

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

June 30, 1916.

Sir,

I have the honour to submit to your herewith a report covering a visit of inspection to the Prisoners of War Internment Camp at the Libury Hall German Farm Colony at Ware in Hertfordshire, on May 29, 1916.

INSPECTION.

The Colony is under the general supervision of the Home Office and the Commandant is Captain G. A. Merry.

PRISONERS.

There were 188 civilians interned there, of whom 178 were German and 10 were Austrian. A few of the men, being of the original pensioners and colonists, have their wives and children with them in the camp.

COMMITTEES.

There were no committees.

SLEEPING
ACCOMMODA-
TIONS.

There is sleeping accommodation for 244 interned men. There is one main building, two and a half stories high, about 30 ft. by 40 ft., built of brick, and an annex building made of timber and galvanized iron, which was originally built for industrial, but is now used for living purposes. There are 4 large dormitories, one of which is divided into cubicles, accommodating 4 men in each, for 64 men. The men have iron beds, mattresses, pillows and as many blankets as they require.

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102-946

-3-

In the main building there are 3 dining-rooms, smoking-room, reading room and a library containing over 1,000 books. In the annex there is a recreation room.

Besides these buildings there are eight cottages with 4 rooms and two latrines in each.

The rooms were examined and there was no criticism to be made.

SANITARY
ARRANGEMENTS.

The Colony has its own water supply and sewage system with a septic tank. There are 10 earth closets near the sleeping accommodations with urinals, and 8 others in the garden. There is one bathroom and also 6 shower baths 4 of which have hot and cold water. There are 2 ablution rooms in the main house, one with 38 taps and hot and cold water and the other with 16 taps - also an ablution room in the annex with basins. There is an excellent laundry and drying room with a pump-house. The sanitary arrangements were examined and found neat and clean.

INFIRMARY.

There is a separate building for the hospital, containing 50 beds, which is in charge of an English doctor, assisted by a German nurse. On the day of my visit there were 3 in-patients and 13 out-patients. Two of the in-patients were suffering from colds and one from heart-disease.

There is also a convalescent ward, a shower bath, 4 latrines and an ablution room.

There have been seven deaths since the colony has been used as a camp, principally from old age.

Everything was examined and found in good condition.

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102-946

-3-

KITCHENS.

In the kitchen there was one chef and one cook, both of whom were German. Most of the food is supplied by the work of the Colony itself. A copy of a representative bill of fare is hereto annexed. (EXHIBIT A) *

The kitchen accommodation includes a pantry, scullery, larder and an emergency kitchen. There is also a bake-house, where they bake their own bread and a dairy where they make their own butter.

Everything was examined and found satisfactory.

WORK.

The men are not forced to work, but every opportunity is given them to employ their time. Wages are paid for work done on the farm, etc., as per schedule annexed. (EXHIBIT B) *

Besides the usual housework, the men are occupied in tailoring, shoemaking, laundry-work, upholstery, basket-making, carpentry, baking, wood-chopping, jam-making, pickling, drying fruit, smith's work, painting, work on the poultry run, in the stables, in the gardens, and in looking after the sheep, pigs and bees on the farm.

Those who are able, are given every opportunity to work, and if they do work, everything is done for them, but those, who are strong enough and are not willing to work, have to look after themselves. There are men and women from the surrounding country employed to assist in the work of the colony.

There is also a fire engine and fire apparatus.

EXERCISE.

There are about 50 acres of garden and about 11 to 12 acres of lawn and compound.

The men in this camp being older men, do not need the same amount of exercise as do the younger men in

* Sent to Berlin.

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-4-

some of the other camps, but good opportunities for being in the open air are given to all.

The camp is situated in a healthy district with a pleasant view and good surroundings.

The men had an opportunity to speak to me privately but there were no complaints of any serious nature.

WANTS BY
CAMP.

OBSERVATIONS.

The German Farm Colony was originally founded by Germans in England to provide temporary work, shelter, board and lodging for German speaking unemployed and destitute men of whatever creed, who were able to and willing to work, thus giving them a fresh start in life; to assist those anxious to return to their homes to earn sufficient money for that purpose; and to suppress as far as possible habitual begging with its concomitant moral degradation. It is being conducted now as a continuance of the original German charity and is supported in part by the Home Office, which pays a fixed sum per head per week for the board and lodging of the men interned there.

In addition to 10 pensioners, 10 colonists and the staff of 9, formerly here, there are now 159 civilians interned here. The interned men are older men, most of whom have wives in England and do not wish to return to Germany.

There is no military guard and the internal affairs of the camp are under the charge of Mr. Muller, who has been for some time Managing Director and Secretary to the Farm Colony. The camp is almost entirely self-supporting as the men can raise everything they need, except certain kinds of butcher's meat, which they have to buy.

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-5-

All the prisoners seemed to be contented and in a good state of health especially considering their advanced age. Copy of a report on the Colony for 1914 is annexed. (EXHIBIT C) *

I have the honour to be,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

(Signed) BOYLSTON A. BEAL.

Special Attache.

The Honourable
Walter Hines Page,
American Ambassador,
LONDON.

* Sent to Berlin.