

About 43 cents per week was some salary. The first few days the food given us was fairly good, but the hotel man was a swine, and the rations went from bad to worse. At the end of two weeks we told our guards if they could not give us better food we would not work. The Prussian burgomaster came into our room, stamped around and shouted, but did not frighten anyone. Two days later we were sent back to Giessen, and put in the "strafe barracks."

Prisoners in the "strafe barracks" are not allowed any tobacco. Letters, but no parcels, may be received. No letters can be written, and the prisoner must sit on a stool for hours each day. No whistling or singing, and very little talking is allowed. Each day some of the men are taken out and made to dig trenches and fill them in again. The worst warders in the camp were in charge. The officer was a typical German bully. Carr and myself remained in the punishment barrack only two or three days, when we were released on account of being sick. Later in the week one of the Canadians did something which displeased the Huns. The officer ordered one of the warders to throw the Canadian outside. The warder could not do so, and the officer went to his assistance, much to the amusement of the other prisoners. The two Germans could not put the "Englander" out. Finally, with the assistance of a third man, the Canadian was pushed through the doorway.

During the summer nine British prisoners refused to work in a mine because minerals were being taken out for making munitions. The German guards prodded the prisoners with bayonets, knocked them down with rifle butts, and kicked them. Finally the men were told they would be shot. The nine men lined up with their backs against a brick wall and told the guards to shoot. One guard brought his rifle to the firing position, hesitated a moment, and lowered the rifle; the prisoners laughed. Those men, I think, had more courage than is required to face bursting shells. The party was returned to Giessen, two men were put in cells for fourteen days, and all did six weeks in strafe barracks.

A large number of Canadians tried to escape while out at work, but so far as I know, none from Giessen succeeded in gaining their freedom. When caught the runaway prisoners were brought back to camp and given a sentence of two weeks in cells and six weeks strafe barracks. A ring was painted with red paint, on either breast or knee, to distinguish them from ordinary prisoners. All prisoners of war at Giessen wearing khaki or civilian clothes had a red stripe painted on each arm from shoulder to wrist and down the outside of each leg, also a stripe down the middle of the back.

The British prisoners owe a debt of gratitude to the Red Cross Society for many parcels of clothing and blankets, in addition to parcels of food sent to Germany. While a number of parcels go astray, the great majority, if properly packed and addressed, reach the individual for whom they are intended.

Carr and myself were finally returned as non-combatants, after having spent eight and a half months in Germany.