

into a hut full of Russians, who did not know what to make of us.

We were so long of hair and beard, so ragged, so emaciated and so altogether filthy that they thought us anything but British soldiers.

Later we found that there were, in all, between four and five hundred Russian, eighty French and Belgian, and, including ourselves, eleven British prisoners, all shoved into two huts in the middle of the usual barbed-wire larder.

As Gleesen was the best camp, so this was the worst of all those we were to know. It was drier than the swamp at Vehmooor, but the drinking water was even worse than the brackish, peat-laden water there. The general sanitary arrangements were terrible. And the food was worse than at Gleesen, the camp in which that lack had been the worst feature among many bad ones. And on top of it all the treatment was bad here. Much worse than any we had known.

A soup, made from a handful of pickled fish roe and a few potatoes was a stock dish, and terrible to taste. On one night a week we received a raw herring fresh from the brine barrel, which we were supposed to eat raw and uncleaned, but could not. One day in seven there was a weak cabbage soup and of course a small daily ration of potato-and-rye bread. Fortunately our parcels were beginning to arrive by this time, so that in fact we fared better than at any of the better camps in the matter of food. With the Russians it was different, and we used to give our soup to them in exchange for their share of boiling water, which we used in conjunction with the contents of our parcels and which they had no use for anyway. However, as we had refused to work we did not require very much food. We used also to give our black bread to the Russians, for which they insisted on doing our washing, though it was little enough of that they did for themselves.

Like Father, Like Son

Ours was a good bunch of fellows and gave freely to one another and to the unfortunate Russians, who rarely received parcels. There was no selling or trading on misfortune here, as in some of the other camps we had been in. The Germans themselves were short of necessities here. They hated to come to the Englishers to buy, so used to send the Russians to beg for soap which they would not use in any event and in this case simply sold to the guards. Discovering this, we shut down on indiscriminate giving. Soap or any other fatty substance was by that time very scarce in Germany, among the lower classes at least. I was the only non-com in our lot, and so put up the stripes I had taken down to avoid giving "Augen Rechts" at Gleesen, and I used that authority to persuade my fellow Britisher to give to the unfortunate Russians rather than to the French, who, like ourselves, were receiving parcels.

A boy of five years or thereabouts used to come regularly to the wire, upon which he would climb and hang like a spider on its web. Grasping it in both small hands and kicking vainly at it and us, he would scream "Engländer Schwein," and I know not what other names, spitting venom like a little wildcat. This was not the ruffian of the camp. The boy was the son of the camp commandant, and the apple of his father's eye.

The commandant was a young chap, a lieutenant. What he lacked in years he made up in hate. He was known as an England hater. We were poison to him. The latrine, a mere shallow pit, was just outside the door of our hut, so the commandant saw to it that the latrine fatigue was always wished off on to the English. We were made to bail it out daily with buckets, which we then carried to the surrounding fields, on which we spread the contents while the commandant and guards laughed. The unteroffizier in immediate charge of us, if left alone would not make us do this. He was the last kind German I remember, and I have mentioned all that I can recall as having performed the slightest act of kindness to us, even of the most negative quality. He used to say that it was a pity to treat us so; that such a job was good enough for the Russians, who were no soldiers anyhow, and who smelled bad

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and would not wash; but for us who were soldiers it was a great shame.

The vermin were so bad here that we chanced further trouble by writing on post cards as though to friends in England and complained. We knew that they would be intercepted and go to the commandant. They did. We were marched to Celle Langer to go through the fumigating machine. We went into a large hut, stripped, tied our clothes in a bundle and shoved them into the large oven to bake for five hours while we sat round with nothing on but a smile. In the interval we were made to run the clippers over our heads and bodies. There were sores on some of the Russians as big as a hand, eaten deep into by the vermin. Uncleanly at best and denied soap here, the lower class of them neglected all the rules of cleanliness. Their noncoms were the reverse, being almost without exception men of some education and general attainments.

To be Continued next week

CANADIAN POTATO CROP

The Canadian potato crop report will be read with interest by the majority of Guide readers for potatoes have been exported from the prairies in larger quantities during the past two years than they ever have been before. The report issued by D. Johnson, the Dominion Fruit Commissioner follows:

British Columbia.—The acreage is estimated at about 5 per cent. increase over an average crop. The plants are looking especially healthy and give promise of a heavy yield.

Alberta.—An average crop is looked for in this province.

Saskatchewan.—There is a substantial increase in the plantings. It is too early to estimate the yield.

Manitoba.—Indication now for a full average crop.

Ontario.—In no case has a decrease in the acreage been reported from any commercial district. It is estimated that the acreage is considerable more than last year and from 5 per cent. to 10 per cent. above the average. Present indications are for a yield per acre considerably above the average.

Quebec.—An increase in acreage is reported with prospects for a yield above the average. Some early plantings on low land were destroyed by rain, and continued cool weather but these have been replanted with late varieties.

New Brunswick.—There has been a 20 per cent. increase for the acreage planted, with prospects of a normal yield per acre.

Nova Scotia.—Some districts report increased planting of from 25 to 35 per cent. The province on the whole is expected to show a substantial increase both in acreage and yield.

Prince Edward Island.—This province also reports increased acreage of from 10 to 15 per cent. and, in addition to this, spraying is much more general. With favourable weather conditions a large crop should be harvested.

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