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**PRISONERS IN GERMANY**

British Not Treated as Well as French—Insufficient Food Supply—Poor Quarters, Little Recreations—Attache of American Embassy in Paris Describes What He Saw, On a Recent Visit to Internment Camps

When the war broke out last July Mr. Wood, the author of this article, who was studying architecture in Paris, became attache at the American Embassy at Paris under the regime of Mr. Herriek. Last fall he made four different trips to the front, covering the territory between Vitry-le-Francois and a point near Dunkirk. In December and January, as bearer of special despatches, he went several times to France, England, Switzerland, Holland, Germany, Austria and Hungary. He here describes what he probably a unique experience. The Germans have, it is understood, not allowed the same person to see both a camp of French prisoners and a camp of British prisoners in Germany. They have, for reasons best known to themselves, seemed to prefer that there should be no opportunity for comparison. By an unusual circumstance, Mr. Wood was able to see a camp of each kind, and he here relates briefly the result of his visit and makes comparison between the two. Mr. Wood, as he himself has said, thinks it should be the aim of a neutral to observe with an unbiased mind, no matter what the state of his emotions may be, and he has put down his observations here with that principle in view. A book by him entitled "The Note Book of an Attache" is to be published by the Century Company the latter part of this month.

Berlin, Saturday, December 5, 1914.—I went this morning with Lieutenant Franz Donait, of the United States army, to inspect the prison camp at Zossen, which is about forty kilometres from Berlin, and contains at present twenty thousand French soldiers, guarded by fifteen hundred Landstrum.

The camp was surrounded by three lines of very high and effective barbed wire fences. In each of the alleys between these fences German sentinels paced back and forth. The prisoners seemed to be excellently cared for, and were healthy, well-fed and fairly contented. They were physically better off than they would be in the muddy trenches at the front. They have all been given some kind of work to do, such as caring for their own prison camps, carrying wood, cooking, and building sheds for themselves, or barracks for the German army. We saw a procession of about two thousand who came in from a near-by forest carrying tremendous bundles of fagots for firewood. As they marched they were singing a rithard French song with much spontaneous gusto. We considered their condition a great credit to their captors.

Berlin, Tuesday, January 26, 1915.—I visited the prison camp at Dohberitz to-day. In a military automobile I was conducted there with much ceremony by Captain Fritscheer von G—, Iron Cross and Red Eagle of the Imperial Guard. He is on leave convalescing from a wound in the knee which he received at Ypres. I was expressly told that I might describe what I saw and repeat what I heard as many times and as much in detail as I chose; so that I have no hesitancy in giving you my impression without reserve, even though it was by courtesy of the German Government that I made the trip.

The camp was distant one hour's fast run from Berlin, and was situated on a flat plain which had very little natural or artificial drainage. The cold mud was everywhere from three to four inches deep. On this plain and closely surrounded by heavy barbed wire entanglements were some seventy or eighty rude wooden sheds arranged in four rows with an avenue down the centre. Here are kept some nine thousand prisoners of war, of whom four thousand are British and four thousand Russians. By careful and repeated pacing I estimated that the sheds were about one hundred by thirty feet. Each one had six unopenable windows on a side. In each house were quartered one hundred and twenty-five men. Each house was heated by one stove, and was very hot and stuffy, being hermetically sealed except for the door.

None of the British prisoners had overcoats, personal belongings or blankets. They slept on straw ticks, measuring approximately seven feet by thirty inches. That they all suffered from lice and other vermin was perfectly evident. The whole camp was closely surrounded by barbed wire, and the main avenue was commanded by three field guns placed outside at one end in a little barbed

wire fort. The whole was apparently under the charge of a captain of Landstrum, and the guards were men of the Landstrum. The prisoners looked thin, peaked, unhappy, sickly, and many had boils. They have absolutely nothing to do—they exist. They are fed three times a day—5 a.m., 12 noon and 4 p.m. For "lunch" and "dinner" and also Sunday breakfast they receive about one pint of a thick soup. I tasted some of this and thought it was concocted chiefly of barley and potatoes. I was told that there was meat in it, but could find no evidence of any. For breakfast the prisoners receive black bread with a slice of either cheese or sausage and either tea or coffee. The diet is evidently insufficient. I should say that it was calculated with German accuracy. I was taken through many of the houses, and although no actual prohibition to talk was given, it was practically impossible to speak with the prisoners, as I was always hurriedly rushed along from one place to another. In order to make a pretense of conversation one of the two captives who escorted me would sometimes say to a prisoner: "What nationality are you?" "Scotch, sir." "What regiment?" "Argyll Highlanders, sir." "Ah, so!" and we would then hurry along again. We were in the camp an hour and a half, and during that time I succeeded in asking three short well-chosen questions of intelligent-looking British non-commissioned officers who looked as though they had the courage to brave German fire:

First question—"Do you get enough to eat?"  
Answer—"My Gawd, no!"

Second question—"How do present conditions compare with the past?"  
Answer—"Wonderfully improved, sir, in comparison."

Third question—"How often do you write home?"  
Answer—"One letter every two months, but they say they are going to improve that."

I saw the four o'clock feeding. It reminded me of nothing except seeing animals fed at the "Zoo." In the kitchen I saw the British soldiers receive their afternoon meal. A line of five great cauldrons of hot soup extended down the room, each one being about four feet high and four feet in diameter. The prisoner entered through a vestibule at one end of the building, where they passed between two German sentinels, to whom each delivered up a metal check before being allowed to pass inside. There is a roll-call in the sheds before every meal, and each man is then handed a check, which later entitles him to receive his ration. Each prisoner possesses and keeps constantly with him one iron bowl and one large spoon. When they are permitted to enter the kitchen, the prisoners rush to whatever cauldron is least busy. There a cook, armed with a long-handled measure holding about one pint, ladles out one measureful of soup into each man's bowl, and this constitutes the entire repast. The captain of the Landstrum, in explaining to me about the metal checks, said, indignantly, "Why, if we did not have this system of checks, they would all come back three and four times!"—by which remark he showed the typical German lack of anything

approaching tact or diplomacy.

There were some British sailors and numerous marines among the prisoners. These, according to the Germans, came from Antwerp. They had reached that city just as the Germans entered. They were sent on in the same train to German prisons, and their total war experience consisted in one continued non-change journey from Ostend to the Dohberitz prison camp. The Germans said that there was at times ill-feeling between English and Russians.

The method of punishment in the camp was called "tying up" for one or two hours. I was unable to get details but gathered that this consisted in suspension by some part of the hands. This, however, may have been a wrong conclusion. I was told that the men receive letters from home, about fifty a day, and are also allowed to receive money. Yesterday was a record day, a big mail arriving with some seven thousand marks. They may spend the money at the camp store, which I examined; tobacco, the sausage and insecticide seemed to be the chief articles in stock.

A bath house has recently been provided in which it was possible to take cold showers. The men wash in the open, apparently in the same bowls from which they eat. Water is very sparingly served out to them.

The two German officers who acted as my guides repeatedly impressed upon me that the camp was a model one and that everything was done for the prisoners which they had a right to expect. It seemed to me very much less desirable than the prison camp for French soldiers which I had inspected at Zossen nearly eight weeks ago. Some specific things which the French prisoners possessed and the British lacked were overcoats, blankets, tunks, work, recreation, abundant food, and the opportunity for exercise.

**Monzo Captured Enemy Routed In Fren Central Africa**

Paris, June 20.—The French Minister of the Colonies has received the following from the Governor-General of French Central Africa:

"As a result of heavy fighting from May 24th, which lasted day and night for 72 hours, a Sangha column has forced the enemy to capitulate Monzo, after taking position after position. The squadron took many prisoners, including many white troops and officers of infantry, also many quick-firers, ammunitions, and valuable correspondence."

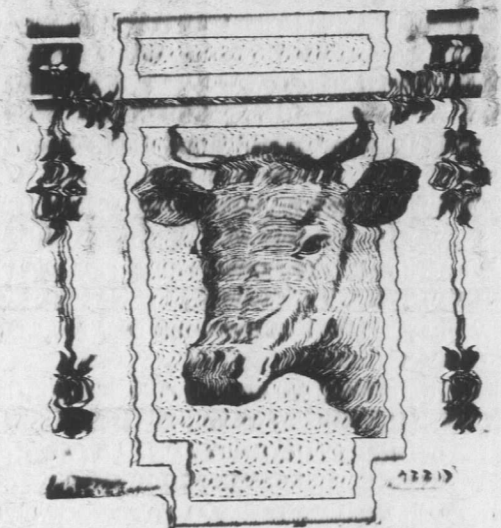
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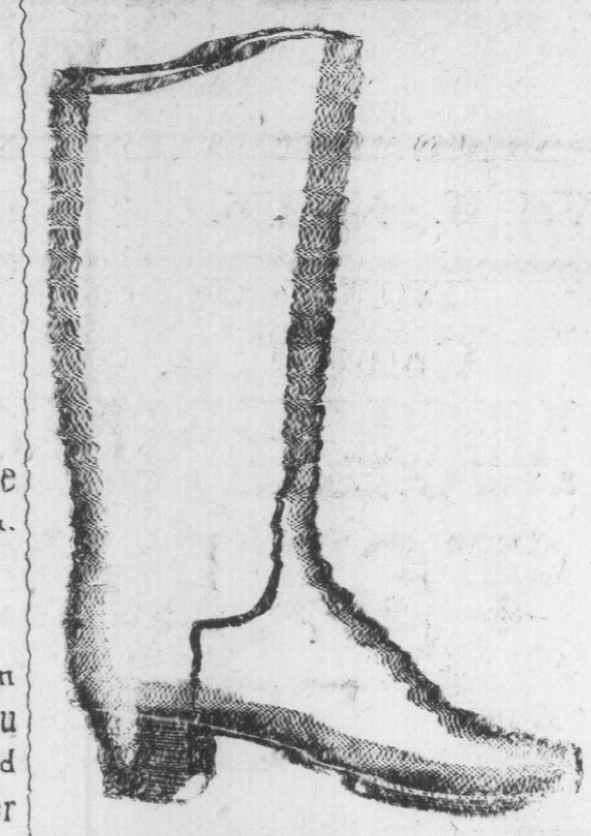
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