

this and other recipes from the fat French cook.

All that day and for several following, officials and guards were busy numbering and renumbering us and assigning us to our companies. They were hopelessly German about it and did so many times and very thoroughly. There were twelve thousand men in the camp and eight hundred in the larger. The majority were Russian and French with a fair sprinkling of Belgians. There were perhaps six hundred British in the entire camp. The various nationalities were mixed up and each section given a hut very similar to those our own troops occupy in England. A number of smaller camps in the neighboring districts were governed from this central camp.

For dinner we had shadow soup. The recipe in my diary reads: "For eight hundred men, two hundred gallons of water, one small bag of potatoes and one packet of herbs." Meat soup was two hundred gallons of water, ten pounds of meat, one small bag of potatoes and ten pounds of vegetables. This was the most nutritious of the lot. Unfortunately for us, the small portion of meat and most of the potatoes were given to the French, both because the cook and all his assistants were Frenchmen and because the authorities willed it so.

This was usually managed without any apparent unfairness by serving the British first and the French last, with the result that the one received a tin full of hot water, while the Frenchmen's spoons

stood to attention in the thicker mess they found in the bottom. This, with other things, contributed to make bad blood between the two races. A great show was made of stirring up the mess, but it was a pure farce.

Once in two months a ration of sausage was dished out. For breakfast once a week there was one pint of acorn coffee without sugar or milk and one and a half square inches of Limburger cheese. To quote from the diary: "Before serving open all windows and doors. Then send for the Russians to take it away."

The Germans discriminated against the British prisoners. When there was any disagreeable duty the cry went up for "der Engländer." The much-sought-for cockhouse jobs all went to the French, who waxed fat in consequence. No Britisher was ever allowed near the cockhouse. The French had for the most part been there for some time, and their country lying so close by they were receiving parcels. We were not, and this made the food problem a very serious one for us. At first the French used to give us a certain amount of their own food, but eventually ceased to do so. Most of them worked down in the town daily and could square the guard long enough to buy tobacco at twenty-five pennings or two and a half pence—a package, which they sold to us later at eighty pennings, until we got on to their profiteering.

Except for the starving, as I look back now, Giesen was not such a bad camp as such places go. At least it was the best

that we were to know. The discipline of course was fairly severe, but on the other hand the Commandant did not trouble us a great deal. The petty annoyances were harder to endure. Frequently we would get the "Raus" at half-hour intervals by day or night. "Raus out," "Raus in," and so on. We never knew what they wanted. The least punishment meted out for the most trifling offence was three days' cells. Some got ten for refusing to work in munition and steel factories, particularly British and Canadians.

Their so-called courts-martial were mockeries of trials. The culprit was simply marched up to the orderly room, received his sentence and marched away again. He was allowed no defence.

Some of the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry were "warned" for work in a munition factory. When the time came round they were taken away, but refused to work. They were knocked about quite a bit. One was shot in the leg and another layoneted through the hip, and all were sent back to camp, where they were awarded six weeks in the punishment camp, known as the strafe barracks. This was a long hut in which were two rows of stools a few paces apart. The Raus blew for the culprits at five-thirty. At six they were marched to the hut and made to sit down in two rows facing one another, at attention—that is, body rigid, head thrown well back, chest out, hands held stiffly at the sides and eyes straight to the front for two hours! Meanwhile the sentries marched up and down the lane watching for any relaxation or levity. If so much as a face was pulled at a twinkling eye across the way another day's strafe was added to the penalty. At the end of the two hours one hour's rest was allowed, during which the prisoners could walk about in the hut, but could not lie down. This continued all day until "Lights Out." For six weeks. No mail, parcels, writing or exercise was permitted the prisoners during that time, and the already scanty rations were cut.

#### The Appeal for Casement

During good behavior we were allowed two post cards and two letters a month, with nine lines to the former and thirteen to the page of the latter. No more, no less. Each letter had four pages of the small, private-letter size. The name and address counted as a line. Mine was Kriegsgefangenenlager, Kompanie No. 6, Barackue No. A. The writing had to be big and easily read and on four sides of the paper in the letters. No complaint or discussion of the war was permitted. Fully one-half of those written were returned for infringements, or fancied ones, of these rules. Sometimes when the censor was peevish they were merely chucked into the fire. And as they had also to pass the English censor it is no wonder that many families wondered why their men did not write.

We were there for three months before our parcels began to arrive. We considered ourselves lucky if we received six out of ten sent, and with half the contents of those six intact. In the larger camps the chances of receipt were better. The small camps were merely units attached to and governed by the larger ones, which thus handled the mail before giving it to the authorities at the smaller ones, thus doubling the chances of fault finding and of theft.

The appeal for Casement and the Irish Brigade was made to us. A number of prisoners were taken apart and the matter broached privately to them. Pamphlets on the freeing of Ireland were also distributed. I did not see anyone go over, and an Irishman who was detailed with another Canadian and myself on a brickyard fatigue said that they had regretted only forty in the camp. The whole thing turned out to be a failure.

There were twelve of us all told on that brickyard job. Three or four shoveled clay into the mixing machine, two more filled the little car, which two others pushed along the track of the narrow-gauge railroad. We were guarded by four civilian Germans of some home defense corps, all of whom labored with us. The two trammers used to start the car, hop on the brake behind and let it run of its own momentum down the incline to the edge of the bank where it would be checked for dumping. Sometimes they forgot to brake the car so that it would ricochet on in a flying leap off the end of the track, and so on over the dump. The guards would rage and swear but could prove nothing as long as our fellows did not get too raw and do this too frequently.

To be Continued next week

## Some Side Lights at Ottawa

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accepted for voluntary enlistment on account of the above reasons.

One of the most commendable bits of legislation of the session is a bill introduced by Sir George Foster as the result of a general demand all over the country and designed to protect the purchasers of foodstuffs and other commodities in regard to the matter of weight, quality, etc. The resolution, on which the bill is based and which outlines its purpose in general terms, is as follows:

"That it is expedient to provide that packages containing human food or other commodities should be marked with the name and address of the fillers, the weight, measure or quantity of their contents, and the dates of packing; but not including packages for export, articles weighed or measured at the time of sale in the presence of the purchaser, or fresh fruit and vegetables; that penalties should be provided for violations of these provisions, and that such provisions should come into force on the first day of January, 1918." The proposed legislation was generally approved.

Sir George pointed out that the old custom of weighing out everything to the customer is becoming less prevalent and there has been a very wide call that shoppers should be protected as far as possible by having marked on the packages the names of responsible makers, weight, etc. "The man who makes the goods," he said, "is responsible for making them and they carry his brand and name. In the second place the quality and weight should be marked upon the packages so that the buyer can be certain as to just exactly what it contains."

The commission appointed to review the findings of W. F. O'Connor, the Cost of Living Commissioner, is headed by a lawyer, Mr. G. F. Henderson, K.C., of Ottawa, who was very much in the public eye some fifteen months ago when he acted as counsel for the famous Col. J. Wesley Allison who figured in the shell inquiry. There is little expectation that the investigators of the investigator (Mr. O'Connor) will have their report ready before the house rises.

## KILLING THISTLES

Canadian thistle and sow thistle are hard to kill as they have underground stems from which new plants are sent up. A piece of this stem if cut off and given the right conditions will form a new plant. The first step in the eradication is to mow the plants, then plow them under and disc the land as often as new shoots appear. Keeping the top from growing will in time kill the roots and underground stems. Growing a crop of corn in hills and cultivating thoroughly both ways and hand hoeing the hills is another way of eradication. Getting rid of the patches of Canada thistle and sow thistle now will save a lot of work a little later.—N. D. Agricultural College.

Dandelions are not the only source of food that can be had for the gathering, according to a statement from the New York State College of Agriculture, which mentions the following pothebs that are edible: Dock, narrow-leaved, curled or yellow; sorrel or sorgrass, horse-radish, chicory, tall or slender nettle, harddock, milkweed, mustard, pigweed and purslane or pursley.

While these pothebs supply little energy or protein they are valuable sources of plant fiber and they contain organic acids, iron and mineral matter used by the body. Much of the mineral matter is lost if the water in which they are cooked is thrown away. The college gives the following directions for cooking pothebs:

Pick over the herbs, wash them well and cook them in boiling water or in steam until they are tender. A speck of soda added to the cooking water helps to soften tough fiber, and to preserve the green color. For old, strong-flavored plants, a second water for cooking may be necessary. Whenever flavor permits, the water in which the herbs are cooked should be saved and used for bouillon or cream soup. A few slices of salt pork or bacon may be cooked with the greens. While the possibilities of danger from poisonous plants being gathered for greens are not great, it is better to make sure of the identity of the plants used for food.

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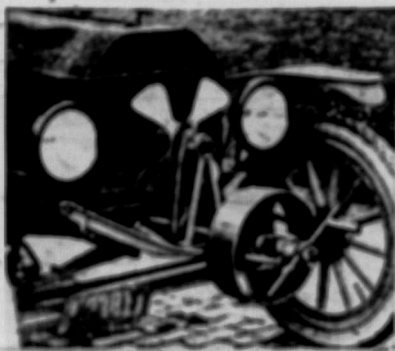
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