

THE CANADIAN PRISONERS OF WAR RELATIVES ASSOCIATION

NEWS

SHEET



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News Sheets No. 41

150A Sun Life Building, Montreal, P. Q.

April 1945

THE DARKNESS BEFORE THE DAWN

Before victory is achieved, before our prisoners are liberated, a dark period must be faced: a period of uncertainty and lack of news for us at home, of food and clothing shortages and crowded living quarters for our prisoners.

As the Allied Armies close in on Germany from East and West and as the bombardment from the air increases in intensity and destructive power, the more difficult it will be to look after the welfare of prisoners of war.

Our prisoners know that disorganization and chaos within Germany is bound to presage the end of the war and that this will be a time of additional hardships for them, but physical discomfort will be greatly alleviated by the morale-building knowledge that this is the end for which they have long waited. They also know, from their experience in captivity, that their government, National Red Cross Societies and the International Red Cross together with the Protecting Power are making every effort to keep them provided with food, clothing and medical supplies. Our Association will also continue to work ceaselessly for our prisoners' comfort through every channel open to us.

Every possible means of getting supplies to prisoners is being explored and, from official sources, the heartening news has come that supplies sent from Sweden to Lubeck and driven in trucks by Swedish drivers, have been received at some of the camps. At the same time from Switzerland, trucks are entering the south of Germany with food and clothing for prisoner Camps in that area.

In Eastern Germany the Russian army has already overrun several prison camps and the liberated prisoners have now been repatriated from Odessa.

At this time when the war-scene is changing with kaleidoscopic rapidity and with the movement of prisoners from camp to camp and sometimes across wide areas of country it is possible that reports published in the News Sheet may be outdated between the time of going to press and the date of publication. While attempting to give our readers the most recent and reliable news regarding the prisoners of war situation in Europe, we ask them to remember that movements and locations of prisoners are always liable to change.

It is natural that relatives at home are feeling anxious and worried about the conditions under which their prisoners are living but there is no cause for panic or pessimism. In fact, we should feel optimistic and hopeful, for the end of our prisoners' ordeal is in sight and soon they will be free men with their faces set towards home.

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.

EVERY EFFORT BEING MADE TO
GET SUPPLIES TO PRISONERS

Mass movements of prisoners of war in Germany from the boundary zone to central Germany are continuing.

This means that many of the men are moving under difficult conditions with inadequate provision for accommodation and food. The Canadian Government, in close collaboration with the United Kingdom and U. S. governments and the Red Cross, has been doing everything possible for the safety and welfare of these men. For some time past efforts have been made to establish substantial reserves in the camps of Red Cross food parcels, medical supplies and comforts, clothing and boots. Last autumn, however, the Germans insisted on these reserve stocks of food being reduced to a weekly basis. All methods of getting fresh supplies in to the overcrowded camps are being explored, and, if it should ever prove feasible, stocks will be sent in by truck or by plane. Meanwhile the Supreme Allied Command in France is carrying on negotiations with the International Red Cross, in an effort to find a way to take supplies to the camps, and despite increasing difficulties caused by the campaign against Germany, all that can be done will be done.

MEDICAL PARCELS

We are advised by the prisoners of war next of kin division of the Department of National War Services, that the number of medical parcels received by the Red Cross Enquiry Bureau addressed to camps known to have been closed is presenting a serious problem.

Since the parcels cannot be forwarded until an official address is received there remains no alternative but to return them to the senders.

Relatives are once more reminded not to send medical parcels addressed to prisoners in camps known to be closed.

NEWLY CAPTURED PRISONERS

Information relative to allied soldiers captured on the Western and Italian fronts continues to reach Geneva.

Several thousand names have been received through official lists and capture cards. It is often difficult, however, to follow the movements of these new prisoners of war since most of them are transferred from one transit camp to another before reaching a permanent camp.

The number of letters to new prisoners arriving in Geneva, waiting to be despatched when permanent camp addresses reach the Agency, is greater than ever before. This, no doubt, is due to the fact that information regarding new prisoners is taking longer to reach Geneva.

Mail from prisoners to their families which, between Germany and Great Britain, used to go via Sweden now goes through Switzerland.

CANADIAN CIVILIANS
INTERNED IN GERMANY

Canadian civilians have been reported at several camps in Germany and Austria. Early in the war 41 Canadians were interned at Giromagny in France. These internees were moved in the Autumn of 1944, because of the Allied invasion, to the civilian section of Marlag und Milag near Bremen.

Another transfer of Canadian internees was reported when the camp at Kreuzberg, near the Polish border, was moved to Ilag XVIII in Austria, near the Italian border. There were 20 Canadians known to be at Ilag Kreuzberg before the transfer took place. A few Canadians formerly living in the Channel Islands were reported to be in Austrian camps in the Autumn of 1944. Six of these who are apparently single men, were interned at Ilag VII, at Laufen while 5 men, 3 women and 1 child were at Biberach Riss, known as a "family camp".

CIGARETTES FOR PRISONERS

Friends and relatives of prisoners of war in Germany are urged to continue sending cigarettes to their prisoners, according to advice received from the Prisoners of War Next of Kin Division of the Department of National War Services. "It is quite evident" Mr. G. D. Allen writes "that cigarettes will be welcomed at all times by the prisoners whether still interned or liberated. If the parcels do not reach Germany they would undoubtedly be placed in a common pool and distributed at a later date. I am certainly of the opinion that none would be wasted nor would the parcels go astray. In the event they do not reach the individual persons to whom they are addressed, as stated above, they would be placed in competent hands for distribution to our sick and wounded in hospital."

Cigarettes are being sent monthly to every Canadian prisoner of war in Germany by the C.P.O. W.R.A. and the Overseas League (Canada) Tobacco Fund. Contributions to the Cigarette Fund may be sent to the Headquarters office, 150A Sun Life Building, Montreal.

RED CROSS LORRIES

Lorries used for taking prisoner of war supplies into Germany will be distinctively marked as follows: the whole vehicle will be painted white and on the roof and sides there will be a red cross on white background, in the four corners of the cross will be the letters CICR (Comité International de la Croix-Rouge) and the Swiss badge.

CANADIANS FREED BY SOVIET
ARMY

Thirty Canadians prisoners, believed to have been on working parties, were liberated by the Russian Army and sent to Odessa, on the Black Sea, preparatory to returning to their own country; of these 30 prisoners, 25 have been identified as having been at the following camps:—

Stalag	VIIIC	—	1
"	VIIIB	—	14
"	IID	—	6
"	344	—	3
"	IXC	—	1.

SEEDS FOR PRISONERS

In October 1944, when the transportation and delivery of parcels to camps in Germany became interrupted, the Royal Horticultural Society in London decided to stop shipping seeds to prisoners of war.

Subsequently, the position changed and delivery of parcels by sea was resumed and seeds were once more forwarded to the camps. In view of the authoritative forecasts that hostilities in Europe would be brought to a victorious conclusion by the coming Summer, it was considered best to send only such seeds as might produce mature crops before prisoners are repatriated. That flower and vegetable seeds have been enthusiastically received and appreciated has been proved many times over by constant references in prisoners letters to gardens and gardening competition.

The following letter from the Civilian Internment Camp Ilag Biberach Riss was addressed to the Secretary of the Royal Horticultural Society and dated 18th December 1944: "It is with very great pleasure that I pass on a brief report from the Camp Gardener, Mr. K. S. Moore, on the results obtained from the seeds you so kindly sent to us. All seeds germinated well. Mr. Moore says 'The results have been excellent and have been much appreciated throughout the camp. Lettuce, radish and spinach made a continuous supply of salad. Cabbage and other green crops were very good. Carrot and beetroot we had very good result with.' In expressing our deep appreciation to your Society, the British Seedsmen and the Canadian P.O.W. Relatives Association I should like to say that the marrow and tomato seeds were grown in the hospital garden and produced good crops, though the latter did not all ripen. The results were not only a welcome addition to our rations, but contributed largely in maintaining the health of the camp. Mr. Moore has had experience as gardener on a large estate in England, and is able to instil keenness in his staff. The layout of the crops was a joy to behold all through the growing season. Please convey the grateful thanks of the whole camp to your Society, also the British Seedsmen and the Canadian P.O.W. Relatives Association."

ARRIVAL OF A FOOD CONVOY DESTINED TO ALLIED PRISONERS OF WAR

On the morning of January 10th, 1945, according to an I.R.C.C. communique, a long convoy of nearly 40 motor vehicles transporting about 100 tons of food and a great many postal bags destined to Allied Prisoners of War reached the Swiss border at Perly. The trucks, some four-wheeled, some six-wheeled with a trailer, are strongly built and have been put at the disposal of the International Committee by the American and Canadian National Societies of the Red Cross for the transport of relief to prisoners of war. Driven by Swiss chauffeurs, these trucks had left Toulon on January 8th and, after a journey of 550 km., which had been rather hard due to the bad condition of the roads and the ice, arrived at their destination.

After proceedings at the custom house the long file of vehicles resumed its course. It went through the town of Geneva and reached the station at Cornavin, from where the food will be forwarded by rail to the International Red Cross Committee's depots.

The President of the International Red Cross Committee, accompanied by many associates, was present at the arrival of the convoy.

BRITISH THANKS TO SWISS PEOPLE

On his return to London from a short visit to Switzerland, Major General Sir Richard Howard Pike head of the section for English prisoners of war camps made the following statement: "I went to Switzerland to thank the Swiss people for all they have done for us. We shall never be able to repay our debt to Switzerland for without her help it would never have been possible for us to secure information about what has happened in English prisoners of war camps in Germany. The ability of the Swiss officials is absolutely admirable. The Swiss know how to select authorized delegates who are able to achieve good understanding between the commanders of the camps and the prisoners of war. We are deeply grateful to Switzerland for this achievement."

INTERNATIONAL DELEGATE VISITS JAPANESE CAMPS

The International Committee's delegation in Japan reports that Mr. Angst, I.R.C. delegate in Tokyo, has recently visited the principal prisoner of war camp at Chosen and sub-camp No. 1.

Other camps visited by the delegate were: civilian internees and prisoner of war camps at Hoten, and civilian internees camps at Shihei, Koshuyu Chosen and at Nagasaki.

PERSONAL POSTAL MESSAGES FOR FAR EAST

Forms are obtained at Post Offices for sending brief postal messages, through the Red Cross, to relatives and friends in enemy or enemy-occupied countries. These may be used for corresponding with prisoners of war in the Far East. A special fee of .25 cents is charged for this facility, including prepayment of reply, or .56 cents if transmission by Air Mail is desired.

WORK A BLESSING IN JAPANESE CAMPS

At a meeting held recently in Los Angeles arranged by the A.A.F. and the American Red Cross, description of prisoner of war camps at Malay-Balay, Davao and Lansang were given by a P.O.W. survivor of the Japanese ship torpedoed off Mindanao.

Work, particularly at Davao camp where they worked in the fields raising vegetables was, he said, a blessing to them.

Their own officers who were in charge of the camp tried to arrange things so that only those physically fit had hard manual work. In this field work they caught frogs, locusts and the famous 12-foot python which helped out their scanty fare.

At night they had lectures by men qualified to speak on a wide variety of subjects and some of the hospitalized men formed an orchestra which entertained them. Life was disagreeable but tolerable. They lived for tomorrow, wondered what their folks were doing and hoped they wouldn't worry.

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.

LONG TERM PRISONERS OF WAR

Sir Leonard Lyle, M.P., who has been urging the repatriation of long-term prisoners of war in the hands of the Germans as well as of the Japanese, has received a letter from Mr. Eden, the Foreign Secretary, in which he writes:—

"Up to the present time, and in spite of frequent pressure from the Swiss no reply has been received to the proposals which we put forward to the German Government in April last regarding able-bodied long-term prisoners of war.

"We are, therefore, now considering whether there is any alternative proposal which we can put forward, and which might have a better chance of acceptance by the Germans. If one is found, you may be sure that it will be forwarded at once through the Protective Power.

"It is only just that it should be made clear to the relatives, and other inquirers, that the fault is with the Germans, and that without their co-operation no progress can be made.

"With regard to prisoners in the Far East, the Japanese Government have, up to the present, refused to repatriate even the sick and wounded."

BRITISH PRISONERS OF WAR

British Prisoners of War from all parts of the British Empire now number nearly 300,000 according to figures given recently in the House of Commons by Mr. Churchill, January 16th, 1945.

United Kingdom (including men from overseas serving in the Forces) ...	161,020
Canada	7,128
Australia	25,597
New Zealand	7,153
South Africa	10,765
India (including 22,803 officers and other ranks missing but presumed to be prisoners of war)	76,023
Colonies	6,752
	<u>294,438</u>

MOVEMENT OF BRITISH PRISONERS IN EASTERN DISTRICTS OF GERMANY AFFECTED BY RUSSIAN ADVANCE

The following information was given by the Financial Secretary to the War Office (Mr. Arthur Henderson), to the House, on 6th February, 1945. Working Parties of:

Stalags	XXA, Probably over-run by Soviet
	XXB, Forces. Men moving to Odessa
	VIIIIB, from whence they will be re-
8	344. patriated as soon as possible.
	Soviet providing them food.
	clothes, etc.
Stalag	XXA, Being moved by Germans
	XXB, through Mecklenburg (i.e. in S.
8	11B. Westerly direction) — some on
	foot, some by rail.
Stalagluft	III. 2,000 to Stalag IIIA (Lucken-
	walde)
	2,000 to Marlag Milag Nord
	(near Hamburg)
	2,000 to Stalag XIIIIC (east of
	Frankfurt-on-Main)
	4,000 to Stalag VIIA (in Ba-
	varia S.W.).
Stalag	VIIIA. Being moved by Germans
8	VIIIC. through Saxony (presumably
	south towards Bavaria).
	Those unfit to travel by road,
	by rail from VIIIA.
Stalagluft	IV. Some being moved by Germans
	to Usedom, near Swinemunde
	(on Baltic).
Stalagluft	VII. Reported to be near Spremberg,
	being moved by Germans to-
	wards Nuremburg and Moo-
	sburg (in Bavaria).
Stalag	VIIIB. Reported being moved by
	Germans towards Aussig (South
	of Dresden).
Stalag	344. Reported being moved by Ger-
	mans to Theresienstadt (South
	of Dresden).

Final destination of prisoners on move not yet certain. General trend S. Westwards.

RED CROSS SUPPLIES TO BRITISH PRISONERS IN GERMANY

Sir James Griggs, War Minister, in a statement about Red Cross supplies to British Prisoners in Germany, said:

"The progress of the Allied attacks on Germany by land and air has resulted in mass movements of prisoners and civilians from the perimeter towards central districts, particularly from the Eastern side. Inevitably, these conditions involved large numbers of our prisoners in Germany moving on foot under difficult conditions, without adequate provision on the road for accommodation and food, and eventually overcrowding in the camps to which they were moved. Representatives of the Protecting Power are doing all they can to secure an improvement and their efforts have not been without some result.

They have been assured that in future, sick or weak prisoners will be moved by train or lorry, and we know this has been done in some recent cases. Between Feb. 19th and 24th their inspectors were due to pay special visits to certain camps, and I will give the substance of their report as soon as it arrives."

Chaos in Germany has reached such a stage that food for British P.O.W. could not reach them. Agreement for limited reserve supplies of food outside the camps came too late to be effective. Not only are food railway wagons not reaching Switzerland from Germany, but such trains as are dispatched to Germany cannot get very far in. While everyone will welcome this disorganization so far as Germany's war efforts are concerned, said Sir James, it had created increasing anxiety for the welfare of British Commonwealth prisoners. Supply of food by air had been considered, but the Government was satisfied that it was not at present practicable. If it became feasible use would certainly be made of this means of supply.

* Negotiations were going on for the purchase of lorries in Sweden to transport supplies from Lubeck to P.O.W. camps in Northern Germany.

One hundred lorries which were being used in France by the International Red Cross have been assembled in Switzerland, and they are now ready to enter Germany with food parcels. "It is, however, impossible to proceed further without the agreement of the German authorities, said Sir James, and I do not yet know to what extent the steps which the International Red Cross are endeavouring to take will in fact be acceptable to the Germans. I understand that a representative of theirs left Switzerland yesterday for Berlin in order to obtain the agreement which is necessary.

But I would like to assure the House that there will be no difficulty on the score of provision of lorries by the Supreme Allied Command. Indeed, 100 more lorries are ready to go into Switzerland at once if those which are there now are allowed into Germany, and arrangements have been made to supply petrol, oil, tyres, and spare parts to Switzerland when they are needed. I should add that the British Red Cross War Organization have authorised the International Red Cross Committee to incur on their behalf any expenditure which they consider necessary in connexion with the care of our prisoners now in German hands.

I hope I have shown that the Government in this country, the Supreme Allied Command, and the B.R.C.S. are doing all in their power to see that any request from the International Red Cross for vehicles, fuel, or maintenance stores which can be effectively used to supply our prisoners is met, subject only to the condition that such assistance will not weaken the attack on Germany and so delay the conclusion of hostilities. I will give the House any further information I can at the earliest possible opportunity."

*ED. NOTE: *Since this statement was made, the lorries or trucks referred to have been put into operation. See front page.*

AMERICAN RED CROSS NEWS

We are indebted to the American Red Cross Prisoners of War Bulletin for the following information.

SWITZERLAND'S PART IN RELIEF

Switzerland is a country of 4,200,000 people. Over 500,000 of its men are trained in military service; about half that number have been constantly on a military footing, with the other half on instant call, to defend any invasion of their soil.

This small country is sheltering over 100,000 refugees, military internees, and military escapees, who have poured into Switzerland from all over Europe. What this burden in food and shelter means can best be understood if we visualize the relative pressure of 3,000,000 people from other lands suddenly pouring into our own country.

The people of Switzerland feel very keenly the misery of the victims of war in all the countries so close to them. In goods from their own country, and in services, they have spent hundreds of millions of francs in relief to their less fortunate European neighbors. Last month, the Swiss government voted a further 100,000,000 francs (\$25,000,000) for relief work in Europe.

HANDICRAFTS EXHIBITION

The International Red Cross Committee has organized a Prisoners of War Handicrafts Exhibition which will be opened at Geneva in April, and later make a tour of Swiss cities.

Prisoners of war of all nationalities have sent camp-made articles to the exhibition. The articles will remain the property of the men who made them.

A first shipment of ten cases of articles, comprising 145 different items, made by German prisoners of war in the United States, went forward to Geneva in December. Other shipments all made on Red Cross vessels, have left since December.

THE NORTHERN ROUTE

Few Americans perhaps realize that the main life line for food to their prisoner kin in Germany is now through Sweden. Back of this is a sequence of events.

A year ago the American Red Cross, backed by the United States government and military authorities, sent large reserves of supplies via Marseille to Switzerland. That is why, though Switzerland was cut off from France for five months last summer and fall, we were able to serve the camps in Germany out of reserves accumulated in Switzerland during the previous winter and spring.

But two roads of relief are always better than one. Therefore, with the aid of both Swiss and Swedes, we started planning as far back as June 1944 the new path via Goteborg, Sweden, and north German ports to the camps in Germany. This has borne results. So far we have shipped 40,000 tons of war prisoner relief supplies to Goteborg. Up to February 1945, nearly 3,000,000 standard food packages shipped on from Goteborg have reached American and Allied camps in Germany.

The Baltic Sea between Goteborg and Lubeck, Germany, is sown with anchored mines. So, when goods are sent over this route, both we and the Swedish Shipowners who provide the vessels are running constant risks. Twenty voyages by Swedish ships have so far been safely made between Goteborg and Lubeck, though any day we know a ship may strike a mine. German minesweepers cleared a path for our Swedish relief ships to Germany, and, at Lubeck, German freight cars steadily move the food packages to the camps.

HIGH PERCENTAGE OF PARCELS REACH CAMPS IN GERMANY

The American Red Cross P.O.W. Bulletin states that during 1943, 99.93 percent of the goods shipped from Switzerland to American prisoners of war in Germany was safely delivered. Every pound of supplies received by the camp spokesman is listed and receipted; I.R.C.C. inspectors to the camps personally verify this accounting with the spokesman; in this way it is possible to establish the exact number of supplies arriving at P.O.W. camps.

INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS DELEGATE VISITS FAR EAST CAMPS

(Translated from *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*.)

On the 16th and 17th of September Mr. H. Angst visited the main Hakodate camp, in which are housed more than 200 British (seven of whom are civilian internees), 40 Americans, 50 Netherlands, and some Australians, Canadians and Estonians.

The camp consists of thirteen wooden bungalows (with plank floors) ten of which are of recent construction. The lighting and ventilating systems are adequate; fire-precautionary measures have been installed and anti-air-raid trench shelters have been constructed. The washing and bath facilities (in the Japanese style) are adequate. The food is the same as that of the camp guards. This is the normal amount, but the prisoners would like to receive more Red Cross parcels. The kitchen contains five cauldrons, some stoves, an ice-box, and two store-rooms for provisions. And there is a hut in which vegetables can be kept. Nine prisoner of war cooks, one of whom is a professional, prepare the meals. The infirmary comprises nine rooms capable of accommodating 60 patients, and the isolation quarters, which consist of three wards, can accommodate a further 20. The dental equipment is, apparently, complete, save for a lack of the material necessary for manufacturing artificial dentures. The camp has, moreover, a group of specially chosen laundrymen, but soap is scarce.

The camp commandant allots to each man a task suitable to his wishes and qualifications, in electrical works, or other factories, the work including such things as carpentry, portage, etc. Prisoners of weak constitution are occupied in the camp itself, where also there is a carpenter's shop. More than 200 prisoners are employed in labour detachments. All workers have a quarter of an hour's break for rest during the morning, and another in the afternoon, as well as an hour in which to take their mid-day meal; every Sunday is a free day.

These men are not insured, but the national laws in regard to employment apply to them and, in case of being the victims of an accident, they

receive the same relief as that to which ordinary workers are entitled by law. The prisoners keep cows, pigs, chickens and rabbits, and cultivate an area of 2,970 square metres. Weekly walks are allowed; indoor and out-of-door games such as volleyball, catchball and boxing are organised. In the summer the men may bathe in the sea every day. They have a library, consisting mainly of books donated by the Y.M.C.A., and they also have some musical instruments.

Religious services can be held at will. The prisoners hold these themselves in English and Dutch.

The commandant had no complaints to make. He stated that discipline was good and that the morale of the men was satisfactory, but he confirmed the need of the prisoners for warm clothing and especially for footwear.

Mr. Angst also visited a branch camp which depends on Hakodate main camp, and which accommodate more than 100 British (of whom four are civilian internees) and some Americans, these latter all being medical staff.

This camp is situated beside the sea; it comprises five wooden bungalows of recent construction. The latrines and baths are installed in the Japanese style. The food rations are the same as those in the main camp, but prisoners who do heavy work receive some extras. The kitchen possesses three cauldrons and two store-rooms; a bread oven is in process of construction; five military cooks prepare the meals.

The infirmary can take in ten patients; prisoners who are seriously ill are taken to the infirmary of the main camp.

These prisoners hold their own religious services.

One hundred men work in a cement factory; the others are engaged in camp maintenance. The prisoners have a sports ground, as well as a piece of ground, measuring 1,320 square metres, where they cultivate vegetables; some pigs and rabbits are raised in this camp too.

The commandant of the camp had no complaints to make in regard to the prisoners, but he passed on to the delegate of the International Red Cross Committee the requests of the prisoners, which were numerous the men being particularly anxious to receive some warm clothing, some footwear and some food parcels.

REPATRIATION OF BADLY WOUNDED

The question is often asked regarding the rôle played by the International Red Cross Committee in the reciprocal repatriations of badly wounded and sick prisoners of war. The exchanges recently operated on Swiss territory provide an opportunity of giving more details concerning this.

In September 1939, the International Committee at Geneva recommended to the belligerent countries a plan for working out the repatriation of wounded and sick prisoners of war as stipulated in certain clauses of the Geneva Convention of 1929.

Since then, during the conflict, the Committee has never ceased to make every effort in the realization of this important humanitarian programme.

The Geneva Convention calls for a Mixed Medical Commission composed of a doctor appointed by the detaining power and two doctors from neutral countries. In a great many cases the International Committee has been asked by the countries involved to nominate competent and impartial doctors as the neutral members.

Once the repatriates are designated by these commissions, negotiations start, between belligerent countries, to determine the manner of the exchanges and to ensure their practical execution.

These negotiations, which are often long and difficult, have been conducted by Switzerland in her capacity of Protecting Power.

The transportation of the invalided prisoners to the place of exchange and the return to their homes is often effected over a very lengthy route, through the medium of hospital ships and trains. The organization of convoys, the care of the sick, the provision of food supplies, necessitate continued efforts on the part of the belligerent states and the transit states assisted by their health services and their Red Cross Societies.

Usually the I.R.C.C. is requested to send a representative or delegate with the sick and wounded repatriates. The duties of these delegates who, when possible, are doctors, are manifold. Firstly, they obtain lists of the repatriates; they then proceed to the place of assembling and witness the embarkation; throughout the trip they make sure

that all measures are taken to provide most favourable conditions, placing themselves at the disposal of the heads of the convoy and of the repatriates themselves to give any help that is needed especially as doctors and interpreters; finally, they write a report on the operation. Always and everywhere, the delegates uphold humanitarian principles and the spirit of the Geneva Convention according to the great charitable tradition of the Red Cross.

On the 17th and 18th of January 1945, Mr. Carl J. Burckhard, president of the I.R.C.C. and Dr. Alec Cramer, member of the Committee, met the first trains of Allied and German repatriates at Geneva coming respectively from Marseilles and from Germany.

These details of repatriation, given by the *Revue Internationale de la Croix-Rouge*, show the co-operation that is established in this sphere, as in others, between the belligerent countries, the Protecting Powers, neutral transit countries, the National Societies of the Red Cross and the International Red Cross Committee.

FRENCH WAR PRISONERS

Communication between French prisoners of war in Germany and their families in France has almost entirely stopped owing to the disruption of direct postal services between Germany and France. To help this situation the Central Agency in Geneva, where lists of prisoners who are without news of their families are being received, transcribes the enquiries on express-message forms and forwards them to France where local Red Cross Committees distribute them.

A great number of these messages have been returned to Geneva with the desired information. In this way the Central Agency has gone far toward relaying news to anxious prisoners and their families.

The French Red Cross is at present distributing all over France but particularly in the Paris area, post-cards of ten words that may be sent, with the consent of the German authorities, to prisoners of war.

DOCTOR DENIES FELLOW P.O.W.'s ARE PROBLEM CASES

There may be an acute danger of too much being made of the "problem" of the returned prisoner of war. Even if due to an excess of zeal and devotion on the part of his people at home, this can be psychologically harmful as well as the cause of much needless friction in personal and business life. As a considered statement of how the real facts of the case present themselves to a Liverpool ophthalmic surgeon who allowed himself to be captured in the Greek Campaign of 1941, and who has since declined two opportunities to be repatriated, we reproduce, by courtesy of the Editor of "The British Medical Journal" and the B.P.O.W.R.A. News Sheet, the following letter. The writer, Major Charters, is a prisoner of war in Stalag IXB.

* * *

Because there is delay in the arrival here of my Journals I have only recently read the correspondence on the prisoner of war mentality. I am amazed to find in Dr. Harkness's letter of April 22nd, 1944, the statement that "the very large majority of our returned prisoners of war will be problems for their lifetime." It has been my privilege for the last three and a half years to administer the medical affairs of large groups of wounded and disabled prisoners. These groups consisted of some of the worst of our "grand blesses" — the totally blind, the double or single amputated, the extensively burned, the paralysed, and the major orthopaedic cases. Nearly all of these patients had known several years of captivity; nearly all of them had suffered hard disappointment when the first attempt at repatriation broke down at Rouen in October, 1941, and they returned to the prison camps instead of going home.

No one realizes more acutely than I do the pressing psychological problems which in certain cases have resulted from years of enforced idleness, of monotony, and of physical suffering and disablement. If any group of prisoners of war was likely to present psychological problems it was the kind of group with which I had to deal. Nevertheless I most emphatically deny that anything approaching a majority of prisoners will be "problems for their lifetime." Rather would I say that the majority of these men have gained

in tolerance, understanding, patience, forbearance and courage. They have acquired a bigger concept of comradeship and of community life. They have more fully recognized the need for the individual to pull his weight in the interest of the group. If a man was disabled it became a matter of pride to him to be one of the "muckers" — the man who was ready to "muck in", to lend a hand, and accept his responsibilities. The average prisoner has demonstrated a high standard of adaptability, and will do so again when he returns home to a post-war world. He will need time to pick up the threads of his life again, but he will not have a peculiar mentality. I have shown Dr. Harkness's letter to several of the men here — cheerful, average, level-headed individuals. They expressed themselves as follows: "Afraid he doesn't altogether know what he is talking about: a few special cases, yes! but not the very large majority."

By all means let us arrange for physical and mental rehabilitation where it is needed. By all means let us make some allowances for the fact that the average prisoner of war is not adjusted to the change of the last five years. But do not let us discuss the majority as if they were psychopathological problems. Above all, let us avoid discussing their "mentality" in the lay press. If Dr. Harkness's statement were true, and if we were to follow his recommendation for wide publicity, "the powerful advocacy of the press" would hardly be sound psychological treatment for the prisoner; nor would it encourage employers to select him as a worker. It is my belief that the responsible Departments of the Government will make a true assessment of the problem, and will provide adequate means of rehabilitation. It will not be difficult for them to obtain accurate information based on actual observation by medical officers and by laymen, who have been with the prisoners over long periods and under changing circumstances.

I have lived with prisoners of war of all ranks, of all the services, from all European fronts. On their behalf I resent any implication that they are below average in the qualities of balance, steadiness, patience, perseverance, tolerance, or good humour. The average prisoner is not a "problem" to himself, his companions or his future employer. Surely Dr. Harkness takes a very pessimistic view of the mental and moral stamina of our race.

QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Question: — May I send vitamins in my personal parcel?

Answer: — No. Vitamins must be sent in medical parcels which may be forwarded through the Red Cross Enquiry Bureau, 18 Rideau Street Ottawa.

Question: — Could you give me some suggestions as to the most useful things to send my prisoner?

Answer: — A recently repatriated prisoner of war has suggested the following articles to be sent to prisoners in Germany. One of the main reasons that these articles were chosen is that none of them are now obtainable in Germany: nail files, nail scissors, penknives (small), teaspoons, playing cards, tooth brushes, india rubbers (erasers). Bed room slippers are always popular as they wear out quickly, the most suitable type are warm ones with leather soles.

Questions: — Am I allowed to send chipped beef and egg powder in my personal parcel?

Answer: — You may send chipped beef or egg powder but both are not permitted in one parcel.

Question: — Can I still write to my husband who was at Stalag Luft III?

Answer: — Yes, address the letter the same as you have always done.

Question: — The most recent letter I have received from my son in Germany is dated November, in which he asks for a blanket and warm underclothes. Do you advise me to send these?

Answer: — No. By the time your son receives the warm clothing the weather will be hot; we advise all relatives to put as much food as possible in their parcels.

Question: — My son was taken prisoner at Hong Kong and I have never heard from him. Does this mean that I should give up hope of his being alive?

Answer: — No, certainly not. A great many families have not heard from their prisoners in the Far East. The reason that some letters have come out and others have not is impossible to discover. The inscrutable ways of our Asiatic enemy is beyond reason.

Question: — May I send magazines or periodicals to my son who is in a German prison camp?

Answer: — No. Periodicals and magazines may be sent to enemy or enemy-occupied countries.

CONCERNING PARCELS

A great many enquiries have been received regarding the sending of parcels to prisoners of war in Germany. At the time of going to press the situation is as follows: The British Red Cross has entirely stopped issuing labels to next of kin while the American government is continuing to issue them as usual, in spite of the confused state of transportation in Germany. In our own country, the Hon. L. LaFlèche, War Services Minister spoke in the House of Commons on March 28th on this subject and warned against sending individual parcels to Canadian Prisoners of War in Germany.

"It is very doubtful," he said, "whether individual parcels will even reach Germany, but if they do there is a danger that they may displace food and medical parcels and also that they may fall into enemy hands."

"Further, there is a most important fact which either is not generally known or at least seems to be overlooked that the distribution of personally-addressed parcels is made through the German postal service, which, according to reports, has been disorganized and therefore parcel post service in Germany is virtually non-existent."

"It seems highly improbable that any personal or permit parcels would be delivered to the addressees."

"Consequently, it is the recommendation of this department that for the present no further parcel addressed to individual prisoners of war in Germany should be accepted for dispatch."

RETURNED NEWS SHEETS

Several copies of the March News Sheet have been returned to Headquarters with the wrappers missing. If those subscribers who did not receive their last month's copy will notify us, another copy will be sent to them immediately.

BOOK 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.

"MONTREAL. CITY AND SEAPORT." By Stephen Leacock. Published in 1942 by Doubleday Doran and Co. 328 pages. Illustrated. \$4.00.

The late Stephen Leacock was a Canadian institution,... more, a Montreal and a McGill institution, and one can feel in this book the true love and understanding he had of Montreal. This history of the city, which inevitably embraces much of Canada throughout, from the earliest discovery days to present times, is packed full of the colourful incident, adventures, achievement and personalities that have made it one of the world's greatest ports. Leacock's dry astuteness happily touches much of the writing, so there is here a concentrated and authentic document of history written with scholarly exactness, affectionate appreciation and the famous Leacock humour, as well.

"THE NEW INVITATION TO LEARNING" edited by Mack Van Doren. Published in 1944 by the New Home Library, 427 pages. \$98.

This is good talk about the classics, which Mr. Van Doren defines as "great books which are permanently discussable." These reproductions of the conversations broadcast by the Columbia Broadcasting System in 1941-42, contain the informal discussions of Louis Untermeyer, Mack Van Doren, Franklin P. Adams, Margaret Webster, Bertrand Russell, Lin Yutang, Andre Maurois and various others who can appreciate the greatest books of all time and talk of them entertainingly. This is intellectual fare informally served.

There is an earlier volume, published in 1942, INVITATION TO LEARNING, which contains an earlier series of broadcasts in which other classics are discussed by three eminent scholars, Allen Tate, Huntington Cairns and Mark Van Doren.

"FOREVER AMBER", by Kathleen Winsor. Published in 1944 by the MacMillan Co. 972 pages. \$3.00.

The author of this much discussed and advertised best seller, or her press agent, has stated that she became so interested in her husband's extensive reading for his university thesis that she too became immersed in the England of Charles the Second, and "Forever Amber" was the result. At any rate, Miss Winsor has been singularly successful in capturing the atmosphere of those dramatic days, both glamorous and squalid. The story reminds one strongly of Scarlett O'Hara in a different setting, that is another tale of the ruthless siren who lets nothing stand in her ambitious way until, after a series of affairs and advantageous marriages, she becomes the mistress of the king himself, but never can hold the one man she really loves. The novel is undoubtedly a "good yarn," full of the lusty, bawdy customs, manners and history of Restoration England, vigorous and shocking as they undoubtedly seem today. This novel is at present "sold out" in most bookshops but new shipments are expected soon.

"BEING MET TOGETHER," by Vaughan Wilkins. Published in 1944 by Jonathon Cape, London, and the MacMillan Co. New York. 510 pages. \$3.50.

Those readers who enjoyed this author's "And So Victoria" will again enjoy this successful blending of history and fiction. The story begins in Virginia, in the last days of the American Revolutionary War, is later laid in various parts of France, the European battlefields, England and Wales, and ends on the Island of St. Helena when Napoleon is imprisoned there. The plot revolves on the gradual political awakening of a young Virginian, reared to hate the English, and who fights against them as an officer of Napoleon's army. England then, as in 1940, was the last fighting stronghold of democracy and the story constantly suggests the similarity of the wars waged by Hitler and Napoleon, the similarity of the men themselves. In this book history, romance and adventure go hand in hand.

PROVINCIAL HEADQUARTERS

BRITISH COLUMBIA	Mrs. R. Thistle 1013 Government St. Victoria, B.B.
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. Cuning, 303 McCallum Hill Bldg., Regina, Sask.
ALBERTA	Mrs. H. Thom, 10222, 118th St., Edmonton, Alta.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

150A Sun Life Bldg.,
Montreal.

VICTORIA BRANCH

At the March meeting of the Victoria Branch, it was to send \$50.00 to the Cigarette Fund.

Two new members were welcomed.

MANITOBA BRANCH

Approximately 130 members attended the February monthly meeting of the Manitoba Branch. Mr. King, the Chairman, extended a welcome to new members, 31 new next of kin having been contacted since the previous meeting.

It was announced that chewing gum is now available in addition to the usual stock of food kept on hand by the Branch.

The Chairman reported that five prisoners from Manitoba were being repatriated.

MONCTON BRANCH N.B.

It was announced at the February meeting, that 145 letters had been sent to next of kin of prisoners in the Far East; letters to next of kin of war prisoners in Germany were to be sent out the following week; all next of kin in the Province will then have been contacted.

Boxes for personal parcels are available at the Branch and knitted garments being obtained while arrangements are being made to procure food and toilet articles as the need arises.

OTTAWA BRANCH

At the February meeting of the Ottawa Branch, 167 members and friends were present.

It was agreed to send \$50.00 to National Headquarters as a contribution to the General Fund.

An interesting address was given by Sqdn/Ldr Foss Boulton, repatriated prisoner of war.

Mr. Monettex, Assistant to Mr. G. D. Allen, National War Services, conducted the question and answer period.

VANCOUVER BRANCH

The following officers were elected at the February meeting of the Vancouver Branch:—

President	Mrs. G. Gration
Vice-President	Mr. A. W. Waddy
Treasurer	Mrs. Geo. Cooper
Secretary	Mrs. Helene Kingston

The question of medical parcels was discussed, one member having had her parcel returned from Ottawa.

Cpl. Ramsden, who was prisoner of war in the last war, spoke to the meeting.

CIGARETTES AND CHOCOLATES ACKNOWLEDGED

The following are a few of the letters of acknowledgement received at the Association Headquarters:—

DULAG LUFT

December 23rd, 1944. — At just the right time your much appreciated Christmas gift came. On 22 December, 1944, eight cartons containing 32 bars each of Cadbury's Milk Chocolate arrived. Previous to that, early in November we received four cartons of the same. Both shipment arrived in excellent condition. We are holding it all until Christmas Day, when we shall issue it, one to each member of the camp. We are a transient camp and have all nationalities. Fortunately, we are rather a small number and we will be able to share a full portion each. On behalf of the Canadian Prisoners of War in particular, and on behalf of the rest of us, thank you very much for your delicious gift, and your kind and gracious thoughtfulness. Best wishes for the New Year, and may your Holiday Season have been a Merry one.

Colonel U.S.A.A.F.
Senior Allied Officer.

OFLAG VIIB

December 20th, 1944. — This is to convey to you and your members my best thanks for all the assistance and thought you have given to me during this year. You have anticipated a prisoner's wants with amazing insight and have organised a service which is unsurpassed. Now that winter is on us again, our attention has been drawn to the number of Officers and O. Rs who can play a musical instrument; many of them than one. You have done good work and are to be congratulated. A Happy New Year.

STALAG IID

January 5th, 1945. — We are in receipt of 230 boxes of Cadbury's Chocolate addressed to the Senior N.C.O., Canadian Ps O. W., Stalag IID. This shipment reached us during the months of December and January in small shipments at a time and as we were not in possession of any advance information regarding the quantity which was shipped for this camp, or if it included the

200 W.Os. and N.C.Os. who were transferred to Stalag 357, we have had doubts concerning its disposition. In addition to the chocolate we have continued to receive gramophone records and stationary, etc., all of which we greatly appreciate and we wish to express our sincere thanks for what you and your co-workers are doing our comfort and welfare. What you have done will live long in the memories of all of us. We also receive cigarettes regularly. They are all reaching us, and if some may neglect to return the card, or should it just get lost en route, we mention this to assure you that your efforts are all effective.

STALAG 357

November 19th, 1944. — Once again let me thank you for your gift of cigs. I received two this week, and they couldn't have come at a more opportune time. Quite a number arrived this week, tho' parcels are slow indeed, so the boys and their chums are smoking again. Hope to thank you personally before long. Good luck to you all!

MILAG NORD

January 10th, 1945. — Please accept my most grateful thanks for the cigarettes received. You can rest assured they are a source of great comfort to us all. Wishing you all every success in this New Year, from all at Milag Nord.

OFLAG VA

Card.
December 24th, 1944.

Please convey to the Canadian P.O.W. Relatives Association the sincere thanks of the seven officers and two other ranks of the Canadian Forces prisoners of war in Oflag VA Germany, for one parcel of Cadbury's Chocolate bars received for Xmas and divided between them. Also my personal thanks for several lots of cigarettes rec'd. Seasons Greetings.

A. E. Newton, Capt.,
Senior Can. Officer.

Card
November 6th, 1944.

We are continuously receiving the benefits of the work which you and your colleagues of the Can. Rel. Association are doing for us. For this we are most grateful. We send you our best wishes for Xmas, and look forward, with you, to the New Year with greatest confidence.

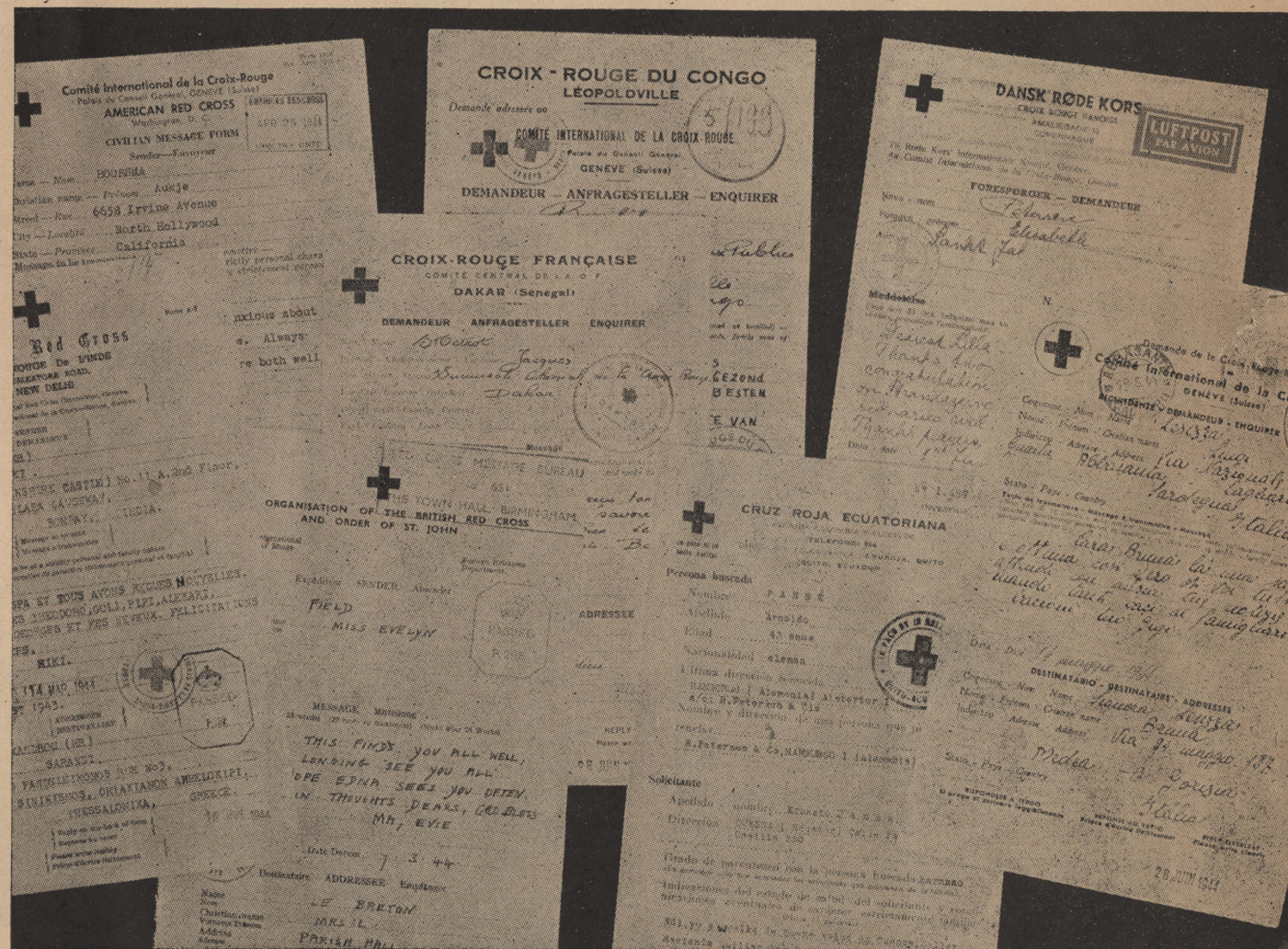
Canadian Officers and N.C.O.'s
Stalag Luft III (East)
per C.L. Olssen, S./Lr, R.A.F.

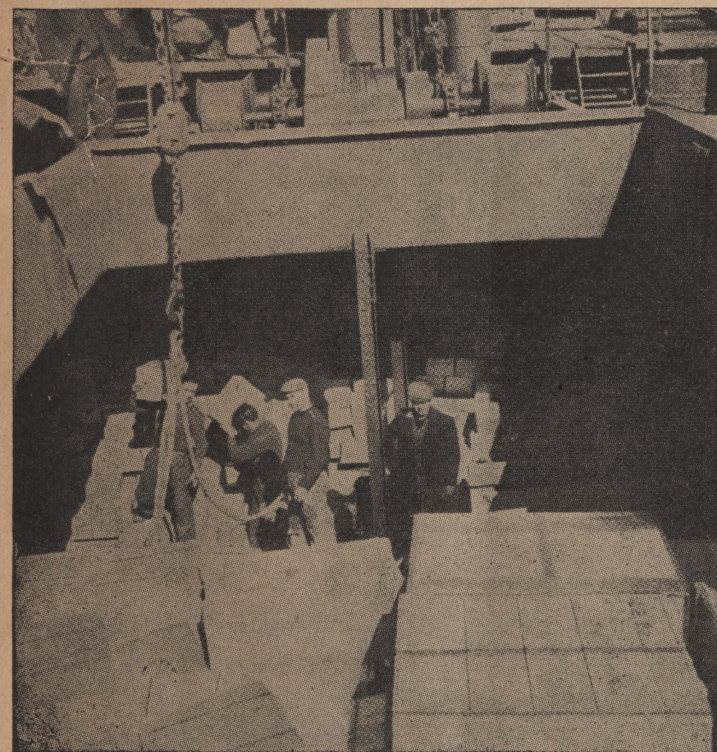
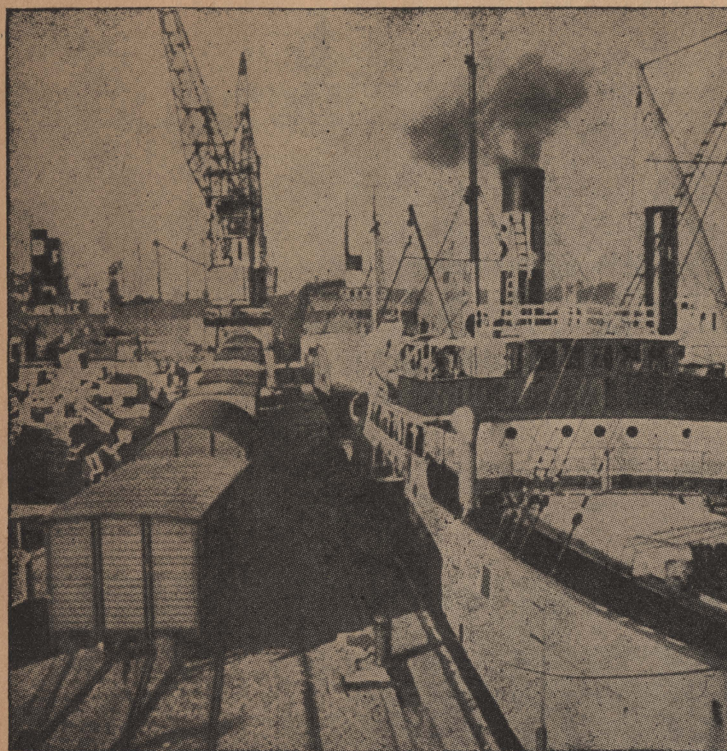
THE INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS COMMITTEE

The following pictures published through the courtesy of the I.R.C.C., show some of the many activities of this highly geared organization to which all relatives of war prisoners are indebted for the magnificent way in which it cares for the well-being of prisoners of war.

Below is a sample of the thousands of enquiries written on Red Cross forms in every imaginable language which are received and dealt with by the Central Agency.

On the following page is shown I.R.C.C. ships being loaded and unloaded with supplies for prisoners of war, at Lisbon and Marseilles while opposite to these pictures will be seen a warehouse at Geneva where food parcels are stored, and a section of the department which looks after the intellectual welfare of prisoners of war. Thousands of book on all subjects and in many tongues are sorted and packed here for distribution to prison of war and internment camps in Germany. All pictures were taken in 1944.





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 evercpts 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

TOKYO, No. 3D CAMP

January 13th, 1944 Rec'd February 1945.

I have received this opportunity of writing and letting you know I am in good health. All the boys are the same. We received a Red Cross parcel at Christmas, between two men. It sure was lovely. Personal parcels have arrived in camp. I have received one. Sending my love to all at home, also to Bill and Jim. I received a letter you wrote in November, 1942, on the 28th of May last year. That is the only news I have received from home so far. Parcels are coming in every day now so I expect one any day at all. Now send all you can. We sure need them here especially warm clothing and footwear. Do not forget chocolate, gum and candies. Hope Dad is still working and in good heath. Have to close now. Love to all.

January 13th, 1944 Rec'd March 1945.

Dear Dad:—

We are off work today and have been permitted to write, so for a change I am writing to you. I have received mail and snaps from Rita, also from yourself, Rene, Fred. I hope you write often. Some of the fellows have received parcels from home. I haven't yet, but I'm hoping. I hope you all had a Merry Xmas and A Happy New Year. Well, Dad, I guess I've changed a little in the past two years. I'm not a boy anymore. I've learned a lot about life and men. This experience is hard, but I think it's a blessing. I'll be able to get so much more out of life when it's all over. I have learned to take eveything in my stride and accept my lot philosophically. I'm sure my kids will benefit by this. Don't worry too much about me, Dad, I'll come through. Keep Mum in good spirits and don't let her grow old. Tell her that her son is all grown up now and can take good care of himself. Look after Rita and the young'uns. I had a good Xmas. I thought of them all day. Keep your chin up. Say a prayer for me. Give Rita and all my love. So long for now Dad. Keep plugging. Your loving son.

January 13th, 1944.

At last I have received mail last November dated 22/7/42 and 10/8/42. It was certainly a relief for me after two years without news from home. I am glad to hear that the family is enjoying the best of health. And I can say that I am in fair condition. I read in your letter that you have sent me a parcel, this has not been received yet, but I expect it shortly, as they are coming in daily. The holiday season has been enjoyed with a Red Cross parcel, this has given colour. I broadcast in French to Canada last September, I hope that it was heard by you. I am always longing for the Homeward Bound Ship, that this may be soon. Until then the best to you all and God bless you.

January 13th, 1944 Rec'd February 10th, 1945.

Dear Folks and all at Home,

Just a few lines to let you all know I'm well and hope you are the same. I'm working every day and work with Frank Christenson, so we have some good talks, and when he worked with Dad, Frank Fletcher is here too, so we aren't lonesome. Well we had Xmas together and made the best of it. We had a Red Cross Food parcel between two, which was very nice, and parcels from home are coming now so I'm looking for mine. I guess it will come soon. I had letters from home and from a few friends which I was very thankful for. Well I'll have to close for now.

January 13th, 1944.

I am well and hope you are the same. I received my first Personal Parcel today. Everything is lovely, especially the socks and sweater. I had thirteen letters last summer. Two from friends and eleven from you. The snapshots were lovely. Wish I had more. Tell Rita the boys are fine. (Meaning Austin and Eric Batley). We had Red Cross boxes at Christmas. I am hoping for smokes and letters soon. The latest letter I received was dated December 1942. Give my best regards to our friends and "Keep Smiling". I will see you all some day and until that day comes, we will just carry on. Good-bye and good luck.

TOKYO No. 5B CAMP

Received August 7th, 1944.

I cannot express in words my sincere pleasure to be writing to you again. Your letters, as always, were masterpieces, and so cheering. My health, glad to say is "Tops". The climate here is similar to home and much more suitable than the previous camp. I sure would like some pictures of you and the family as I have none. As one letter is the

limit, give my love to all the family. You are always in my thoughts and prayers.

CAMP "N" HONG KONG

Dearest Beryl:

Was glad to receive your Xmas cable and to know all are well. I am well, thinking constantly of you all. Love and Kisses.

Maurice.

GERMANY

ILAG KREUZBURG O/S

October 8th, 1944.

On my arrival in the Camp last night after work I had a most pleasant surprise, a parcel and letter awaited me, the letter from Aug. 20th, very quick, don't you think, and the parcel, well there wasn't any date on that, but it came from room 150 A Sun Life Building, Montreal, Que., Canada and the sender's name was yours. Perhaps you know something of this, if not, please find out and express my sincere thanks for such a splendid gift. I cannot give you in detail the items, but I can assure you everything was most appreciated and I would like you to write a letter of thanks there being more likelihood that your letter will reach them. Since the new scale of operations the mail has been very slow in arriving, but yesterday for the first time over a period there was a lot of parcels and letters. There isn't much happening here, but some excitement has been aroused with regard to a possible shift either to another camp or an exchange, so don't be surprised if one day soon you find me presenting myself with a colourful bow before the presence of your Majesty.

OFLAG VIIB

December 10th, 1944 Rec'd February 26th, 1945

Many thanks for your nice letter of Nov. 8th and for the cigarettes. I will let you know as soon as they arrive. Yes, I am still cooking for our mess, and as our establishment has been reduced to five it is much easier now. N.'s June parcel had such a lovely assortmetnt of spices that I am in a quandary to know which to put in the Xmas cake, so I'll probably put a little of each. Best wishes for Xmas and 1945.

"Boxing Day in England"

1944

Rec'd February 28th, 1945.

Here we are the day after Xmas, with no "Hang Over", but almost the same feeling from the time honored (5 year old tradition) Kriegie Custom of "bashing" on Christmas Day. This year it has

been more terrific than ever. To begin with, tho' we have been on half parcels since Sept. & a bit hungry at times, everyone had been putting a little away so that on Christmas Day there would be no stinting. Then one week before Xmas the Germans told us that we would have to get rid of the Camp reserve of food & that as soon as that was done they would see that we got some more parcels. Now this reserve, when distributed, has been considerable & so all have been able to get down to some steady eating with a clear conscience. One hasn't been bothered with the thought that "some day this tin of milk or butter may be the only things left". This life makes us all hoarders & tins that had been stored for over two years have finally been opened. So with lots of eats & brilliant sunshine we have had about as Merry a Christmas as possible, for what looked a few weeks ago as a rather dim one. The above is all pretty complicated but in short we had lots to eat; nothing to drink, darn it, except wonderful brews of Tea, Cocoa & Coffee, which is Christmas to a P.O.W. The cigars have been great; they completed the Christmas dinner & more of them to look forward to. Everything fine with me & trust it is likewise with all of you.



Picture taken at Stalag IID. Pte Lyall Deremo, centre, front row. Kindly lent by Mrs. M. I. Deremo of Toronto.

October 20th, 1944.

I do wish things would start moving again. It looks as if we may be here for yet another Christmas. Some loads of cinders have been coming into the camp for the paths. We find there is a little coke amongst it and so directly a load is sighted coming into the Camp, hundreds of us rush out from our rooms with any sort of utensil and within five seconds of it being tipped you cannot see it for bodies. Ten minutes later it is scattered about as if thousands of large birds have scratched it over! It makes grand fuel for heating our drinks.

October 30th, 1944.

Last night we had a very amusing Bridge Competition. It took place on the stage of the camp theatre and consisted of two teams, Canadians and English. The eight best players in the camp took part and made some pretty bad mistakes, much to the delight of the audience. The hands played were put up in large figures so we could see and the players could not. The orderlies are giving a show this week. They are usually very badly acted and the audience laughs in the places where they are meant to cry! Still no next of kin parcel. I have so far had none this year. Supper time and the days stooge — P.O.W. for maid of all work wants to lay the table.

November 20th, 1944.

I wonder if we shall see much change in each other when I get home. The others say I am very grey over the temples. Of course, I am getting an old man! I have had some vitamin tablets in good time for the winter for which I am deeply grateful, also an excellent book, "Silent Drum". While I am writing this letter there are two people doing shorthand together, and one writing a letter at this table. One man is finishing off our new home-made stove, another splitting wood for burning, with a broken knife, two reading, another making his bed (Time 5.40 p.m.). Living continually with 16 people in and out of a room, you get so used to it that even when someone is hammering you don't notice it! In a few minutes I am going to shave which all adds to the general confusion. Now winter is here, I have adopted my winter programme, which includes shaving in the evening as the mornings are far too cold. Every year I have said — "Home by Christmas". Perhaps by '46 or '47. I shall be right.

November 30th, 1944.

I have again had several good books from Mrs. A. She is most awfully good sending them to me. They are a great blessing.

STALAG LUFT IV

November 9th, 1944.

How are you all? I hope everyone is in good health. Everything here is just the same. I received some more mail; that makes fifty letters now. Gee, it is sure good to get mail. The only thing it makes us a little homesick. Well, it looks as if winter is coming. We got stoves in now so we are fairly well set for it. Really not much else to write this time. Just tell everyone I said 'hello'. Be sure to write as often as possible. I guess Gran understands why I don't write. Let her read your letters.

STALAG IVA

October 6th, 1944.

I hope by now you have received word through the Red Cross that I am doing fine. I am a prisoner in Germany, but am in a hospital where there are British Doctors, and we are treated very well. I was captured and wounded on August 29. All the way from France to Germany the German nurses and soldiers treated me very good and it was the same when I got to a German hospital, the Doctors and nurses were wonderful. I got shot through the thigh and got a broken bone out of the deal, but it is coming along fine, so don't worry too much about it. Well, I guess that is about all I have room for.

November 4th, 1944.

Just a line to let you know that I am getting along quite well, and hope you are all the same at home. My wound is getting along fine, it doesn't give me much pain anymore. The last X



Group taken at Stalag 357. Front row, from left to right: Art Flatt (Detroit); Jim Stephenson (Toronto); Len Lindsay (Vancouver). Standing, from left to right: Don Sugden (Armstrong); Ivan Quinn (Little Current); Walter Martin (Detroit); H. Martin (Toronto); G. Flatt (Detroit).

Ray I had of it showed that the leg was only a little shorter than the other, that was a couple of weeks ago, so it may have pulled out the rest of the way, by now. If not, the shortness of my leg will not be noticed as the difference between the two is so small. I shall be glad when I am able to get out of bed. I have been on my back for over two months, but I don't think it will be so long before I will have a try at getting around.

November 22nd, 1944.

Just a line, hoping to find you all in the best of health, as it leaves me as well as can be expected, under the circumstances. My wound is coming along fairly well, at least I don't feel any pains from it, but I am still not able to get up, which is something I shall be glad of when the time does come. I guess this is going to be another time I won't be with you for Xmas, however, the time will come when I shall be with you.

November 26th, 1944.

It's almost two weeks since I last wrote you, but there isn't anything to write about anyway. I'm feeling fine and still working in the sugar factory — we will be through here in about another month and I hope the war is over by then. I still haven't any cigarettes — they are quite a problem here. I just hope I can receive a cigarette parcel for Xmas — I think we shall have a pretty good Xmas here, that's if our Red Cross parcels keep coming. We get an extra parcel, so they say. Well, I think that's all for this time. Wishing you a Merry Xmas and New Year and let's hope we're all together for the next one.

December 18th, 1944.

Another week and it will be Xmas. I hope you will have as happy a time as is possible. If you haven't already had any letters from me you should get one any day now, I guess that would be as good a Xmas present as you could get except for me getting home myself, but I guess it will be one more Xmas I won't be at home. I shall be glad myself when I get a letter and some cigarettes from you. They are having a concert at the hospital on Xmas and the Doctor is going to have me taken down to it on a stretcher which will be a change for me as I haven't been out of this bed yet. There's not a thing to worry about as I am coming along very well.

December 24th, 1944.

Well, this is Xmas Eve, so thought I would drop a line or two. It's really nice out, moonlight — wish I were a free man for a day or two. My chum and I made our Xmas cake yesterday, and it looks real good. We have icing on it and all —

we cooked our meat as well and it looks good too. We are having a concert tomorrow night — they bought us a piano here for a few days. We have a guitar here too but can't get any strings for it, so I'd like you to send me a set as soon as you could, one never knows how long we'll be here. I think that Xmas here will be as good as in the army. Well, that's all for this time, hope you all have a Merry Xmas and Happy New Year.

Card.

December 26th, 1944.

Had a wonderful day Xmas day, all we could eat for dinner and tea. The staff of the hospital put on a concert at night for us. In all we kept up the Xmas spirit.

STALAG LUFT VII

November 5th, 1944.

Hope this reaches home come Xmas, also my card I sent last week. Some of the lads here on camp make the cards, and sell them for cigarettes which are the common currency. They are very well done, I shall buy some more and send some to the girls. I smoke a pipe, so I use my cig. ration to swap for chocolate and other things. Hope you are all well at home, as we are well here. We are busy saving up for Xmas dinner, and can by now, between us, turn out a fair meal. We are quite proud of our "Stalag Luft Special" (that's a stew of our own design); the recipe of which we have passed on. As ever, I shall be thinking of home on Xmas day. Must close for now, to see to our food. Cheerio. Merry Xmas and Happy New Year.

STALAG VIIA

November 6th, 1944.

I'm tickled pink to hear from you again and so many letters too. Yesterday and today, I received no fewer than 11 letters from you, plus two from Mother and 15 snapshots. Your letters were dated from July right up to October 8th which is excellent going. I've received your June personal parcel, a clothing parcel from the Can. Red Cross, and your T. Eaton parcel of books and running shoes. As for clothing, I'm well supplied now. I'm astounded at your news of Cornwall's earth quake. I've never heard anything like that happening in our district before, except minor tremors which amounted to nil. I'm writing this on top of my bed, (3 stories high) and the light being rather too far away for convenience. Am attending church regularly on Sundays, and Bible study classes during the week, which isn't doing me any harm.

November 20th, 1944.

I had a letter this week from you. Very glad to hear everyone is well. I am very well myself. At least I feel O.K. Sorry to hear you are not receiving my mail, it is not because I am not writing, as I write pretty near every week. Well, as yet I only received one parcel from you and that was sent in June. I think something is wrong somewhere. Oh well, it won't be long till I will be seeing you all again. So the farm is coming along pretty good, keep it up. How is the weather now, pretty cold, I bet. Same here. Look as if my paper is getting short so I must close.

November 20th, 1944.

I am writing to thank you for sending me a further parcel of three hundred cigarettes. This is the second I've received since becoming a prisoner of war. It will probably interest you to know that this particular parcel was despatched to my old camp in Italy in June 1942, was apparently held up at Geneva, then redirected to my present camp. Thus it has taken no less than two years and five months to get here. The cigarettes were in perfect condition and needless to say, very very welcome; in fact they couldn't possibly have come at a better time. Would you please convey to all the members of your association my deepest gratitude for being so kind. Such gifts as these are a great tonic and so once more, thanks very much and the best luck to you all.

December 4th, 1944.

Just a few more lines to say everything is so, so. How are you all these days, all in good health, I hope, as it leaves me in the same way. I bet you are busy these days, eh? I hope you have the turkey good and fat, although I won't be there to help you to eat it. I was thinking for awhile I may have been, but now I can see I won't be. There are personal parcels in, but so far none for me, but I have hopes for some next week. We have a good time cooking up our meals with what we have, pretty good sometimes.

STALAG XIB

November 11th, 1944.

Just a line to let you know I am well and feeling fine, and hope you know by this time that I am a prisoner of war in Germany. I hope you are well and that I hear from you as soon as possible.

November 18th, 1944.

Just a line to let you know I am well. Don't worry about me as I am getting along fine and just waiting for the day when I get home. What a re-union we will have! How is everything a-

round Stanley? I suppose quite cold by now. I had a share in 2 Red Cross parcels, they are sure nice to get. I saw a movie a few days ago, "Girl Crazy", starring Mickey Rooney. Here's hoping I won't be away too long. Take good care of yourself and the boy, tell him to be a good boy for his Dad.

December 28th, 1944.

Just a line to say I am fine but wish you would send me 4 or 5 thousand cigs. Well Xmas is over for this year. I had a good Xmas.

STALAG XIIA

December 8th, 1944. Rec'd Feb. 26th, 1945..

This being Sunday evening and nothing to do, decided to drop you a few lines. I'm in the very best of health, hope you and rest of family are the same. I'm getting quite fat now, the fattest I've been since I've been in the army. But I guess that's because I do most of my own cooking. Made a lovely bread pudding this afternoon with cream on it made from powdered milk and butter from a Red Cross parcel which I receive every week. Cut hair practically all day. There are fifty men here that I have to keep trimmed up. That keeps me very busy. Sure hope you have received some of my mail by this time as I have not received any of yours yet. I suppose you are getting all fixed up for Xmas; certainly wish I could be there with you, but guess I'll make out O.K. because they say P.O.W.'s have a pretty good Xmas. Well, paper is getting short so get a letter to me as soon as possible with some photos of yourself and family. Will say so long for now.



Group taken at Stalag IID. Seated: Bill Morgan (Detroit % Windsor); Bert MacKenzie (Meaford); Russ Wilcox (Windsor); Roland DuVal (Montreal). Standing: Tommy McClean (Toronto); Bill Jeskay (Winnipeg); Maurice Snook (Windsor); Allan Sloan (Windsor); Lyall Deremo (Toronto). Kindly lent by Mrs. M. I. Deremo.

Card

November 12th, 1944. Rec'd Feb. 26th, 1945.

Here I am at a new camp. Like it quite well. I'm in best of health. Hope you are the same. I am looking forward to some mail from home soon, also chocolate and smokes. I'm back in the barber business again and quite happy to do so. Received barber tools from Red Cross. Well Good Bye.

STALAG 344

June 20th, 1944.

Very many thanks for your kind letter, received two days ago, having taken over six months to reach me. It is a great pity that mail is subjected to such delay, but we all know that the Red Cross are doing all they can to help matters and a very grand job of work they are doing too. I feel I cannot repeat too often my very sincere thanks to you and to the Relatives Association, for your repeated kindness and generosity in having

made my detention here a little easier. But in one respect I feel rather guilty. I have been receiving parcels from England too. Though it is impossible for my father to send parcels from Rio, I wrote to the Red Cross and asked them to allow a friend in England to act as next of kin on my behalf. This they promptly did. Parcels from Canada came as a complete surprise, now I feel that I am getting more than my share. I had much more to write in order to reply to your letter fully, but that will have to be postponed until next time. G. is fine and taking active part in sport, no doubt you will be hearing from him too. Will be writing again soon.

November 12th, 1944. Rec'd Feb. 24th, 1945.

Received three June letters the early part of last month. The June parcel came intact and duly appreciated. Tea, coffee, and sugar go a bit better than maple sugar, although it sure is a treat. How about dropping a line to the Dept. of Education



Group taken at Stalag Luft III. Front row — second from right: Flt/Lt. A. B. Thompson (Penetang) Back row — second from left: Flt/Lt. Peter Roper (Port Hope); fourth from left: Flt/Lt. Ralph M. Johnson (Westmount) Kindly lent by Mrs. J. D. Johnson.

and find the requirements, facilities, etc., necessary to take a course in Aeronautical Eng., also if rehabilitation grants are applicable to courses taken in the States. I expect that will depend upon whether courses are available in Canada. I am not as yet interested in correspondence courses. You mentioned preparing a special parcel for later when I return home. Well, here is an idea which is good providing we return to Blighty for a time. Send this parcel, or parcels, of small kit including a couple of silver grey shirts and a good pair of oxfords, to someone, or to Canada House or the Beaver Club, so that I can pick it up as soon after arrival as possible. Thank you for the two good books.

November 19th, 1944. Rec'd Feb. 5th, 1945.

You will now be in the throes of Christmas shopping, and I can imagine how the "Bay" and Eaton's will be decorated. Here today we are having our first good day in weeks. Last week the first snow fell, making the camp very muddy. I hope this is a bit of Indian summer, although it is a little late for that. We have a French Canadian Jesuit here now. He was on his way to the missions in Africa when picked up. I am hoping to get some French lessons from him this winter. He couldn't talk English before capture and even now his sermons are a penance for the congregation, although he can converse easily in English. Please don't send any more games (Steeplechase, Monopoly, etc.) They are a dead loss. Playing cards, gramophone needles and books are much more useful.

December 3rd, 1944. Rec'd Feb. 26th, 1945.

The winter has just begun here. Although it is cold enough to harden up the mud there is no snow, and I saw a good soccer match between the B. E. F. and the M. E. F. this afternoon. There is no equipment here now that most of the Canadians are gone, so I don't think I will ever play hockey in Germany. However, we may be able to wangle a walk out to the lake when it has frozen. I am feeling fine maybe those vitamins are good. I have plenty for the duration now. Would like to read "Epic of America", J. T. Adams, "Invitation to Life", Eric Knight. "We All Own Canada" was interesting. Would like to read "Make this your Canada", David Lewis and F. Scott. All the best in '45.

December 10th, 1944. Rec'd Feb. 24th, 1945.

I am glad you have at last heard from — school. There is plenty more that I would like to know about it, but no doubt there is too much detail, and anyway I can find out later. I mentioned in my last letter about sending a parcel to England,

providing you think that I am not coming straight home. As far as I am concerned there are a few courses in my line that I wish to take before returning.

December 28th, 1944.

From my date you will see that Xmas has gone by, and once again thanks to the Red Cross we didn't fare too badly. The Xmas parcels failed to arrive in time, but we have great hopes for the New Year. A few days ago, a parcel of cigs arrived at our Welfare Dept., addressed no doubt to a repatriated prisoner, and some of them were given to me along with a card, hence my writing to you, to express my appreciation. One can have no idea of the value of a cigarette here, and if I tell you that it made the Xmas complete, I'm sure you will understand. At the moment we are enjoying wintry sunshine, cold by day and hard, some of your boys are even eating and we look forward to the New Year with confidence and I hope and wish that 1945 will bring to you the happiness you have brought to all of us.

MARLAG UND MILAG NORD

January 4th, 1945. Rec'd February 16th, 1945.

Happy New Year. My last letter sent December 28. As English cigs seem to be held up and may be for some time, will you send two thousand. Hoping for some of mine soon. We received two chocolate bars from your association. Thank you so much. Milag sent these to us as they get them, we have to rely on Milag to send us what we are due.

STALAG LUFT III

August 6th, 1944.

Well we are on the move. Our address will apparently remain Kriegsgefangenen Lager 3, since that is the main mail centre and censoring place for the airforce mail. I'm beginning to think that doesn't matter, though, because I still haven't received any mail and have about given up hope. There are a lot of Canadians, here, from Dieppe, but I understand they are mostly from Windsor and I haven't run into anyone I know. I am well and am hoping to see you soon. Don't worry.

August 20th, 1944.

Believe it or not, I got my first mail, this week. Gee, it was good to hear from home, after waiting 7 months. I certainly hope you didn't have to wait so long. Neither yours or dad's were the first from you, according to the contents. What I wouldn't give for a good swim. We are pretty well settled down, now. I am in what we call a combine, with a chap from Toronto. We joined

up together and were together till last June. He lasted longer than I did, though. He has only been down four months. We pool our food and cook it together. You ought to see our cooking facilities. Everything is made of cans, even to the stoves. Talk about necessity being the mother of invention. We have a blower on our stove and it is quite efficient and will burn anything, even ashes. If this letter takes as long to reach you as yours did, I hope I'll be with you when you get it.

September 5th, 1944.

Many thanks for the blankets, clothing parcel, cigarettes and letters. I now have three from dad and four from mother. Once the mail started I really hit the jack pot. The blankets are swell. It makes an awful difference. The things in the parcel were also very well chosen. I am going to make an apple pie. It is a little difficult making crust out of crushed biscuits, but it is possible. Baking is also a little difficult without an oven, but we made a raisin pie last week, so it can be done. I got the snaps alright, thanks a lot.

October 9th, 1944.

We are getting rainy weather at present & chilly at nite, so the blanket I received on the hottest day of the year is coming in very handy. We are busy with lectures & soccer but don't do too much running around as we are on half parcels and don't have too much energy to spare. It does not do to study too much as some of them get "bushed"

from it. We had a band show last week & all the boys enjoyed it very much. I have not received any parcels of late but there are a lot down at the "forlager" so I might get one.

October 16th, 1944. Rec'd February 10th 1945.

I was cook today and here is our menu at present. Breakfast:— 2 slices of German bread with margarine & a cup of tea. Lunch:— 2 slices of bread & a spread or a piece of cheese and a cup of coffee. Tea:— Bread & a cup of German coffee. Supper:— 2 tins of corned beef, potatoes mashed & roasted and a cake I made. I broke up two packets of Amer. biscuits fine and some ground barley, 1/2 tin of margarine, 1 pkt. of raisins & some sugar and a little Klim. Mix it till tacky & put in greased pan & bake for 20 mins. Believe it or not, it tasted O.K. We have to be snappy on the fire as 134 fellows get their food cooked on a range 3' x 2' x 2'6". We cook by rooms & there are eight in our room which is 14 x 14 ft. This is our usual menu, but we seem to have a fair amount of prunes for dessert. On full parcels we have more to eat but am afraid I have some weight to put on when I get home. I forgot to mention we have a cup of coffee or cocoa & slice of bread in the evening. Some evenings we have a few rubbers of bridge, but most of the time we read or go to bed early.

October 20th, 1944. Rec'd March 1st, 1945.

We've spent three days moving furniture about, scrubbing down, and making for ourselves a pre-



Group taken at Stalag VIIA. Pte Earl S. Whitney in centre of first row. Kindly lent by Mrs. Earl S. Whitney of Cornwall.

sentable habitation. With five bookshelves and many pictures, we have a good-looking establishment, but it has taken fully a year to accomplish this. I'm glad N. L. paid you a visit. I didn't know him very well, but he could give you a picture of the doubtful days. Don't worry about my not liking macaroni: it was the lack of it and everything else that reduced the girth. I have just finished a cooking term, and I did hope that during it, some of our n.o.k. parcels would come in so that I could dish up some apple pies — one of us is bound to get apples — but no luck! Cooking for the gang is an all day job for eight days, recurring about once in six weeks. Sometimes we have soup, but our usual meal is Red Cross meat, and potatoes, (a word censored here) vegetable if available, and a dessert of cake, pie, pudding or any convenient concoction, usually very tasty. Breakfast, lunch and tea consists of a brew — tea or coffee — and bread. We finish the day with a brew and biscuits at night. One day I'll give you a picture of "stooge" day (cook's helper), and "dhobi" day (wash day).

October 22nd, 1944. Rec'd Feb. 22nd, 1945.

Well here it is time to be wishing you a Merry Xmas, and a very Happy New Year. Gosh! sure thought I'd be saying that in person this year, still I suppose they might as well do the job properly while they are at it. I'm not exactly looking forward to another winter here, but still I can't complain. I'm still in the best of health and we're getting enough to eat — if a little monotonous, it's good wholesome food "Thanks to the Red Cross". All of us in our barrack have been together for a year and half some of us two years now, so we don't go short of fun, and comradeship. This life may be a bit dreary, but it sure teaches you how to live with your fellow men. A lesson this whole world could learn. So I suppose it's truly an "ill wind that blows nobody any good".

October 22nd, 1944.

This is the first mail that I have written since August, as I was firmly convinced in my own mind that I would be corresponding with you from England before you would receive any from Germany, but just lately I have been forced to change my mind, so I have started again. I shall continue to write to the very end from now on. Since August, I have received twenty letters from you, with dates ranging from March to July. I was very pleased to do so as you already know, and to hear that you are all well. The proper studio photograph of the kiddies really staggered me when I first looked at it. I still can't believe

that I am the father of such two big, healthy, good-looking kiddies. I am really proud of that photograph and have shown it to all the boys. I received June's personal parcel the other day and it certainly did come in handy.

October 22nd, 1944.
(continued)

In the last two months I have had twelve letters from mother; dates from March to July. Also four from H. and J.; one from J. and one from Mrs. P. Cigarettes parcels very good just lately, and a tobacco parcel from you. Please thank everybody and thanks a thousand from me to you. Have heard from England as well. Very sorry to disappoint you folks at home but I am firmly convinced that I shall not be home for Christmas. I shall be satisfied myself if I have the privilege of spending my fourth Christmas overseas in England. At least I shall be in civilization once again.

October 29th, 1944.

Mail coming through much better, lately. I have some as late as the latter part of September. I also got your snaps, many thanks. We are all hoping it will soon be all over and just a bad dream.

November 26th, 1944.

This month I received your letters of Sept 3 & 24. I had better wish you a Merry Christmas, although this may be a little late. I have all the parcels you have sent, including the August personal parcel. I am very glad to have the mitts and socks and especially the food. Last week I got some cigarettes from Auntie. I got 1000 cigs from the Legion on Oct. 31. The war seems to be going pretty well for us lately. I might be home for Christmas yet — I hope. Have you sent any snapshots yet? I haven't any pictures at all. There are plenty of interesting lectures during the fall and winter and I'm getting genned up on lots of subjects.

December 14th, 1944.

This month so far I have received your letters of Sept. 19, Oct. 1, 12 and 15, also cigarettes. Well It's not long till Christmas now. I would like to have some books on the cheese industry in Ontario, methods of manufacture, production, distribution, organization etc. Send them at your own discretion. I saw a good play last week "The Importance of Being Ernest". We had our first permanent snowfall during the night and I guess it's here to stay. I hope you are all well at home.

DIRECTORY

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