

## Eight Months In a German Prison Camp.

*In this continuation of his narrative Sergt. Walsh describes prison life at Giessen.*

A board fence some seven or eight feet in height, with three strands of barbed wire on the top, surrounds the Giessen prison camp, which is divided into ten companies or compounds, each containing five barracks, two lavatories, a small canteen building, one kitchen, and a water tap. Every prisoner is provided with a mattress filled with either a sort of wood shavings, or seaweed, a pillow filled like the mattress, one blanket in the summer and two in the winter.

All money in possession of prisoners must be turned in to German officials, who give special stamps in exchange. The stamps are negotiable only in camp canteens, or in specially appointed stores when men are away from the camp at work. Sentry boxes some twenty feet in height, are placed at short intervals around the fence, and in one corner of, and overlooking the camp is a large platform, on which are mounted several machine guns.

Each morning the two camp hospitals are visited by a German medical officer, who examines, and orders treatment for any men reporting sick. A German is in charge, with English and French orderlies doing the work. Medicines are as a rule rather scarce: aspirin, castor oil, and calomel are the cure for all ailments. Amongst the French prisoners taken in October were two dentists. They sent home for their instruments and did the dental work for the prisoners. It is claimed by men who have been interned in different camps that Giessen is one of the best, not only as regards the water and sanitary arrangements, but also the general treatment of prisoners.

During the first few weeks of our imprisonment the Germans seemed to have a great antipathy towards the British. Evidently they thought we were desperate characters. All razors and pocket knives, except very small ones, were taken away. Some days we were made to stand for two or three hours, because one or two men smiled when a German warden counted us several times to make sure no mistake was made in the number.

Near the middle of June the first working parties of Canadians were sent out from camp. Some went to mines, on farms, in stone quarries, on railroads and various other work. My lot fell in with a party of twenty sent out to a small town, excavating for laying water pipes. When we arrived at our destination we were put in a basement room of a hotel, the windows being covered with barbed wire. It gave one the feeling we were caged animals. Some of the boys threw in cigarettes, to see what would happen; I suppose just life children toss peanuts to the bears in a park.

The pay promised was 50 pfennig (12 cents) per day; 30 pfennig was paid in stamps, and the balance held until the end of the war.