

(German Division)
9, Carlton House Terrace,
London, S.W.

22nd August, 1916.

Sir,

We have the honour to submit herewith a report covering a visit of inspection to the Prisoners of War Internment Camp at Knockaloe, Isle of Man, on the 12th, 14th, and 15th of August, 1916.

DESCRIPTION.

The Camp, taken as a whole, is composed of four smaller camps, each of which comprises four or more compounds - Camp IV. has seven compounds. The entire Camp is under the general supervision of the Home Office and the Commandant is Lt.-Col. F.W. Panzera, C.M.G. A Sub-Commandant is in charge of each of the four compounds; in Camp I. Major Kaye, in Camp II. Major Fife-Scott, in Camp III. Major Dickson, in Camp IV. Major Nodin.

PRISONERS.

There were 22698 men interned at this camp on the day of our first visit - August 12, 1916. Of these 19011 were German, 3065 were Austrian, 103 were Turks and 518 were of other nationalities.

COMMITTEES.

In addition to the usual "Lowry" and "Markel" Committees and the other Committees mentioned in the report, dated May 18, 1916, there are:-

General Welfare Committees.

Red Cross Committees.

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Sports Committees, which arrange matches between the Compounds.

Football, Baseball, Schlachtball, Fistball
Cricket, Tennis, Wrestling, Skittles and
Boxing Committees.

Physical and Gymnastic Exercises Committees.

Whist Drive Committees.

As an example of the activity of the Dramatic or Entertainment Committees, it may be mentioned that in Camp IV. there are seven theatres - each compound having its own theatre, which is managed by a separate committee - whose seven chairmen meet at the Camp Central Committee offices at intervals, to arrange for the production and exchange of plays, etc. The report for the last half-year covering the theatrical activity in Camp IV. shows the production of 79 theatrical performances - mostly well-known comedies, both English and Continental - 48 variety shows, by professionals and amateurs, 61 classical concerts, 4 athletic and sporting events, 21 open air concerts, etc.

Choral Societies, Orchestras and Benevolent Societies exist in all the camps. There are also postal Committees, which have the general control, under supervision, of all postal matters.

The Central Committee in Camp IV., referred to in the report dated May 18, is now apparently in good working order. This Committee controls the functions of the various committees formed in each of the seven compounds. By reason of its centralising organisation the individual efforts made by the different Committees are equalised and accelerated for the common benefit of the camp, and its offices serve the purpose of a general clearing house

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for correspondence, applications, proposals, etc., relating to committee and administrative work in general.

The Central Committee is composed of:-

- (a) A Supervising Secretary.
- (b) A Chairman elected by the Compound Committees.
- (c) The clerical staff.

All members give their services voluntarily and suitable office facilities have been provided.

There are also in Camp IV. Literary and Scientific Clubs, Chess Clubs, and Skittles Clubs. In Camp IV. alone there are 48 gymnastic and sporting clubs with a total membership of 1774.

SLEEPING ACCOMMODATIONS.

The sleeping accommodations are practically the same as described in the report dated May 18, 1916.

SANITARY ARRANGEMENTS.

In the sanitary arrangements there have been several improvements and needed weather-boards have been added to the latrines.

HOSPITALS.

The five hospitals mentioned in the report dated May 18, 1916, were in charge of the same number of doctors as on that date. There were 36 German attendants and one British attendant.

In Camp I. the number of in-patients was 33 and there were 40 out-patients. The number of deaths since the opening of this camp was 14, all of which were from natural causes.

In Camp II. the average number of in-patients was

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36 daily and the average number of out-patients was 70 daily. Thirteen deaths have occurred since the opening of the Camp, the causes being natural.

In Camp III. there were 23 in-patients and 28 out-patients, the latter number being the daily average for the last two months.

The Isolation Hospital, common to all the four camps, is under the supervision of the doctors in charge of the hospital in Camp III., who are assisted by eight attendants. The number of patients in the hospital on August 12 was 37, of whom 14 were syphilis cases, 16 were tuberculous cases and 7 patients were under observation.

The number of deaths since the beginning in the hospital in Camp III. and the Isolation Hospital, taken together, is 13. Eleven of these deaths were from natural causes, one was from suicide and one was through an accident.

In Camp IV. the in-patients numbered 53 and the out-patients numbered 89. This is the daily average during the summer months. The deaths, since the opening of this camp, have been 15, all of which were from natural causes.

A qualified British dentist is installed permanently and makes the rounds of the camps and compounds at stated intervals, or when wanted.

The general health of the camp is very good - the death rate being but two in a thousand yearly.

KITCHENS.

The kitchen staffs are similar to those mentioned in the previous reports.

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In each camp the catering arrangements are managed by committees elected by the various compounds. Each compound sends, in rotation, two representatives to draw the rations from the Government Agent. Horse-drawn carts are provided.

Each kitchen employs special men, who work as washers-up, potato-pealers, etc., etc. Some of the staffs, in order to utilise the extra issue of flour, are permitted to cook at night.

The quality of the cooking is, in general, good and the quantity conforms to the Government Scale, with an addition to each compound of one bag of flour per diem and one box of onions per week. A copy of the scale of rations is hereto annexed, (EXHIBIT A).^x together with Canteen Price List (EXHIBIT B).^x

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The occupations of the interned are manifold. In addition to those employed in the ways mentioned in the last report, there are masons, mail-bag makers, basket makers, camp cleaners, sanitary workers, sleeper layers for the camp road-beds, store-men, bakers, wash-house attendants, etc. The private occupations include sport instruction, wood-carving, bone-carving, metal-working, lace-making, toy-making, painting and sculpture, and the production of all sorts of articles both useful and ornamental. Two successful Exhibitions have been held of the work of the interned.

EXERCISE.

The opportunities for exercise consist in marching out to the recreation grounds three or four times a

^xSent to Berlin.

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week, and in the out-door and indoor games organised by the Sport Committees.

The older men in Camp III. and the invalids from the Isolation Hospital enjoy walks among the hillside gardens, from the top of which fine views of the sea and surrounding country can be obtained.

There are many tennis grounds in each of the camps. Apparatus and complete outfits for the various sports have been placed by the Government at the disposal of those wishing to use them.

Billiard tables have been placed in some of the halls, where billiards can be played at a very nominal charge.

Besides the above there is opportunity for exercise to a large number in doing out-door work.

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MS.

The conditions of this camp are much the same as when last reported upon - report dated May 18, 1916, covering visit of April 29 and 30, and May 1, 1916 - a notable addition being a new recreation field of 40 acres attached to Camp IV. This field is very much appreciated by the prisoners in Camp IV., which is the largest camp at Knockaloe, and constant use is made of it. It is situated in health-giving surroundings about 110 feet above sea level, and, in consequence, the drainage is such that it will not become muddy in wet weather. Three separate grounds are set apart specially for football, cricket and gymnastics. Other parts are used for walking, climbing and general games.

The general physical conditions of the camp are satisfactory, and, apart from the fact that the interned

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have now been at the camp for two years and their mental depression is very marked, the prisoners appear to be in general good health. All prisoners, however, seem to be in a highly nervous and neurotic condition, and if the strain under which they live is not soon relieved it would seem likely that many cases of mental trouble will result.

The Committees that interviewed the representatives of this Embassy were, in many instances, extremely excited and unrestrained in their language and lodged many complaints of an almost offensive nature against the Embassy and its Staff for, as they said, not looking after their interests properly.

They apparently have lost the power of discrimination and have but very little sense of proportion.

We most respectfully, and urgently, wish to call your attention to the fact that these men are approaching a serious mental crisis, and to ask that all steps necessary for their repatriation be seriously and immediately considered; this is especially necessary in the case of the older men and the unemployed. At its approach the gloom of winter fills them with apprehension. This is due to the psychological condition that exists and does not arise from improper treatment but from the monotony of their confinement and the consequent lack of change in their environment. In this connection we would respectfully point out that internment is more likely to work upon the minds of civil prisoners than upon the minds of military prisoners, who are accustomed

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to discipline and know well how to take care of themselves. This is true in a very marked degree, as comparison with reports on military camps in England will prove. In our opinion it is very necessary that steps for their repatriation be undertaken forthwith.

The authorities are making every effort to better the conditions at Knockaloe, and large quantities of tar and felt are being procured to render the huts dry and comfortable for the winter that is approaching, while the huts are also being provided with porches and double doors.

These improvements are being carried out with the greatest possible despatch, but there is much difficulty in obtaining tar and felt, and facilities for transportation to the Isle of Man are limited.

Paths, consisting of gravel from the beach and placed between two sleepers about 18" apart, have been and are being constructed throughout the camp, which will much improve the conditions in wet weather.

The prisoners complained of a lack of fresh vegetables, and the Commandant admitted that there was some justification for the complaint, but that he has made every effort to obtain adequate supplies for the interned men under his charge.

They also complained bitterly of the brown sugar that has been issued to them, asserting that it contained substances deleterious to their health. We tasted this sugar many times and found it to be ordinary unrefined sugar from sugar-cane. An analysis of this sugar was also made, a copy of which is attached to this report. (EXHIBIT C)^x We would point out, with reference to this

^xSent to Berlin.

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analysis that it was made by analytical chemists who had no knowledge of the origin of the sample.

In two instances men complained that the huts were overcrowded but, on inspection, it was found that they had more than the minimum allowance of space of 600 cubic feet.

Their complaints were often of a trivial nature - probably the result of their mental condition. There were complaints as to delay in repatriation and matters of diet, which latter are not taken up as Dr. Taylor is soon to visit Knockaloe for the purpose of making an exhaustive inspection and analysis of the food.

Our conclusion is that there has been a general improvement of camp conditions since the last visit, and that every effort is being made to still further improve these conditions.

In the Isolation Hospital, we again found but one bath and one tap for all the 30 patients. We recalled attention to this matter and expressed our surprise that it had so long remained without attention. We believe the matter will be remedied shortly. The other sanitary arrangements in this hospital, and, as a matter of fact, throughout the camp, were satisfactory. A new system of sewage disposal is under construction, as the one in existence was not altogether satisfactory, though it has fairly well served its purpose.

The vegetable gardens, which were being planted at the time of the last report, are now in excellent condition and the prisoners, to whom these grounds have been allotted, take great interest in cultivating them

and caring for them. In addition to other vegetables there are now one million cabbages planted in the grounds about Knockaloe Camp.

At the end of this month - August - there is to be a Horticultural Show in each camp - the best compound receiving a prize, for the best flower-plot and the best set of vegetables. There is also to be a competition for garden implements made by the prisoners. For instance, in Camp IV. a little water-wheel has been constructed in a brook, and, by its aid, the prisoners irrigate their gardens.

We have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servants,

(Sgd.) LELAND H. LITTLEFIELD

FRANCIS E. BRANTINGHAM.

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