Committee of the Red Cross, according to an official of the Department of External Affairs. However, although the Japanese have signified their willingness to transmit messages to and from the camps, the service has not yet started pending final arrangements, and its success will depend on the co-operation of the Japanese.

It is proposed that each prisoner or internee will be allowed to send one cable a year at first. This limitation has been imposed so that as many prisoners as possible may be heard from. The prisoner's cable to his next-of-kin must be the first in the exchange. Next-of-kin will not be able to send messages until they have heard from their relative in the prison camp. This restriction has been set because many relatives have had little or no information from the Far East, and it is considered more important that they should receive news from the prisoner-of-war or internee than the other way round.

Costs of the cable both ways will be paid by the Canadian Red Cross Society, and the Canadian Red Cross Enquiry Bureau is willing

to bear the responsibility for the telegrams reaching their destinations. Messages will be routed through Geneva.

The adoption of the cable exchange arrangement does not affect the facilities previously established for communication with the Far East, the External Affairs official pointed out. He warned, however, that there may be considerable delay before the first cable is received, and that failure to receive a cable in the near future should not cause over-anxiety on the part of relatives. If the Japanese Government does its part, it is hoped that the first cables will start coming in in time for Christmas.

NO CRITICISM FOR ALLIED
GOVERNMENTS

It has come to our notice that certain groups formed by next of kin of prisoners of war amongst the Allied Nations have protested that the Allied Governments have not exerted sufficient effort on behalf of prisoners of war in the Far East.

The Canadian Prisoners of War Relatives Association deplores this attitude which, we feel, is based on either incorrect information or ignorance regarding the assiduous efforts of the allied governments together with National and International Red Cross to negotiate with the Japanese authorities.

Every possible approach has been attempted and that these endeavours have been unsuccessful is due, not to Allied negligence but to the lack of co-operation and the procrastination of the Japanese.

Our Russian Ally has offered every assistance as a neutral power in the Far East and at present a Russian port is being used to receive shipments of supplies destined for prisoners of war in Japan and Japanese held territory.

The situation concerning prisoners of war in the Far East has improved considerably although it is far from satisfactory yet. Hope is held out however, that an agreement will be reached whereby conditions of our prisoners may be bettered, and to this end the Allied authorities are working ceaselessly.

BETTER HANDLING OF PRISONERS SEEN BY BRITISH

Hope that the lot of allied prisoners and internees held by Japan can be improved in the near future was expressed by Lord Iliff, chairman of the Duke of Gloucester's Red Cross and the St. John's Fund in a recent address in Manchester, England. Lord Iliff reported the present situation as much more favorable than before and said that Britain is working in close cooperation with the United States and Canada.

During past months considerable publicity has been given to negotiations with Japan for moving the 1500 tons of Red Cross supplies held in Vladivostok. Russia has granted permission for a pro-Japanese ship to enter a port near Vladivostok to take on these supplies.

Distribution is to be made to British, Netherlands and American prisoners, and arrangements have been made for each country to meet the cost of servicing its own nationals. Because of geographical nearness, the United States has been selected as the source of supply for food but the cost will be paid by all three nations.

The British, Dutch and American Red Cross sent 4500 tons of relief in the ships that carried Japanese exchange prisoners.

The recent gift of 20,000 pounds sterling sent to Chungking by Lady Cripps brings the total from England for the United Aid to China Fund to 950,000 pounds. Arrangements have been completed, according to London, for sending 20,000 pounds to Chungking each month, instead of larger amounts less frequently. (*The Shanghai Evening Post and Mercury*).

CAMP REPORTS

FUKUOKA No 17

According to the International Red Cross camp reports, Fukuoka Camp 17 which was opened on August 7th 1943 was visited last April by an I.R.C. delegate. In this camp are about ten officers, a hundred N.C.O.'s and several hundred men, all Americans.

The barracks, 33 one storey buildings, are well aired and have sufficient light; the water is furnished by the town and is good. Sanitation is satisfactory.

Three meals a day are prepared by fifteen cooks, kitchen service is well organized and there are two electric bread ovens, frigidaire, etc. Food rations could be improved.

The surgeon and three medical orderlies of the Japanese army as well as two interned doctors and ten orderlies are on duty.

A number of prisoners are employed in the camp's workshops, tailors, shoemakers, etc., while others are employed in coal mines, the work being distributed by the camp Commandant. All are paid and spend a good part of their pay at the Canteen, the profits from which are used for the benefit of the prisoners.

Protestant Church services are celebrated every Sunday, in English.

Recreational facilities are adequate and the library is provided by the YMCA. There are no organized classes and the prisoners asked for musical instruments.

In general, the prisoners are well treated and the Camp Commandant did not report any complaints from the prisoners.

NAGASAKI

CIVILIAN INTERNMENT CAMPS

The civilian internment camp at Nagasaki, which was opened in March 1943, was previously the Convent of St. Francis. Situated on an isolated hill in a fertile region, the camp is composed of two well-equipped dormitories, one dining room, one recreation room and a library and houses fifteen men, of which 5 are British, 6 Canadian, 2 Belgian, 1 New-Zealander and 1 Norwegian. Every second month a Japanese doctor carries out a general examination of the internees and is also called in when necessary. Serious cases of illness are sent to the city's University Hospital where internees also receive dental care. Mass is celebrated. Games are organized and internees are busy growing vegetables and raising chickens.

CAMP REPORTS

GERMANY

International Red Cross Review

OFLAG IX A/H

On March 11th 1944 delegates of the International Committee visited Oflag IX A/H. Not much change was noted since the last visit a year ago; living conditions for the few hundred officers and N.C.O.'s were about the same. There were still complaints regarding the lighting which is decidedly insufficient in a castle where thick walls and very small windows tend to darken the rooms considerably; the heating also was barely adequate in spite of the moderate winter.

Two officers responsible for the kitchen are in charge of food rations, these have been slightly improved due to British and Canadian collective and individual parcels.

The clothing situation is satisfactory regarding uniforms, underwear and shoes but officers asked for toilet linen as they were only receiving small squares of material. They also suggested that a blanket reserve should be built up at the camp for the benefit of new prisoners who are likely to wait a long time for their first personal parcel.

Regarding sanitary conditions, the delegate reports that in general the state of health is very satisfactory, the two camps, upper and lower, each have a small infirmary containing about ten beds, only mild cases are treated here. Officers of the upper camp, of which many are relatively old, would like to receive a visit from an oculist as their sight is daily deteriorating. Dental care is still provided at Lazaret Obermassfeld.

Reporting on recreation facilities the delegate says that sports are very popular, curling matches having been held in the Castle's moat during the month of February. Recently officers have been allowed to go for walks which is greatly appreciated by the older prisoners who are unable to take part in the sports.

Religious services are celebrated in both camps and the library is well stocked. A great number of officers are following study courses.

Both camps have a food reserve for about 3 months — 1,500 parcels in each camp.

OFLAG IX A/Z

Since last June all American officers have left this Oflag. Several hundred British officers remain, lodged in the old town seminary where living conditions have not greatly changed during the past year, the principal complaint being overcrowding. A reduction of fifty men would be necessary to allow sufficient space. Lack of space is most keenly felt in the refectory where prisoners are obliged to eat in three groups and which is the only available room for study courses and theatrical productions.

Sanitary arrangements are adequate for the camp's needs but showers are functioning only every fifteen days due to the fact that the Commandant is unable to obtain sufficient fuel.

The infirmary is well set up and well equipped and the general state of health is satisfactory. On the day of the delegate's visit, five diphtheria patients were being treated and since the British doctor in charge had an insufficient quantity of anti-diphtheria serum (German authorities being able to furnish only 4000 U.I. per patient), an order for 200,000 U.I. was telephoned to Geneva through the delegate. In this connection it should be noted that serious cases are directed to the Lazaret Obermassfeld where five officers have just been sent for a thorough medical examination, in view of the approaching visit of the mixed Medical Commission.

There are in this camp 24 British doctors and 25 chaplains who constitute a sort of reserve destined to provide help, in case of necessity, to the different prisoners of war camps all over Germany.

Dental first aid is given at the camp but serious cases needing advanced treatment are sent to Lazaret Obermassfeld.

Sports are well attended, either in the small camp courtyard or on a much bigger space situated at about one kilometre from the camp where the officers may go daily. During the winter there is skating and curling matches are also held.

In ending the report states that Oflag IX A/Z gives a good impression.

MARLAG O AND MARLAG M.

No changes have been made here since the last visit of the International Red Cross delegates; the installations are exactly the same and the personnel having increased considerably the prisoners have less room. However, they did not complain and seemed to be quite satisfied.

The food situation in both camps, O and M, is according to regulations. In camp O the food, from Red Cross parcels, is prepared collectively by the Officers while in camp M the cooking is done by the ratings. However, food conditions in both camps seem to be satisfactory thanks to the numerous Red Cross food parcels which come in regularly.

The clothing situation is far from satisfactory and the delegates report that many prisoners are wearing wornout uniforms. This applies especially to the ratings in camp M where the P.O.W.'s are wearing French uniforms.

In both camps two British Officers receive and distribute the food and clothing parcels. While the Officer in charge of the food parcels seems to be quite satisfied — with the exception of the extra small quantity of tea in standard food parcels — the Officer receiving and distributing the clothing parcels complains that he has no reserve whatever and that the P.O.W.'s are badly in need of clothes.

The hospital is in charge of a medical Capt., assisted by five orderlies. Only light cases are treated here; other cases are sent to the Milag lazaret. The Dental department is satisfactory. Patients from both O and M are treated here. Prisoners would appreciate more books — especially fiction and travelogues. There are three padres at this Camp.

MILAG NORD

Milag Nord contains about 3000 prisoners of which 1000 are officers composed of British, Americans, Norwegians, Belgians, New Zealanders, Greeks, Chinese etc., 21 nationalities in all. The prisoners are grouped according to national-

ities and disposition of the barracks allows each group to live a relatively independent life.

All internees at the principal camp are satisfied with their living conditions. Only one change has occurred since the last visit from the delegates of the International Committee, Indians are now separated from the other prisoners and are lodged in a special camp situated at the border of the wood. Under these conditions they are better able to perform their religious ceremonies which occupy an important place in their lives.

There are three large kitchens at the main camp and two others which are used exclusively for the preparation of Red Cross parcels. The Indians also have a kitchen and numerous individual rooms.

Clothing is in general good, the man of confidence receives and distributes all collective food and clothing parcels.

The Lazaret of Milag has 86 beds and a medical personnel composed of 6 doctors, 2 surgeons and one dentist. Instruments, bandages and pharmaceutical products are in sufficient quantity; the reserve of serum against typhus is of 224 cm and against diphtheria, 12 millions U.I. which are good until the end of July 1944. There is still 320 cm of insulin left and a stock of 11,444 invalid comfort parcels.

Amongst the very sick and seriously wounded men, 59 have passed before the Mixed Medical Commission for repatriation with the next exchange of prisoners and 170 others are waiting to be examined by the Commission.

There are several chaplains who celebrate religious services. One Roman Catholic priest asks that the Canadian Red Cross sends him regularly communion wine and wafers, candles and a white vestment for the celebration of mass.

The library is well run and has 1900 technical books and 9400 others which include fiction etc. Prisoners can easily organize lecture courses. The theatre productions and orchestra are excellent.

The majority of prisoners are not working although some are employed at small tasks inside the camp and some have volunteered to work at nearby farms.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Question: I have not received my prisoner's P.O.W. number or camp address; I understand I can write to him c/o The International Red Cross, Geneva. What assurance have I that letters so addressed will reach him?

Answer: The International Red Cross has undertaken the duty of forwarding letters to prisoners of war. Information regarding prisoners camps and P.O.W. number is sent direct to Geneva by the Detaining Power and as soon as this information is received the I.R.C. will forward your letters. (See page 2).

Question: I have been notified that my son is a prisoner of war at Stalag 344 but have not received his P.O.W. number. Can I get a government label to send him a parcel?

Answer: Yes. So long as you know your son's camp, and it is a permanent one, the Dept of National War Services will issue you a label at your request so that you may send a next of kin parcel.

Question: Are individuals allowed to send Christmas cards to P.O.W.

Answer: No.

The sending of Christmas cards to Canadian and other British military prisoners and civilian internees in Europe is prohibited again this year.

The congestion at enemy censorship caused in the past by the large number of Christmas cards resulted in delay in delivery of ordinary letters. The prisoners prefer to receive their ordinary letters promptly rather than having them delayed through the sending of Christmas cards.

This restriction does not apply to Canadians interned in neutral countries.

Question: Who lays down the restrictions and regulations regarding mail to and from prisoners of war?

Answer: Under the Geneva convention, prisoner of war mail is transmitted free and is delayed as

little as possible by censorship. The number of outgoing letters is fixed by each of the belligerent nations, but incoming mail is limited only by the exigencies of transportation and censorship. Postal censorship officials encourage letter writers to be brief and not to write more than one letter a week. In Germany, non-commissioned officers and men are allowed to send out two letters and four postcards a month. Protected personnel — doctors, dentists, medical orderlies, chaplains, stretcher bearers — may send out four letters and eight postcards each month, and officers may send mail in amounts varying according to their rank. Canadian postal censorship regulations prohibit mention of anything likely to give information to the enemy. When letters cannot be sent because they contravene regulations, they are always returned to the sender with an explanation and a new copy of the regulations.

Question: What is the safest method of sending photographs to prisoners of War?

Answer: The quickest way to send photographs is to mail them in an envelope, either air or free mail, *without* enclosing a letter. Letters are censored at a different depot to photographs which causes a delay when they are sent together. Envelopes should be marked "photographs" stating the number enclosed and should have the senders name clearly marked on the back. Each photograph should bear the name and address of the sender and the recipient.

Question: What is the latest information regarding Stalag 357 and Stalag 355?

Answer: Stalag 357 has been transferred to a place called Oerbke, near Fallingbistel, and has not been changed to Stalag 355 which is an entirely separate camp. As far as we know, the men from Stalag Luft VI are still either at Stalag 357 or at Stalag Luft IV.

Question: Can you give me any information regarding the location of Stalag Luft VII?

Answer: Stalag Luft VII is located at Krauzbeig on the River Oder.

BOOKS

Books fill an essential need in the life of a prisoner of war. Firstly they provide a means of mental escape from the dreary surroundings of a prison camp, secondly they supply stimulation and food for the mind which is second only in importance to food for the physical man and thirdly a bookshelf beside a man's bunk provides him with a comfortable feeling of owning some personal belongings and lends an air of homeliness to the gregarious impersonality of communal living quarters. Books are read over and over again, they are handed from one man to another and are always in use, consequently paper-covered books of the Penguin variety are unsuitable in P. O. W. camps. The quality and durability of the binding should be taken into account as well as the contents of the book. And the latter consideration is of course the most important of all and one which should be given much careful thought in choosing for prisoners.

Every book is subjected to double censorship, certain books are prohibited by Canadian authorities for security reasons. This applies almost entirely to technical books and has little bearing on fiction, biographies, travel books etc. The German censorship however, is more complicated and presents many obstacles. Authors of Jewish origin, European emigrants etc., are banned together with authors whom the Germans just don't like, such as Frank Swinnerton, H.G. Wells, Harold Stephen Spender, Elmer Rice, some books of Kipling's, Bernard Shaw's and Hemmingway's and many others.

It is interesting to note that Eric Knight's war novel "This Above All" was received in a German camp, which must have been a case of a careless censor. Since books are in great demand by prisoners it is well to take no chances in having them confiscated and care should be taken to send only books of non-controversial and non-political nature.

Lengthy books are the best value when time has lost its meaning and has become a drug in the market.

Many of the younger men are reading good literature for the first time and discovering the magic that can be wrought with words, the fund of classical literature that will feed this new-found appetite is limitless and the delight and pleasure that can be derived from reading is incalculable; others are renewing their acquaintance with books that they had forgotten, and finding new meaning and entertainment in them. The Modern Library, published by Macmillan provides a splendid choice of classical books adequately bound and reasonably priced.

But literary taste, like any other taste, varies with the individual. Biographies, historical novels and travel books are all popular, also current fiction of the not-too-light variety. Humorous books if they are well written, such as those by Benchley, Leacock, Lardner etc., are well liked. Books about Canada are in great demand.

We will be very pleased to give advice and suggestions regarding suitable books for prisoners to anyone writing for it. Letters on this subject should be addressed to the Editor. All books must be sent through firms holding permit licenses in parcels weighing not more than eleven pounds, postage is free.

GEFANGENEN GAZETTE

The American Red Cross has issued a special supplement to its Prisoners of War Bulletin consisting of extracts, drawings and cartoons taken from the Gefangenen (Prisoner's) Gazette, a magazine produced by hand and typewritten three times weekly by American prisoners of war at Stalag Luft III.

The predominating note in this magazine is that of humour and the Gefangenen Gazette is just one more example of the invincible spirit that is the heritage of Briton and American alike; the desire and ability to make fun of anything and everything in the face of hardship and alien surroundings. One would imagine that this particular trait is one that is not easily understood by citizens of the Third Reich.

BOOKS REVIEWS

contributed by Janet Partridge

The following books have been chosen as being suitable to send to Prisoners of War. They may be sent through firms holding postal permit licenses, a list of which will be found in the Directory of the News Sheet.

"CAPTAIN HORATIO HORNBLOWER", by C. S. Forester. Sun Dial Press, \$2.25.

In the 3 novels contained in this volume C. S. Forester provides 662 pages of entertaining reading about Captain Hornblower's adventures on the high seas, during the past century.

In command of His Majesty's Ship Lydia, Hornblower sails to Central America with orders to assist in a rebellion there and so open a route across the isthmus to British commerce. The fantastic machinations of El supremo, a paranoiac in whose madness one easily recognizes a modern counterpart, are described with verve and imagination in the first book of the series "Beat to Quarters".

"Ship of the Line" and "Flying Colours" take Hornblower back to European waters and both stories are full of action and humour. There is an irresistible fascination about the days of sailing ships and the Napoleonic wars and in these three stories Forester proves once more his ability as a first class writer. Highly recommended for prisoners of war.

"MADAME CURIE", a biography by Eve Curie, translated by Vincent Sheean. First published in 1938. Doubleday, Doran, Inc. — 385 pages. \$1.39.

This distinguished biography is written with skill, understanding and simple beauty by Madame Curie's daughter Eve, herself a famous figure of achievement. As she says, nothing has been added or taken away from this story of the world's greatest woman scientist, and we are fortunate that the writer's sources of information are so intimate and rich in authentic detail.

We read first of the baby, Marya Sklodovska, in her native Warsaw, of her student days there and of her intellectually stimulating family who were always to remain close to her heart, as was her beloved Poland. But the greater part of her life was spent in France where she not only

endured but embraced almost unbelievably cruel hardship, poverty and gruelling work, first at the Sorbonne, but ever as the eternal student. Life outside of her work seems scarcely to have existed for her.

But, "by passion and will she succeeded with love, maternity and science," and her marriage to Pierre Curie, her co-worker and scientist of genius, was, for them, idyllic. The high point of the book is that magic evening when, after eight years of unceasing hardship and labour, they returned to their barren work shack and found the miracle of their radium glowing in the night.

After that came the world wide fame and honours which, to Madame Curie, were only an unwelcome interruption in her continual search for scientific truth, which never ceased until her death in 1934.

Here is a true record of achievement and courage, a biography in all ways worthy of its great subject.

OLIVER WISWELL, by Kenneth Roberts. First published in 1940 by Doubleday Doran and Co., and by McLelland Stewart Ltd. 836 pages — \$1.39.

This novel is for those more interested in history than in fiction, being a product of Roberts' always meticulous research into history of the American Revolutionary War, which was, of course, actually a civil war. The story is told through Oliver Wiswell, an educated, intelligent young Loyalist of Massachusetts.

Chased from his home to Boston, in 1774, by Sam Adams' rebel riffraff who were terrorizing the Loyalists, Wiswell's adventures as information seeker for the British cover the next eight years. There are excellently done pictures of those times through the Battle of Bunker Hill, Long Island and New York, London, Paris, Charleston and Boone's Wilderness Trail to Kentucky, back to New York, and, finally, the St. John River Valley, promised land of the Empire Loyalists.

These backgrounds are all coloured and smoothly held together by Wiswell's romance with Sally Leighton and his contacts with a teeming cross section, characters famous and infamous, real and fictional.

The point of view in this novel is a new departure for Roberts who has heretofore presented the rebels's side of the story. Here we have the seldom told Loyalist cause dispassionately set forth, showing the courage and cowardice, the military blunders, the political inertia and rottenness of both rebels and British, with the Loyalists the unhappy victims. It is good solid writing, and good reading for those who like their history both palatable and authentic.

CORRECTION

On page 12 of the October issue of the News Sheet a typographical error occurred for which we offer our apologies. The pay due a warrant officer, 2nd Lt., and Pilot Officer is equivalent to £4.16.0 and not £41.6.0 as stated.

PROVINCIAL HEADQUARTERS

- BRITISH COLUMBIA Mrs. R. Thistle
1013 Government St.
Victoria, B. C.
- MANITOBA Mr. W. S. King
Paris Building
Winnipeg, Manitoba
- ONTARIO Mrs. Gordon Weir,
Bank of N. Scotia Bldg.,
79 Queen St. East,
Toronto, Ont.
- QUEBEC Mrs. H. E. Plant,
718 Sun Life Building,
Montreal, Que.
- NEW BRUNSWICK Mrs. George Filliter,
68 Portledge Ave.
Moncton, N.B.
- NEWFOUNDLAND Mrs. A. C. Holmes, M.B.E.,
Caribou Hut,
St. John's, Nfld.
- NOVA SCOTIA Mrs. W. A. Black,
30 Ivanhoe Street,
Halifax, N. S.
- SASKATCHEWAN Mr. C. A. Cunning,
303 McCallum Hill Bldg,
Regina, Sask.
- ALBERTA Mrs. H. Thom,
10222, 118th St.,
Edmonton, Alta.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS
150A Sun Life Bldg.,
Montreal.

OTTAWA BRANCH

At the October meeeting of the Ottawa Branch it was agreed to send \$50., to the Assocication Headquarters as a donation to the Christmas Chocolate Fund.

An escaped prisoner from Italy, F/O Moran addressed the meeting and gave an interesting talk on conditions in the camp from which he escaped.

F/L Heatherinton who is attached to the Committee for the Welfare and Protection of Prisoners in Enemy hands also spoke on the work of his department and offered assistance in so far as he was able, to any relative.

VANCOUVER BRANCH

Eighty five members attended the October meeting of the Vancouver Branch.

The meeting approved the action of the executive committee in sending a cheque for \$400. to Montreal Headquarters which represented the Vancouver share of the \$1,000. donated by the three B.C. Branches for the Christmas Chocolate Fund.

The visiting committtee reported having contacted the next of kin of 14 new prisoners.

A committee was formed to visit repatriated prisoners in Shaughnessy Hospital.

It was reported that 23 parcels were packed during the month, including several which were sent to distant points in the Province.

A short address was given by Mr. Waddy in which he sketched briefly the activities of the Branch during the last two years.

MANITOBA BRANCH

The October meeting of the Manitoba Branch was attended by approximately 100 members. The Chairman announced that there were 25 next of kin of new prisoners from this district and extended a welcome to any that might be present.

A notice was read that a gift of £1,500 had been made by prisoners of war at Stalag 344 to the Books Section of the Red Cross.

Several letters were read from various camps in Germany. The Chairman gave a description of how the local branch had started, for the benefit of newcomers.

PROVINCE OF QUEBEC BRANCH

During the month of September, and the first part of October, 380 next of kin parcels were packed at Branch Headquarters; a great many of these parcels were supplemented or completely donated by the Branch.

64 pairs of blankets have been dispatched lately, of these, 28 pairs were donated.

MONCTON, NEW BRUNSWICK

A meeting of the Moncton, New Brunswick Branch was held on October 14th. The buying committee reported the shipping of Sports Parcels to the 18 Prisoners of War from Moncton and District. It was decided to finance medical parcels for these boys.

The President, Mr. MacMurray, reported sending donations to the Seed, Emergency Kits and Chocolate funds at Headquarters.

It was decided that more publicity should be given to the desire of the Branch to help finance personal parcels to P. O. W.'s whose next-of-kin needed this assistance. Plans were made fo. the annual meeting which is to be held next month.

SASKATCHEWAN BRANCH

Fifty-five members of the C.P.O.W.R.A. met in the Central Library, Regina, on Thursday evening, October 26th.

A further donation of \$200.00 was voted for the Dominion Christmas Chocolate Fund and \$100.00 for the Dominion Cigarette Fund for Canadian prisoners of war in Europe.

Mrs. J. Jolley, liaison officer between the Red Cross and the C.P.O.W.R.A. who has recently returned from a trip to Eastern Canada, gave a most interesting talk on the Red Cross activities particularly in regard to the packing of prisoners

of war parcels at London, Ontario, where as many as 5,000 are packed each day.

The Food Supply Committee is kept very busy, a large number of orders being sent out each month. Letters received from time to time indicate that this service is greatly appreciated.

During July and August our Branch sent gift parcels to all Saskatchewan prisoners of war, to the value of \$875.

ONTARIO BRANCH
TORONTO

Two repatriated prisoners spoke at the October meeting of the Toronto Branch. Major West from Oflag VIIIB and Pte Peter McLeod from Stalag IXC. Both looked extremely well and were in excellent spirits. Each spoke of conditions being quite good and nothing to worry about. After having lived in army barracks the change was not very noticeable as far as living quarters were concerned in prison camp. Major West said that the boys are very grateful for the help given them by our organization. He also said that parcels were being accumulated against the time when transportation will become more difficult and that they had a supply that would last 6 to 8 weeks.

The Ontario Branch continues to send circular letters offering assistance to next of kin of Ontario prisoners.

REPATRIATES WELCOMED IN TORONTO

Lieutenant Commander C. Miller Fisher, repatriated from Marlag und Milag Nord, met with the next-of-kin of the prisoners in that camp. This was achieved with the aid of the Prisoners of War Relatives Association. The meeting took place in the Overseas Reception Centre at Union station. Surgeon Lieut. Commander Fisher told them of life in German prison camp and generously answered a host of queries. The Red Cross Next-of-Kin Department and the Prisoner of War Relatives Association were hostesses later at refreshments.

ON BEING A PRISONER

Reprinted from the London Times Literary Supplement with permission of the editor

Lately the postman has brought letters from several young prisoners, all unknown or scarcely known to the grateful recipient. "Converse not much with the young, nor with strangers," said the author of "The Imitation," in the eighth chapter of his first book; and the rules of the Kriegsgefangenpost make it inevitable to obey; even if one had the handwriting of a Charlotte Brontë or of a calligrapher whose pleasure is to write a chapter within the area of a sixpence, it would embarrass the censors if one were to employ it, and it is undesirable to embarrass these powerful and industrious ladies. How tired they must be of finding that all mankind casts them for the duenna's part and of wondering whether even the rows of amorous but inarticulate crosses beneath a signature are a patterned cipher! The most innocent truth comes to them with a sidling and self-conscious air. No one attempts to show to them "un homme dans toute la vérité de la nature." Their existence—however indulgent they may be in their hearts—would be a blight upon Rousseau himself; and how their ears must ache with the draught of keyholes!

Among the prisoners' letters has been one from Germany, one from Italy, and one from an officer not strictly a prisoner at all except in the sense that upon him also leisure is imposed—a hospital case in the Middle East. All of them write about literature. From that, certainly, no general conclusion is to be drawn. Others, no doubt, are writing about cricket to cricketers or about love to ladies. These three, doubtful perhaps, but wrongly doubtful, of their correspondent's interest in cricket and ladies, courteously addressed him on what, since they had read his books, they knew to be his own subject—and happened to be theirs. They knew also that, in another war, he himself had been a prisoner, and had good reason to believe that, when they said they were writing prose and verse, he would not be astonished or think that they were wasting their time. They were, perhaps, wise enough to guess that he might even be a little envious of them. "Choose for thy companions God and His Angels only," said the author of "The Imitation" in the same chapter, "and flee from the notice of men". To be a prisoner is to be beyond the notice of men. Though it close doors, it may open windows.

* * *

Those whose beloved are prisoners often rely for consolation upon the single thought that they

are alive. Their only petitions are that they may not be ill-treated and that some day they may return; but those who are themselves imprisoned know—or learn after the first shock of confinement—that even imprisonment is not a static interlude in their lives but a part of life itself, full of hazards and graces. Their education by experience has not ceased; they are lodged in a new school which may permit to them new recreations. Is it not a vanity in us to suppose that only in the company of our freedoms can they be free? The good in life is deeper than our sorrows and wiser than our complaints. Ask faithful questions always, though as yet the answer be silence.

"...So I try now how I can suffer a prison," wrote Donne in another age and another context, and yet to the point. "And since it is but to build one wall more about our soul, she is still her own Center, how many circumferences soever fortune or our own perversnesse cast about her." This discovery all prisoners make; it is the beginning of their peril and opportunity. They are driven in upon their "Center," as we seldom are who butt our heads continually against the circumferences of existence, but who knows what they will find there—darkness or light? Will their circumferences remain opaque, darkening the "Center" as well as including it, or become translucent so that the "Center" itself is illumined?

Or is thy Mind travail'd with discontent?

Or art thou parted from the world and mee,

In a good scorn of the worlds vanitee?

They are Donne's questions and are applicable to prisoners. Every one has pointed out that life is a kind of imprisonment, but fewer that imprisonment may be a renewal and rediscovery of life.

* * *

At first a prisoner is shocked by confinement. He considers his state, not in its own terms, but in terms of the outside world. Yesterday he was free and fighting; not long ago, it may be, he had leave, and the memory of it is close and warm; now he is cut off, excluded, cast out, made useless. His mind occupies itself with bitter contrasts; and a reasonable man, while at this stage of a prisoner's development, often wastes his hours in elaborate protests against his treatment, in bickering about the little privileges or rank; in kicking against the pricks. Or he may become the prey of rationalized fantasy. Rumours torment him continually, he is twisted by grievances against his gaolers or his comrades, he develops an obsession of calendars or ropes or possessions, he hoards and conceals things—all of them, directly or indirectly, emblems of the outside world. Escape, which will afterwards take its place in the

perspective of reason, may at first be almost a madness—not a release to be hoped for, a duty to be performed when the chance comes, but a gnawing at the brain that destroys peace and paralyses initiative. But in most men, if their guards do not harry or exasperate them, this phase passes, and many do not experience it at all. Imprisonment is hardest upon professional soldiers, whom it deprives of the chance to distinguish themselves, and upon those whose whole interest in life has hitherto been active. They are, so to speak, world-bound, as ghosts who cannot detach themselves from their former existences are said to be "earth-bound." But even they, except in rare instances, adjust themselves in the end. Their guards say then that a man is "settling down." Donne would say that his mind had ceased to be "travail'd by discontent." But it is, or may be, much more than that.

The change, like the great conversions of ordinary, unimprisoned life, often has small beginnings. The prisoner obtains a pillow a little less hard than that to which he has been accustomed, or he shifts his bed into a position from which he is able to watch the light fall in a way that pleases him, or, raising his hands to his face, he breathes in the odour of some herb that he touched an hour earlier while taking his permitted exercise, and for the first time since he was captured is impelled, by the comfort of that pillow, the beauty of that light-fall, the pleasure of that fragrance, to see the life of prison as a thing of itself, with its own internal proportions and contrasts, and not simply as an exclusion from his former life. This is the first mercy upon prisoners and captives, as it is upon all of us—that by some stroke of life itself they may be awakened to their possession of it and be delivered from hardness of heart.

* * *

Next, the prisoner, who had thought that the weeks, the months, the years were being wasted, begins to see time as an endowment. It becomes precious again in its own right: having lain heavy on his hands, it begins to slip through his fingers. He is delivered from the disgraceful sin of being bored, and begins to cultivate his garden. Again the beginnings may be small. The garden he cultivates—if an indulgent gaoler gives him a little patch to call his own—may be real, not metaphorical, and he, like a child, be drawn into it and find there a companionship of intimate recognitions, so that in the morning he is eager for the hour in which he may be at his garden again and angry when he is called away from it. Or a

book may come that casts an enchantment over him, or he may begin to learn an ancient language or a craft, or he may say, as young men have done—and we may smile at but not scorn them—he may say: "I have time enough. I will get my thought straight. I will solve the mystery of the universe." Or he may take up his pen and say to an older man, who might not after all be interested in gardens or ladies or the study of Greek: "I am writing prose and verse... Not with a view to immediate publication..." All these activities—the garden, the Greek grammar, the carpentry, the meditation, the prose, the verse—have this in common: that they are not performed with a view to immediate effect. To the world they are presently "useless," but they have value. For a young man of our period to discover that what he does is valuable but not useful may be, in many instances, to be born again, and to achieve an undreamed-of tranquillity of spirit. "Heroism and devotion," said Anatole France, "are like great works of art—they have no object beyond themselves". A prisoner may learn this in his prison who might learn it nowhere else.

But Anatole France had a queer habit of saying what was true and failing to grasp the truth of his own saying. His sceptical genius was of the kind, not infrequent among graceful and tolerant writers, that can admit either the air of intellect or the light of intuition but not both at the same time. If he opened a window, he closed the curtains; not as some have said since he went out of fashion, because he was shallow and sentimental, but because he was a little timid of catching cold and of being dazzled by the sun. What he would not add, in this instance, is that, though heroism and devotion and great works of art have no object in the sense of looking for effect or reward, though they are arrows without a target in human action or opinion, they are nevertheless not in vain. "Men sacrifice themselves for the sake of sacrifice," he said, and that is true, but he added that the "fatal destiny" of this kind of virtue was "to be always defeated. It gives to its soldiers the incomparable beauty that belongs to the vanquished"—and that is no more than a half-truth. One cannot be defeated if one had no purpose of victory; an arrow that aims at no target cannot be said to have missed. What Anatole France would not admit is that the value of "useless" devotion or "useless" art is the value of quietism and acceptance, and consists in what it is, not in what it does; in what it receives, not in what it gives. And it is very hard, in the midst of an active world, to learn the subjective virtue of receiving, but a prisoner may learn it and some

day carry at least a part of that knowledge back with him into the world.

* * *

The world will have need of it; so will he; for it is a virtue we are starved of in every degree of our civilization—in the love of men and women, in education, religion, art. We know how to demand, acquire, capture, not how to receive. Social conscience has taught many how to perform an active service, even how to inspire others, but not how to receive inspiration. We teach love how to charm, to win, to be generous or bold, and say, as if this were the whole art of loving, that the lovers must be wise in their giving and gentle in their demanding; but the art of submitting themselves to each other and to inpouring of an essence from outside themselves is little studied. Submission and stillness are thought of as if they were slavishness and a waste of time. Milton's sonnet on his blindness is read as if it contained but a fourteenth line and as if that were the stale adage of a copy-book. Another blindness, the all-submissive blindness of ecstasy, is strangely abused in the contemporary mind. That great line of Julian Grenfell's—"And who dies fighting has increase"—which some dared to scorn during the long Armistice, was not, as they tremblingly supposed, a praising of brutality in action, but on the contrary a signal, from one who had foreknowledge, that heroism, like art and devotion, is not purposeful, but, being accomplished, is receptive, and has all things added unto it. In that poem there is not a word of victory, of effect upon the enemy. The ecstasy it proclaims is the same in its absolutism with the ecstasies of love and of poetry itself.

And when the burning moment breaks,

And all things else are out of mind,

And only joy of battle takes

Him by the throat, and make him blind—

then, because all things else are out of mind, he lies open, the windows are open, the curtains drawn back, the room of his spirit is emptied of earthly purpose, and Day clasps him (it is Greenfell's phrase) and poetry comes to him (it is Keats's) "as naturally as the leaves to a tree." This we have come perilously near to unlearning and perilously far from wishing to exemplify. There are not many persons who, with the sonnet in their hands, would choose this for to-morrow's sermon:—

God doth not need

Either man's work or his own gifts.

but to many prisoners it may appear not to have become less true since Milton wrote it.

* * *

There is an intolerable sameness in a prisoner's life until he discovers variety within himself, and an intolerable subordination until he finds refuge in the core of freedom—the "Center" that Donne spoke of. Having been taught, as we all are, that in a stormy world it is his duty to fight unceasingly against the storm and so rise above it, he is at first tormented by enforced inactivity, but after a little while he may discover in himself Jeremy Taylor's skylark which, hoping to get to heaven and climb above the clouds, was beaten back, and "his motion made irregular and inconstant,"

till the little creature was forced to sit down and pant, and stay till the storm was over; and then it made a prosperous flight, and did rise and sing.

—as if its inactivity had been receptive or, in Jeremy Taylor's magnificent phrase, "as if it had learned music and motion from an angel, as he passed sometimes through the air, about his ministries here below." Is it so far a cry from this to the words of the young man who said from his prison a month ago: "I am writing prose and verse," and added with a wry smile: "Not for immediate publication"? Are we, who live in masses and think in masses and of the effect of our work upon masses, to consider that he has been made valueless because he has been deprived of our society? Is it not well, perhaps, that, in literature and in life, there should be some who are given time while they are young in which they may "sit down and pant, and stay until the storm is over"? It is a comment upon the condition to which the activists and collectivists have brought the world that scarcely except in prison is this stay possible to the young. Kabir said that he is the true saint "who requireth thee not to close the doors, to hold the breath, and renounce the world... who teacheth thee to be still amidst all thine activities," and this is true; this is the supreme self-mastery to which the long disciplines of wisdom are directed; but how shall a man learn it when he is young if he is everlastingly beset, or know even that is to be learned? But a prisoner may learn all these things, and in his life or in his literature communicate them, for, though he never address himself to the world, the world is not blind or deaf to a skylark that has "learned music and motion from an angel." May the prisoner learn how to receive, lest the world altogether forget: accept, receive, submit, lie open, be still. "I am an ambassador in bonds that therein I may speak boldly as I ought to speak."

LETTERS RECEIVED

Letters from prisoners of war published in the News Sheet are of great interest to our readers. We appeal to prisoners relatives to share news of general interest that they receive from prison camps, by allowing us to print their letters or excerpts from letters. Photographs are also very much appreciated. The editor will handle carefully all material received and return letters and photographs when requested.

FAR EAST

CAMP A. HONG KONG

No date.

Received July 1944.

Hoping that this finds you in the best of health. I am feeling fine. Give my love to all the family.

CAMP S. HONG KONG

March 6th, 1943

Received July 31st, 1944.

Communications must be difficult, but I sincerely hope that you will receive this letter. I can't express how pleased I was to receive your letter of May 20th last, and to know that you were well. I, also, had a letter from Lee; my brother (he is well) had a letter from each of our sisters. I was pleased to know that father was well; give him and my family my best regards. You and my sisters obviously did not know about F. when you wrote; I miss him very much, and I am sure he is deeply missed by all. I have been well: have read many good books; have plenty of opportunity for exercise and sports. We spend a good amount of time arguing about petty things. I, also, spend much time thinking about you and wishing I could be with you. The Red Cross food and supplies have been sincerely appreciated. We all hope there will be more when these are finished. Give my very best regards to your father and mother, and remember when and if you write again to tell me more about yourself. Here is hoping we can look forward to a happy reunion in the very near future.

GERMANY

Ilag Biberach Riss Civilian Internment Camp

June 6th, 1944

Received October 23rd, 1944.

Many thanks yours of 23/3, 9/5, 27/2 also for a most helpful book. The one you so kindly sent me has not come yet, but little mail of late. I only hope we will have an opportunity to do something for you someday to show our deep appreciation of all you have done for us. About the medical parcels, we would very much like the following if you can send them. Tooth brushes

and paste or powder, Soda Mints, Vaseline, Mentholatum Throat Lozenges, Vitasol Capsules (They are marvellous) Talcum Powder, Germolene, Freezone or some Corn Cure. My work is interesting as long as I have supplies to issue but people have so much time on their hands, that they get through a tremendous lot of work. I have just prepared and issued a lot of patchwork and am giving prizes for bags, cushions, and cosies. We had a fine show in April and sent a few good pieces to England for Prisoner of War Exhibition. Had a cold wet Spring and no real summer yet.

OFLAG VII B

No date.

I have just been on a visit to the Abess. We were a party of sixteen escorted by a German Officer. We went straight to the Convent by a back lane and on arriving we were met by Von Fetter, A German Civilian, who is from the Foreign Office and works in the camp as "Good Relations Officer". He told us the Abbess was ready for us and led the way up a winding staircase to the enormous reception room. This room was laid out with all the vestments altar clothes, frontals, etc., and all most beautifully arranged. Also illuminated books and sacred oil from some saints' bones. About a quarter of the room at one end was cut off by a grille reaching to the ceiling behind which stood the Lady Abbess. We were all presented by name by Von Fetter and shook hands through the grille. Later she came out into the room with us attended by an old Nun. They both spoke excellent English. The Lady Abbess was most charming and had obviously taken an enormous amount of trouble arranging the room. She said that we gentlemen would not understand the work in the embroideries! The British Officer, who had arranged the party, had asked me to bring my work which I had done so I showed them to her and she could hardly believe I had done them in the camp. After that we were taken to see three other churches. Another party went the next day and on returning one of them told me that the Abbess was still talking in amazement of the work I had done and how beautiful it was! I am rather keen on the new piece which has a very good design. A Chinese woman with an enormous bird (phoenix) behind her. Several people have wanted me to sell a piece of my work and I have been offered twenty pounds, but I want to bring them all for you to see.

I have been for another walk — about one hundred of us and we were taken by two German N.C.O's, very different from the old days 4½ years ago when we had sentries with fixed

bayonets and police dogs. We walked for an hour along a most attractive path and then were told that we could go off for an hour and a half. In this way we are enabled to get right away, completely by ourselves for a bit, which is a very pleasant and welcome change. Most of us take our knapsacks and fill them with wood to help the evening meal. Our P.M.C. gave us a good "Bash" on my birthday. We had an iced cake with John 33 !!! in icing and a good supper. I am playing tennis. We get a game about once in 10 days, for an hour, very enjoyable.

OFLAG 79

August 3rd, 1944 Received Sept. 20th, 1944.

As you probably know, our quarters in our present camp have been badly overcrowded, but tomorrow, we are being allowed a larger area and consequently we won't be treading on each other's toes so much. There's one thing you may be certain of: I shall never want to see a large crowd again so long as I live! Of late I've had lots of mail from the family (U.S.A.) but all Canadian mail is very slow.

STALAG II D

May 7th, 1944

Letters have been very scarce lately, but I'm hoping for a big bunch this week. All is well with me and I hope you are all O.K. at home. Had 500 cigs lately. These were very useful. You say you are worried at how thin I look, well there

isn't anything to worry about as I was weighed yesterday and I haven't really lost any weight. We are now on a farm and it is a reasonably good job. Weather has been fine and warm.

June 7th, 1944.

This past week has been one of my best for mail and news. Your letters of 6th and 21st Feb., and 1st and 10th March all arrived yesterday. Was pleased to hear you had had some mail from me. You tried to tell me of someone in the 10th March letter, but it was all blacked out by censors. All going very well at this date. We are all happy again! Cigarettes are coming through O.K. now, and all in all things are going very well with us. I also have G's letter of 27 Feb., with picture enclosed. I have quite a few pictures in my album now, and it is pleasant to look through it on Sundays. It is now positive that I will see you all in person in the very near future. I may appear to be always looking for parcels, but it is now almost time for No. 7, and some of the boys have theirs already.

July 20th, 1944.

I can find plenty to do like reading books. I had six letters from you to-day. I'm getting my Red Cross parcels O.K. I can get a good job of repairs done on my boots. Nothing matters to me now except that I get home where a son should be. I will be able to tell you all about the country I have seen. I am on one of the garden lots.



Group taken at Stalag 344. L.T. Goat is 5th from left, centre row. Kindly lent by Mrs. Fred Goat.

STALAG IV B

July 17th, 1944. Received Sept. 21st, 1944.

Once more we have writing material. Until this week there has been quite a lull in the incoming mail, nothing at all for about two months. I have made up for it though, as I received six days ago, two parcels of cigarettes from you, one from W. and the books from D. Also 300 cigs from S. Since we get so few chances to write perhaps you would give them all my very best thanks. This morning two more parcels 1600 cigarettes in all, many thanks to you all. This evening six letters from you, Mar. 25, Apr. 1, 8, 15, 29 and May 6. This brings the total to 16 parcels and 14 letters. The snaps were very nice. Sorry you are not getting my mail as often as you might, we can write only when given the forms, and I presume a good many of them go astray. Particularly now with the western conflagration. We are all fine here, perhaps a bit fed up, but the books and cigs you have sent helped more than you can know. Hope this finds you all well and not fretting about me.

STALAG VII A

July 16th, 1944 Received Aug. 16th, 1944.

I am in very good health, getting a good tan, have a lot of Canadian buddies here and we all get together and talk about our good times in different parts of Canada. Play a lot of checkers. Receiving Red Cross parcels. Have plenty to do to occupy all my time. Still always thinking of home.

STALAG VIII B

September 3rd, 1944.

I guess you know where I am by now. Bet you were surprised eh? It was all so fast I didn't quite know what happened until some days after. I hope you did not feel too badly when you got the wire saying I was missing in Action. I am hoping to see J. if he is a prisoner. There is a good chance because I went through hell and I'm here today. I don't want you to worry about me. I'm in the best of health and am getting plenty to eat. We were given new clothes the other day. The Red Cross is doing a swell job; we lads here in these camps can't begin to thank them. I for one will never pass a Red Cross box on the street when I get home. Will you write... Tell her I'm o.k. and will write her a card as soon as I can get another. We only get 4 cards and 2 letters a month. Again I say don't worry and chins up; this will be all over soon. We'll have a swell time together soon.

STALAG IX C

Postcard

I wish to thank you so very much for the splendid cigarette parcels you are sending me. They are deeply appreciated. Your Association brings many a joy to a man's heart out here. Us lads are all well out here and our chins well up. Do hope this card finds you all well. Once again, thank you.

May 4th, 1944.

I will not be going back to a working camp as my recognition of a Corporal has reached me from England, and has been approved by the Germans. I haven't as yet received the parcel you sent but it may arrive any day so am hoping for the best. Sometimes it takes a very long time for our parcels to get through.



Photograph taken at Stalag 344. L/Cpl. George McGaw, extreme right, back row. Kindly lent by Mrs. Walter McGaw.

June 1944.

I am receiving parcels regularly from Canada, in fact this year I have received more parcels than letters. All here are very grateful to all on the other side.

August 20th, 1944.

At the present time I am trying to write this and listen to a musical concert at the same time. The concerts has been exceptional and you would be surprised at what good concerts have been

produced under all types of difficulties, with the aid of the Y.M.C.A. and the Red Cross in sending us musical instruments, make-up, music and such like, with the talent from the camps. We have managed under most circumstances to have at least two a month, and they sure make a change in the routine.

STALAG XVII B

July 11th, 1944

I hope you received the letters I wrote you during the week. I received two from you the same day — 4/7/44. I cannot thank you enough for the parcels you are sending me, as I have only received one clothing parcel in two years, and I do need clothing. I have no parents and my brothers, sisters and regiment have sent me personal parcels. I was in Italy 18 months, and never received one parcel. I hope to see Canada after the war, and I knew a lot of Canadian soldiers in England, and they asked me to go to see them after. I do hope to receive some mail. I receive a Canadian Red Cross parcel every week, and I think it is the best. It is a marvellous organization. I must close now hoping the weather stays as it is now.

STALAG XVIII

July 4th, 1944

Received Aug. 5th, 1944.

Thank you very much for the two letters I have received. It was a surprise. I do not know

how to thank you for the clothing parcel you have sent me. I have no parents of my own, but I have parcels sent from my sisters and the Regiment. To speak the truth, I have been very unfortunate as I received one parcel in two years. I think the duplicate of your husband's parcel will be just right as I am six feet tall. I shall write home and send your address. I know they will be very pleased. I will write again in three days time. I am working in Germany. The weather is very nice where we are, but not like being at home.

STALAG 344

No date.

This letter will have to be short snappy sentences as there is quite a lot to say, especially about Whitsun Weekend. Weather good, getting a fine tan. Whitsun week-end went off well — track and field events, parade of fancy floats and costumes all home made here in the camp by P.O. W.'s; some floats were — Anthony & Cleopatra; Zulus (covered with root & grease) a model Lancaster (1/10th size of real one with moveable parts); Farming Advances; A full size cow (giving milk made from Klim); a camel; Flower Seller; Volga Boatmen; and many others. It was a wonderful parade lead by Brass Band and Bag Pipes following, it sounded real good. On rugby pitch there were numerous stalls of various games; darts, battles, etc. It was the best day the camp



Group taken at Oflag VIIIB, showing the following Canadians: Standing from left to right: 1st—Sterling Ryerson (Toronto); 3rd—Bill Lang (Winnipeg); 4th—Bruce McCorkell (Toronto); Seated from left to right: 2nd—Jim Green (Toronto); 3rd—Lt. Col. LaBatt (Hamilton); 4th—Royston A. F. Currie. Kindly lent by Mrs. Currie of Saskatoon.

has ever seen. Received letters and cigarettes. Please send 1,000 per week. Also received book parcel.

April 9th, 1944 Received Sept. 28th, 1944.

I'm O.K. Finally received mail from you dated Dec. 29 and Nov. 1 in that order. The Nov. 1st letter from Montreal. It is unfortunate that the majority of Americans do not appreciate how lucky they are, to be away from this Continental Cesspool of wornout traditions and culture, hatreds, poverty. Enjoy life and count your lucky stars. (You have many).

Card

April 16th, 1944 Received Sept. 19th, 1944.

Am quite O.K. Working very hard in entertainments. Open tomorrow nite in Musical "Rise Above It". Mail and parcels very, very bad lately. Can only wait patiently. However, don't worry. I'm O.K. and have sufficient. Have marvelous friends here.

May 1st, 1944 Received Sept. 29th, 1944.

I am O.K. Since last letter to you have received picture with letter enclosed. It's a beautiful picture and made me happy to receive it. A friend of mine here made a very fine frame and glass for it. Also received clothing parcel for which I thank you (there was no food in it — I don't need any but just wonder if there was supposed to be). This week received 2200 fags from England, none from U.S.A. or Canada. Probably be soon. Keep sending fags from Canada. Last letter from you dated Dec. 29/43. Happy that you are receiving my letters. Mail in this direction is not too good. Just closed in Musical Revue Sat. nite. Expect to go on tour again Friday. Otherwise, nothing new or sensational. More repats going home soon. They will write you. Take care.

May 1st, 1944.

This week has brought changes. I am now in charge of an 80-bed hospital. Only doctor — but there is a civilian hospital near, where we can use the X-ray and for major operations so that helps.

May 7th, 1944 Received October 1944

Summer has been slow in coming this year. Nevertheless softball and basketball are in full swing. This year I feel much more inclined to play and am getting more exercise than I have had in years. The sweatshirt and ball from P.O. W. Rel. Assoc. arrived yesterday. The other Guelph boys and I think it is an ideal sports parcel. Sweatshirts are very serviceable and the balls

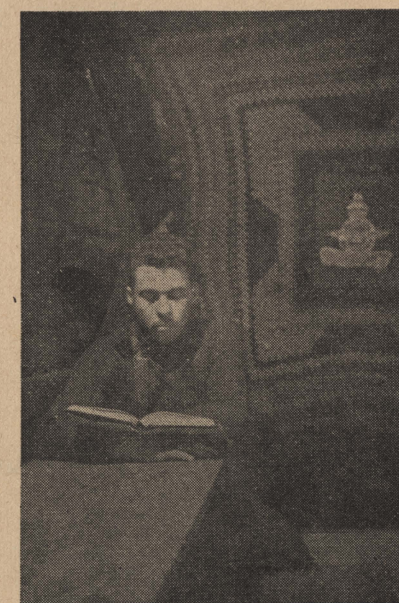
a welcome addition to our meagre equipment. I rec. the first parcel of Buckinghams from the store yesterday. It came at a very opportune time, and put me back in the money again!

May 15th, 1944 Received Sept. 20th, 1944.

Just received February clothing parcel in good condition. Selection was excellent. Would like more dried beans and vegetables than banana flakes. Am sending letter with photo also this week. Weather has been fine lately and softball is in full swing. Hope you are as well as I am and enjoying good weather.

May 28th, 1944.

There is no mail this week. I have been quite busy but today has been very quiet so I have been sitting in the sun doing a bit of reading. The past weeks have gone very quickly, probably because of the work here. Major — a New Zealand M. O. whom I relieved here, was repatriated; may write you altho', I imagine, he'll be busy after three years of this life. We have only twenty Englishmen here — the bulk of the patients being our Eastern allies. We are well and still looking ahead. Weather has improved and we have some grass and trees around our place which makes it quite a pleasant change. Am keeping fine but shall be ready to start home when the time comes.



W/02 K. N. LAING taken at Stalag Luft III showing an afghan, in the background, which he made. Kindly lent by Mrs. Laing.

Card

May 29th, 1944 September 19th, 1944.

I'm O.K. Your last letter of Feb. 3rd. Big Parade and Carnival in camp today in celebration of Whit Monday. It was quite a gala colorful day. American and Canadian fags are not coming thru very well for me lately. Send Canadian fags primarily. Take care and don't worry.

June 1st, 1944 Received Sept. 19th, 1944.

I'm O.K. Everything O.K. 1140 fags received this week, 240 from club in London, 300 from a perfect stranger, and 600 Luckies from you. Mail not very good. Hope to get some soon.

June 3rd, 1944 Received Sept. 21st, 1944.

Please convey to the members of your branch P.O.W. Relatives Association my sincere thanks for their kindness in sending me a sweat shirt and a softball which I received this week. I also received a parcel containing stationery, playing cards, pencils, books, etc. through the T. Eaton Company, from P.O.W. Relatives Association, but I do not know which branch. If it was from your branch, again many thanks.

June 11th, 1944.

My March clothing parcel arrived this week and everything is fine. The long awaited "do" has begun but all we can do is wait. There is little to say but we're all hoping for things to go well. Love to all.

Card

June 12th, 1944 Received Sept. 15th, 1944.

Everything O.K. A.H.'s second letter of Jan. 4th received. Also two snapshots. Since A.H.'s birthday, the sun has penetrated the clouds. Write often.

June 18th, 1944.

Have received letters from you now up to May 22nd. There are still a lot of back letters to come through. The weather is lovely now and we are getting in lots of sport: I was put out of action for a while with a twisted knee but it's all right now. I could have my job back in the clothing store if I wanted but I think I'll just laze around for a bit. I just started a book "My Friend Flicka". You said you had seen the film. I have read a lot of good books lately; I just finished a book called "Next to Valour", a story of taking Canada from the French. Have read quite a few about that period. Cigarettes are coming fairly well, keep up the good work.

June 25th, 1944.

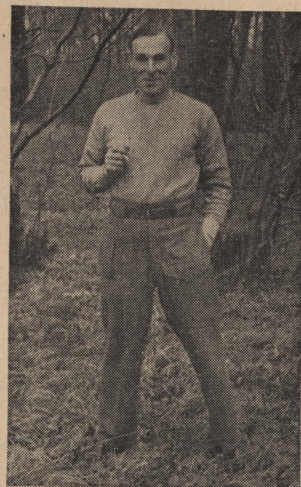
I received a sports parcel this week. Shoes, shorts, sweater. There was no sender's name on it when I finally got it. The days go by — a bit of work — some exercise and a vague idea of things going on outside our little world. It is not very inspiring weather this summer. Feeling fine. Love to all the family.

July 23rd, 1944.

Good news this week, rec'd many letters from home and a couple of fag parcels from you. As yet I haven't got the sports parcel but I'm expecting it any week now. Well the International Basketball Tournament is over and Canada won, the final game between us and U.S.A. was the best, real fast and close all the way through, the final score was 39-34. They had tiers of seats around the court (outside) and all told I'd say there were about a thousand chaps there, Boy, was I ever hot at the end of the game. Our uniforms were pretty good, underwear jerseys, dyed blue with a white maple leaf on the front and number on the back, white shorts and blue socks. Another chap and myself did the dyeing and we were blue all over for days afterwards. Unlucky for us the dye ran and we were all blue after the games. There is another sports day coming off soon and I'm in the Tug-O-War and a couple of field events. Glad to hear you're getting some of my mail.

August 7th, 1944 Received October 1944.

Rec. yours of July 10th today. Best service yet. Am well and enjoying the fine weather. Big sports day here today — August Bank Holiday. If



Kenneth Hardy taken at Stalag II D. Sent in by Mrs. Harry Hardy.

mail becomes irregular do not worry. Read "Mentality of P.O.W.'s" in Br. Med. Journal of Jan. 1944... very amusing.

August 15th, 1944 Received October 1944.

Today I received sports parcel containing running shoes, bat and sport shirt. I wish to thank your organization for this timely gift. All of us here appreciate the difficulties you are faced with, and are pleasantly surprised with the results your efforts produce. We hope to be able to thank you personally in the near future.

August 20th, 1944 Received October 1944.

Yesterday I rec. a July letter, from you. It was a very pleasant surprise to receive such late mail. E. will be pleased to know that the sports parcels

from P.O.W.R.A. arrived in good condition last week. They made a substantial increase to our softball league equipment. Today has been one of the hottest yet. Our basketball team scored our eighth victory. We have not been beaten yet. The rest of the day I spent sunbathing and reading. Books arrived lately. "Two Generations and Frenchman's Creek". I enjoyed them very much. Also received the extra running shoes from Morgan's. The shoes wear out in three months because of the gritty sand on the playing fields. Don't worry about the garden, lawn etc. By next summer maybe I will be home and can fix the place up to good condition once more. I am well, and brown as an Indian. Don't be alarmed at lack of mail.



Photograph taken at Stalag Luft III on "Anzac Day" with the Canadian Padre leading the March Past. Kindly lent by Mrs. K. N. Laing of Weyburn, Sask.

STALAG 357

May 20th, 1944.

I received the photos you sent of M. and myself. The boys here say I don't look a day older than when the snaps were taken, shortly after I joined up, but I know I am fatter, I weigh 182 now and when I joined up I weighed 145 pounds. Enclosed is a snap of myself taken about the first of May, so you can judge for yourself. I have about 20 copies, and will send one in every letter to you. Well I hope to see you soon, things seem to be traveling faster. Say hello to all. To date I have received 6 parcels from you.

June 8th, 1944.

I received a few letters this week and cigarettes, thanks a lot for them, I hope to be able to repay you all later on. Well the bees are thick around the clover and buzzing around the apple blossoms, maybe we will get a taste of good clover honey this fall, gee that will be a great change. I am sending another snap with a dog and myself. I was in swimming today, the water was swell, but the sun is very hot. I hope to see you in the near future, funny I have been saying that for nearly two years you'll be getting sick of it.

STALAG 383

Card

July 27th, 1944 Received in Sept. 1944.

Just a hurried card to tell you that in the event of halt in the mail not to worry, because the Air Force are moving in the morning. Watch for new address. Keep writing to the same one yet. Have a few cigs and food so am O.K.

STALAG LUFT I

No date

Received October 2nd, 1944.

Another two weeks, they have been pretty good. We have had two movies "Presenting Lily Morse" and of course we all enjoyed it very much. We also had a couple of concerts. To commemorate the 1st of July we had a mess dinner in our room — with the Wing Commander as our guest of honour, we had a six course dinner with "horse devers" and all the trimmings—we even made some wine for it. It was all very official and so forth, it really was a lot of fun. At present we are spending most of our time sun bathing and I'm getting a wizard tan. My studies are still going pretty well. We have a few more technical books in now — some chemistry and some mining both of which I wanted. Once a week now we go down to the beach for a swim, it is really good too. I hope you are all well and making out alright.

June 21st, 1944 Received Oct. 10th, 1944.

Another glorious Sunday A.M. and a very beautiful church service in the theatre. Four years ago six people attended the service in a small room in the other compound — this A.M. six hundred eager followers of the Protestant Faith crowded the attractive little theatre to hear an excellent sermon by our new Presbyterian Padre. A most illustrative lesson on what basis we should use for our conception of the magnitude and significance of the love of God. Most fortunate for us we still have the privilege of freedom of thought and plenty of food for thought on such subjects when we stop to consider the miracles that brought us here. Met an American lad whom I knew up North two years ago. Anniversaries of one description or another are the one real occasion for celebrations, usually by pooling the Red Cross biscuits and baking a cake together with prune juice brew. We paraded on the sports field on the occasion of the King's birthday — complete with band and I must say it was much more impressive than I expected, not even the errors that we usually get on the station. The Y.M.C.A. Supervisor was here this week-end — a special program was arranged including concert, baseball game, play "Orders are Orders" and a special church service. Have read more books in the past two months than in the past ten years. Now reading "Arctic Pilot" and mention is made of some of the old Commercial pilots whom you remember I was on a course with in Trenton 1940 — amazing. Spoke to a lad to-day who had a letter from home dated May 17th., so there is plenty to encourage me. I trust the same applies to you and that everybody is enjoying the best of health and happiness.

STALAG LUFT-III

April 7th, 1944

To-day is Good Friday and we are taking things easy. J. and I are permanent cooks until we get fed up. Am playing a lot of baseball which helps to pass the time. We have organized a league. I guess there will be 400 playing this summer in different categories. Yesterday was a dark day for this camp, and everyone has been feeling very low about it. Could you send an officer's hat badge to England to J. so I can pick it up when I get back. Looking forward to my first mail.

May 1944

My head is oiled with local margarine. When melted it is almost colorless, tasteless and odorless. It makes a pretty good hair tonic. When hot weather comes I'll have to stop using it for the

flies like it also. In the meantime it helps me to keep well groomed!

May 31st, 1944 Received August 12th, 1944.

At present I am getting a great deal of pleasure tending to our garden plot. I sort of appointed myself chief gardener as I know more about it than anyone else in our room and also had experience trying to grow things in this soil last year. The Germans have supplied us with one and one half tomato plants per man and have promised more. That meant 2,250 plants for this compound alone and there are six compounds in the camp. The corn seed arrived. We got seven seeds and now have seven plants about seven inches high. Had the first fruits from our labor last night: 12 radish — two each. These and the tomatoes were the only things we had any success with last year. We also have carrots, lettuce, beets, onions and some flowers. It has been very hot this last week. I like it this way in spite of the dust. We hope to get the fire pool cleaned out soon and will then be able to get cooled off in there.

June 3rd, 1944 Received Sept. 16th, 1944

It is somewhat satisfying to see these months come and go. I pray you are keeping well. I am fine and quite fit. I am looking for some mail

this month. The weather is warm as I am outside playing softball, running and doing some bar work. We have had some excellent theatre shows, Music Hall, a variety show done by the P.O.W.'s was our last. On the dull days I study and am sending for a second year University course. Earlier this evening I was explaining our educational system to an English chap. Let me know the No. of letters you receive. These are so short and I'm so restricted. Don't worry, I'm not miserable or ill.

June 15th, 1944.

How are we all doing? This is quite an exciting week for us. With the invasion on and our track meet coming off this Saturday we have lots to talk about. During the week we are having the elimination heats. With — officers to pick from there are lots of good track and field men among us. The Canadians have a good team and we are looking for them to win the meet. The track conditions aren't too good and the boys have no spikes, consequently the times aren't too good but the competition is very keen. My garden is coming along fine. We have had two lots of radishes from it, they were a real treat. The tomatoes are doing quite well also; each room has fourteen plants so we give them lots of nursing. Last Sunday we had a special ball game, the East vs West.



Photograph taken at Oflag VII B. Sitting — left to right: Capt. R. Gravel, Capt. Camaraine, Lt. L. Clermont, Major S. Marchand, Padre Boulanger, o.m.i., Lt. Y. Tetrault. Standing — left to right: Lt. A. Bissonnette, Lt. M. Mather, Lt. M. Lafortune, Lt. M. Ranger, Lt. D. Doheny, Lt. P. E. Roy, Lt. R. DeMontigny, Lt. C. W. Bath, Capt. J. Duclos. Kindly lent by Mrs. C. W. Bath of Montreal.

Both teams had a top-notch line-up, but the Eastern Canucks came through with a victory on the eleventh inning. A home run finished the game. I was base umpire (Also won a chocolate bar). Thank my friends for the books they sent me. They were both very good books and I greatly enjoyed them. I also note the better books you are sending me. Very good. When you get a good book there are always so many of the other chaps who are anxious to read them. This brings pleasure to many. Keep your fingers crossed. Hope we're home this year.

July 12th, 1944 Received August 30th, 1944.

One of the best things for the morale is for new prisoners of war to come into camp. Of course it is bad for them to be shot down, but it does us good to talk to men who have recently come from the good old U.S. I'm always hoping there'll be some one I know, but in all of my army career I have never had any one except E.B. However, I wouldn't take anything for the new friends I've made, from all over the world. I've met many men and had such a wide variety of experiences that I will probably be the biggest bullshooter in Kirkwood when I get home. Maybe I'll be like the old Confederate veterans who used to sit down at the corner when I was a boy.

June 28th, 1944.

Well this is my twenty third birthday, these three years have certainly swept by, it doesn't seem any time since I left home. I received 600 cigarettes last week and a games parcel. I certainly appreciate it. To date I have received about forty letters and thirteen parcels, which is not bad at all. We are having wonderful weather here now, in fact it is a little too hot.

July 12th, 1944.

My mail has been coming through very well, and to date have received fifteen parcels, and collecting two to-morrow, every parcel you have sent I have received, I played a game of football to-day, the English are very keen on football, consequently we have some very good games here. There are several professional players here, some of the games are as good as the games in England. The Canadians spend some of their time playing softball and basketball. On the first of July the East played the West in softball and basketball, and the West was victorious in both cases. We had a very nice procession of the Blessed Sacrament on Sunday following the Feast of Corpus Christi, it was even better than the Eucharistic Congress we had in Courteney.



Group taken at Stalag Luft III showing F/Lt. Don Edy, second from left; F/O Bill Stephenson, third from left. The "Chesterfield" on which they are seated was made by themselves and the coffee pot was also made by them from milk tins. Kindly lent by Mrs. Marie Stephenson of Belleville, Ont.

July 19th, 1944.

Hello once again, everything is just fine here. I received two more parcels to-day 300 cigarettes and a box of Vitamins pills, which had no senders name on. I also received three letters yesterday. We are having lovely weather now, much the same as in England. We have plenty of amusement here outdoor sports and indoor entertainment such as plays and some good shows, the plays are much better than any I have seen at home.

No date

This is my first letter this month because I have been feeling so optimistic lately that I think I might beat any letters I write now, home. We have also had good weather and so everything is as good as it can be here. I've received several letters. You sound so very busy you put me to shame — my controlling interest at the moment being an attempt to learn how to play cricket which is a much better game than its critics would have one believe. Please forgive me for not writing more often this month. I'll try to do much better next month, though pretty soon I hope to deliver my letter in person. The last batch to pass the repat. board left a week ago.

STALAG LUFT IV

Our whole barrack-block was evacuated on Tuesday and its various occupants are scattered throughout the camp. Every room has been painted. There is some satisfaction in having the pleasure of living in a freshly painted and clean looking room. I am now living in a room in an adjoining block and sleeping on their settee, an ingenious piece of furniture designed and built by themselves in true Kriegie fashion. O. who moved in with me is sleeping on the table. I was very cheered to get 7 letters from you and 1 from England all at once and learn that you are well.

July 31st, 1944.

M- and I have changed camp, we are now at Luft IV. Parcels should be sent here but mail still goes through Luft III. Through very unusual and unexpected circumstances we have lost all our kit, so I'm back to the VII A days so please send some warm clothing & toilet articles. M. is in the same predicament. We're well!

STALAG LUFT VI

June 19th, 1944 Received Sept. 25th, 1944.

Although I haven't had any mail from you since the end of May, I shouldn't complain as I had a lot of mail during May. It is still arriving but I have just been unlucky. I did get another box of records also some books from home, 1 cigarette parcel and thirty Penguins. It is hard to tell who they are from as there are never any cards with them. It was a marvelous relief to hear that the Invasion finally started. We are all extremely bucked by the news, for of course this is what we have been waiting for all this time. Not only that, but things seem to have gone extremely well for us since the 6th., and I don't think I am over optimistic by hoping to be with you for Christmas. I am afraid my January clothing parcel must be lost the same as last year but the April one may be here soon. Still, the need for clothing isn't very great at the moment and the food situation is still O.K. Our theatre here burned down a few days ago, so we won't see a show for a while. I still have softball, basketball etc., to keep me busy and in fairly good shape. Although it is sometimes hard to realize what it will be like to be back in civilization again, I think I will soon settle down.

MARLAG UND MILAG NORD

July 7th, 1944.

It is surprising how fast time flies I seem to be busy all the time. Have not yet started Spanish but am getting on with my Pitman's shorthand. I may not be here long enough to become very good at it but at least will have some idea of it. We are short of Red Cross clothing now but the lads have been very generous and have given us a lot of clothes and cigs. Of course I am eagerly awaiting parcels from you, send a parcel of cigs every two weeks for two months or three so that I can build up a stock in case of non arrivals later and also I will need some extra to help out new arrivals as was done for me. When you send a book parcel would like a good modern history of Europe covering the last hundred and fifty years. Am now reading one French book a week for practice and give a hand with the French classes

for dictation, conversation etc. Have been getting lots of sun this past week and weigh 148 pounds; will have to be careful or I will be too fat; lots of starch is apt to do that. Now that summer is on us, the camp gardens cultivated of course by us, are starting to give us a few greens which are a treat. I will need a few woollens for the cold weather : two sweaters and a few heavy stockings but don't send me too much clothing. Will you please get me some white shirts, collars and underwear as before and hold on to them, I may get you to send them to England for me to pick up, but that can wait a bit.

August 24th, 1944 Received October 1944.
Yesterday I received the parcel containing the cards and books. Thank you very much for sending them. They certainly help pass the time away here. I am well, and I hope you are the same.

July 31st, 1944
Just a line to let you know I am fine and well. Am having quite a good time these days. Was to a play in the theatre last nite, put on and acted by some of our gang in the camp. It was very good considering the equipment they had. There is a sports' event tomorrow. Hope you are all well at home and hope to see you soon.

July 7th, 1944.
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August 21st, 1944.
It is fitting at this time to let all of you good people know just how much we Canadians in Milag Nord appreciate, not only your kind gifts of cigarettes and other comforts which have reached us from time to time, but also the spirit that prompted your spontaneous assistance to us, so far from home and all it means. Most of us have completed almost four years as prisoners of war, and the happiness we anticipate in the not so distant future is such as persons who have not suffered Captivity will scarcely be able to conceive. Such good "Angels of Mercy" who go to make up those splendid organizations, the I.O. D.E., Navy League, Overseas League and above all, our magnificent Canadian Red Cross Society, are constantly in our thoughts. Without the help each of you have unstintingly rendered us our position would not have been an easy one. God be with you always.

August 21st, 1944.
Just a few lines to let you know I am still in the land of living and I hope you are the same. I haven't heard from you for a long time, I received some tobacco alright last week. Well the way things are going I have an idea it won't be long before I see you again. I hope so. I can't tell you much but I am doing alright and I am in good health which is the main thing. I hope you are all doing well in Can. 3½ years is a long time to be behind barbed wire. Now I don't think I will get an answer to this one, I think it will be all over soon. I suppose you are all pretty busy now, I will sure be glad to get back to work soon. I hope you can find me a good job when I get back. My mail is very bad this year I have only had four letters up to now. Give my regards to all the boys, tell them I hope to see them soon.

DIRECTORY

Subscribers are urged wherever possible to buy from those companies listed here; they are helping to defray the cost of this bulletin and to send educational supplies to P.O.W. camps.

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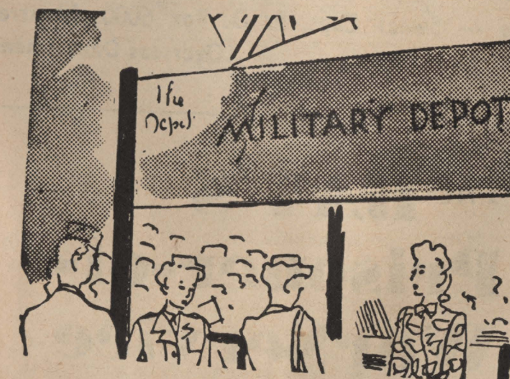
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