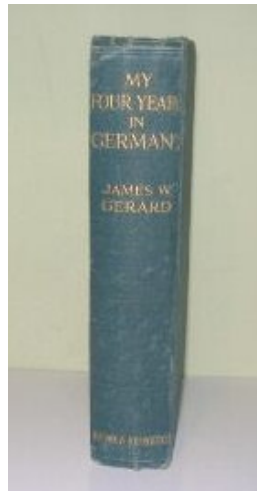


The book by the American ambassador about his experiences in Germany was serialised in the *Daily Gleaner* in October 1917. From this, Jamaican readers got some idea of the conditions being endured by their fellow countrymen who were in German prisoner of war camps. The text given below is close to that published in the *Gleaner*, though there are differences in chapter numbers etc.



My Four Years in Germany by James W. Gerard

CHAPTER X

PRISONERS OF WAR

During the period of the first months of the war, in addition to other work, it became necessary to look after those subjects of other nations

who had been confided to my care.

At first the British were allowed considerable liberty, although none were permitted to leave the country. They were required to report to the police at stated times during the day and could not remain out late at night.

The Japanese had received warning from their Embassy as to the turn that events might take and, before sending its ultimatum, the Japanese government had warned its citizens, so that a great number of them had left Germany. After the declaration of war by Japan, all the Japanese in Germany were immediately imprisoned.

This was stated to be in order to save them from the fury of the population and certainly the people seemed to be greatly incensed against the Japanese. When I finally obtained permission for their release and departure from Germany I had to send some one with the parties of Japanese to the Swiss frontier in order to protect them from injury. They were permitted to leave only through Switzerland and, therefore, had to change cars at Munich. Before sending any of them to Munich I invariably telegraphed our Consul there to notify the Munich police so that proper protection could be provided at the railway station.

On one occasion a number of Japanese were waiting in the Embassy in order to take the night train for Munich. I sent a servant to take them out in order that they might get something to eat in a restaurant, but as no restaurant in Berlin would sell them food, arrangements were made to give them meals in the Embassy.

The members of the Siamese Legation, who in appearance greatly resemble the Japanese, were often subjected to indignities, and for a long time did not dare move about freely in Berlin, or even leave their houses.

The Japanese were marvels of courtesy. After I visited some of them at the civilian camp of Ruhleben, they wrote me a letter thanking me for the visit. Nearly every Japanese leaving Germany on his arrival in Switzerland wrote me a grateful letter.

When I finally left Germany, as I stepped from the special train at Zurich, a Japanese woman, who had been imprisoned in Germany and whose husband I had visited in a prison, came forward to thank me. A

Japanese man was waiting in the hotel office in Berne when I arrived there, for a similar purpose, and the next morning early the Japanese Minister called and left a beautiful clock for Mrs. Gerard as an expression of his gratitude for the attention shown to his countrymen. It was really a pleasure to be able to do something for these polite and charming people.

On August twentieth I paid my first visit to a German prison camp. This was to the camp at Doeberitz situated about eight miles west of Berlin, a sort of military camp with permanent barracks. Some of these barracks were used for the confinement of such British civilians as the Germans had arrested in the first days of the war. There were only a few British among the prisoners, with a number of Russian and French. I was allowed to converse freely with the prisoners and found that they had no complaints. As the war went on, however, a number of British prisoners of war were taken by the Germans during the course of the great retreat of the British in Northern France. Then officers and privates began to come into Germany and were distributed in various camps. Finally, in the autumn of 1914, the British Government decided on interning a great number of Germans in Great Britain; and the German government immediately, and as a reprisal, interned all the British civilian men who, up to this time, had enjoyed comparative freedom in Berlin and other cities of the Empire. The British civilians were shut up in a race track about five miles from the centre of Berlin, called Ruhleben. This race track in peace times was used for contests of trotting horses and on it were the usual grandstands and brick stable buildings containing box stalls with hay lofts above, where the race horses were kept.

On August twentieth I paid my first visit to the police presidency in Berlin where political prisoners, when arrested, were confined. A small number of British prisoners subject to especial investigation were there interned. This prison, which I often subsequently visited, was clean and well kept, and I never had any particular complaints from the prisoners confined there, except, of course, as the war progressed, concerning the inadequacy of the food.

I had organised a special department immediately on the breaking out of the war to care for the interests of the British. At first Mr. Boylston Beal, a lawyer of Boston, assisted by Mr. Rivington Pyne of New York, was at the head of this department, of which later the Honourable John B. Jackson, formerly our Minister to the Balkan States, Greece and

Cuba, took charge. He volunteered to give his assistance at the commencement of the war and I was glad of his help, especially as he had been twelve years secretary in the Berlin Embassy and, therefore, was well acquainted not only with Germany but with German official life and customs. Mr. Jackson was most ably assisted by Charles H. Russell, Jr., of New York, and Lithgow Osborne. Of course, others in the Embassy had much to do with this department.

The first privates, prisoners of war, came to the camp of Doeberitz near Berlin. Early in the war Mr. Grew, our First Secretary, and Consul General Lay visited the camp for officers at Torgau. The question of the inspection of prisoners of the camps and the rights of Ambassadors charged with the interests of hostile powers was quite in the clouds. So many reports came to Germany about the bad treatment in England of German prisoners of war that I finally arranged to have Mr. Jackson visit them and report. This was arranged by my colleague, our Ambassador to Great Britain, and in the first winter Mr. Jackson made his trip there. His report of conditions there did much to allay the German belief as to the ill-treatment of their subjects who were prisoners in Great Britain and helped me greatly in bringing about better conditions in Germany. After vainly endeavouring to get the German government to agree to some definite plan for the inspection of the prisoners, after my notes to the Foreign Office had remained unanswered for a long period of time, and after sending a personal letter to von Jagow calling his attention to the fact that the delay was injuring German prisoners in other countries, I finally called on von Bethmann-Hollweg and told him that my notes concerning prisoners were sent by the Foreign Office to the military authorities: that, while I could talk with officials of the Foreign Office, I never came into contact with the people who really passed upon the notes sent by me, and who made the decisions as to the treatment of prisoners of war and inspection of their camps; and I begged the Chancellor to break down diplomatic precedent and allow me to speak with the military authorities who decided these questions. I said, "If I cannot get an answer to my proposition about prisoners, I will take a chair and sit in front of your palace in the street until I receive an answer."

The result was a meeting in my office.

I discussed the question involved with two representatives from the Foreign Office, two from the General Staff, two from the War

Department and with Count Schwerin who commanded the civilian camp at the Ruhleben race track. In twenty minutes we managed to reach an agreement which I then and there drew up: the substance of which, as between Great Britain and Germany, was that the American Ambassador and his representatives in Germany and the American Ambassador and his representatives in Great Britain should have the right to visit the prison camps on giving reasonable notice, which was to be twenty-four hours where possible, and should have the right to converse with the prisoners, within sight but out of hearing, of the camp officials; that an endeavour should be made to adjust matters complained of with the camp authorities before bringing them to the notice of higher authorities; that ten representatives should be named by our Ambassador and that these should receive passes enabling them to visit the camps under the conditions above stated. This agreement was ratified by the British and German Governments and thereafter for a long time we worked under its provisions and in most questions dealt direct with the War Department.

Of course, before this meeting I had managed to get permission to visit the camps of Ruhleben and Doeberitz near Berlin; and Mr. Michaelson, our consul at Cologne, and Mr. Jackson and others at the Embassy had been permitted to visit certain camps. But immediately preceding the meeting on the fourth of March and while matters were still being discussed we were compelled to a certain extent to suspend our visits.

In the first days of the war it was undoubtedly and unfortunately true that prisoners of war taken by the Germans, both at the time of their capture and in transit to the prison camps, were often badly treated by the soldiers, guards or the civil population.

The instances were too numerous, the evidence too overwhelming, to be denied. In the prison camps themselves, owing to the peculiar system of military government in Germany, the treatment of the prisoners varied greatly. As I have, I think, stated in another place, Germany is divided into army corps districts. Over each of these districts is, in time of war, a representative corps commander who is clothed with absolute power in that district, his orders superseding those of all civilian officials. These corps commanders do not report to the war department but are in a measure independent and very jealous of their rights. For instance, to show the difficulty of dealing with these corps commanders, after my arrangements concerning the inspection of

prisoners of war had been ratified by both the Imperial and British governments, I went to Halle to inspect the place of detention for officers there. Halle is some hours from Berlin and when I had driven out to the camp, I was met by the commander who told me that I might visit the camp but that I could not speak to the prisoners out of hearing. I told him that our arrangement was otherwise, but, as he remained firm I returned to Berlin. I complained to the Foreign Office and was told there that the matter would be arranged and so I again, some days later, returned to Halle. My experience on the second trip was exactly the same as the first. I spoke to von Jagow who explained the situation to me, and advised me to visit first the corps commander at Magdeburg and try and arrange the matter with him. I did so and was finally permitted to visit this camp and to talk to the officers out of ear-shot.

This camp of Halle was continued during the war, although not at all a fit place for the detention of officers, who were lodged in the old factory buildings surrounded by a sort of courtyard covered with cinders. This building was situated in the industrial part of the town of Halle. There was no opportunity for recreation or games, although several enterprising officers had tried to arrange a place where they could knock, a tennis ball against the wall.

It was the policy of the Germans to put some prisoners of each nation in each camp. This was probably so that no claim could be made that the prisoners from one nation among the Allies were treated better or worse than the prisoners from another nation.

In the beginning of the war the Germans were surprised by the great number of prisoners taken and had made no adequate preparations for their reception. Clothing and blankets were woefully wanting, so I immediately bought what I could in the way of underclothes and blankets at the large department stores of Berlin and the wholesalers and sent these to the camps where the British prisoners were confined. I also sent to the Doeberitz camp articles such as sticks for wounded men who were recovering, and crutches, and even eggs and other nourishing delicacies for the sick.

At first the prisoners were not compelled to work to any extent, but at the time I left Germany the two million prisoners of war were materially assisting the carrying on of the agriculture and industries of the Empire.

The League of Mercy of New York having telegraphed me in 1914, asking in what way funds could best be used in the war, I suggested in answer that funds for the prisoners of war were urgently needed. Many newspapers poked fun at me for this suggestion, and one bright editor said that if the Germans did not treat their prisoners properly they should be made to! Of course, unless this particular editor had sailed up the Spree in a canoe and bombarded the royal palace, I know of no other way of "making" the Germans do anything. The idea, however, of doing some work for the prisoners of war was taken up by the Young Men's Christian Association. Dr. John R. Mott was at the head of this work and was most ably and devotedly assisted by the Rev. Archibald C. Harte. I shall give an account of their splendid work in a chapter devoted to the charitable work of the war.

At only one town in Germany was any interest in the fate of the prisoners of war evinced. This was, I am glad to say, in the quaint university town of Gottingen. I visited this camp with Mr. Harte, in April, 1915, to attend the opening of the first Y. M. C. A. camp building in Germany. The camp was commanded by Colonel Bogen, an officer strict in his discipline, but, as all the prisoners admitted, just in his dealings with them. There were, as I recall, about seven thousand prisoners in this camp, Russian, French, Belgian and British. It is a pity that the methods of Colonel Bogen and his arrangements for camp buildings, etc., were not copied in other camps in Germany. Here, as I have said, the civil population took some interest in the fate of the unfortunate prisoners within their gates, led in this by several professors in the University. The most active of these professors was Professor Stange who, working with a French lawyer who had been captured near Arras while in the Red Cross, provided a library for the prisoners and otherwise helped them. Of course, these charitable acts of Professor Stange did not find favor with many of his fellow townsmen of Gottingen, and he was not surprised when he awoke one morning to find that during the night his house had been painted red, white and blue, the colours of France, England and America.

I heard of so many instances of the annoyance of prisoners by the civil population that I was quite pleased one day to read a paragraph in the official newspaper, the *North German Gazette*, which ran somewhat as follows: "The following inhabitants of (naming a small town near the borders of Denmark), having been guilty of improper conduct towards prisoners of war, have been sentenced to the following terms of

imprisonment and the following fines and their names are printed here in order that they may be held up to the contempt of all future generations of Germans." And then followed a list of names and terms of imprisonment and fines. I thought that this was splendid, that the German government had at last been aroused to the necessity of protecting their prisoners of war from the annoyances of the civil population, and I wrote to our consul in Kiel and asked him to investigate the case. From him I learned that some unfortunate prisoners passing through the town (in a part of Germany inhabited by Scandinavians) had made signs that they were suffering from hunger and thirst, that some of the kind-hearted people among the Scandinavian population had given them something to eat and drink and for this they were condemned to fines, to prison and to have their names held up to the contempt of Germans for all time.

I do not know of anyone thing that can give a better idea of the official hate for the nations with which Germany was at war than this.

The day after visiting the camp at Gottingen, I visited the officers' camp situated at the town of Hanover Munden. Here about eight hundred officers, of whom only thirteen were British, were confined in an old factory building situated on the bank of the river below the town. The Russian officers handed me some arrows tipped with nails which had been shot at them by the kind-hearted little town boys, and the British pointed out to me the filthy conditions of the camp. In this, as in unfortunately many other officer camps, the inclination seemed to be to treat the officers not as captured officers and gentlemen, but as convicts. I had quite a sharp talk with the commander of this camp before leaving and he afterwards took violent exception to the report which I made upon his camp. However, I am pleased to say that he reformed, as it were, and I was informed by my inspectors that he had finally made his camp one of the best in Germany.

Much as I should have liked to, I could not spend much time myself in visiting the prison camps; many duties and frequent crises kept me in Berlin, but members of the Embassy were always travelling in this work of camp inspection.

For some time my reports were published in parliamentary "White Papers," but in the end our government found that the publication of these reports irritated the Germans to such a degree that the British

Government was requested not to publish them any more. Copies of the reports were always sent by me both to Washington and to London, and handed to the Berlin Foreign Office.

While Winston Churchill was at the head of the British Admiralty, it was stated that the German submarine prisoners would not be treated as ordinary prisoners of war; but would be put in a place by themselves on the ground that they were pirates and murderers, and not entitled to the treatment accorded in general to prisoners of war. Great indignation was excited by this in Germany; the German government immediately seized thirty-seven officers, picking those whom they supposed related to the most prominent families in Great Britain, and placed them in solitary confinement. A few were confined in this way in Cologne, but the majority were put in the ordinary jails of Magdeburg and Burg.

As soon as I heard of this, accompanied by Mr. Charles H. Russell, Jr., of my staff, I went to Magdeburg, using my ordinary pass for the visiting of prisoners. The German authorities told me afterwards that if they had known I was going to make this visit they would not have permitted it, but on this occasion the corps commander system worked for me. Accompanied by an adjutant, in peace times a local lawyer from the corps commander's office in Magdeburg, and other officers, I visited these British officers in their cells in the common jail at Magdeburg. They were in absolutely solitary confinement, each in a small cell about eleven feet long and four feet wide. Some cells were a little larger, and the prisoners were allowed only one hour's exercise a day in the courtyard of the prison. The food given them was not bad, but the close confinement was very trying, especially to Lieutenant Goschen, son of the former Ambassador to Germany, who had been wounded and in the hospital at Douai. Among them I found an old acquaintance, Captain Robin Grey, who had been often in New York. The German authorities agreed to correct several minor matters of which the officers complained and then we went to the neighbouring town of Burg, where other officers were confined in the same manner and under similar conditions in the ordinary jail. After visiting these prisoners and obtaining for them from the authorities some modifications of the rules which had been established we visited the regular officers' camp at Burg.

This was at that time what I should call a bad camp, crowded and with no space for recreation. Later, conditions were improved and more

ground allowed to the prisoners for games, etc. At the time of my first visit I found that the commander, a polite but peppery officer, was in civil life a judge of the Supreme Court at Leipzig, the highest court in the Empire. As I had been a judge in the State of New York, we foregathered and adjourned for lunch with his staff to the hotel in Burg.

After Churchill left the British Admiralty, his successor reversed his ruling and the submarine prisoners were placed in the ordinary confinement of prisoners of war. When the Germans were assured of this, the thirty-seven officers who had been in reprisal placed in solitary confinement were sent back to ordinary prison camps. In fact in most cases I managed to get the Germans to send them to what were called "good" camps.

Lieutenant Goschen, however, became quite ill and was taken to the hospital in Magdeburg. At the time of his capture, the Germans had told me, in answer to my inquiries, that he was suffering from a blow on the head with the butt end of a rifle, but an X-ray examination at Magdeburg showed that fragments of a bullet had penetrated his brain and that he was, therefore, hardly a fit subject to be chosen as one of the reprisal prisoners. I told von Jagow that I thought it in the first place a violation of all diplomatic courtesy to pick out the son of the former Ambassador to Germany as a subject for reprisals and secondly that, in picking him, they had taken a wounded man; that the fact that they did not know that he had fragments of a bullet in his brain made the situation even worse because that ignorance was the result of the want of a proper examination in the German hospitals; and I insisted that, because of this manifestly unfair treatment which had undoubtedly caused the very serious condition of Lieutenant Goschen, he should be returned to England in the exchange of those who were badly wounded. I am pleased to say that von Jagow saw my point of view and finally secured permission for Lieutenant Goschen to leave for England.

Dr. Ohnesorg, one of our assistant Naval Attaches, went with him to England on account of the seriousness of his condition, and I was very glad to hear from his father that he had arrived safely in London.

Undoubtedly the worst camp which I visited in Germany was that of Wittenberg. Wittenberg is the ancient town where Luther lived and nailed his theses to the church door. The camp is situated just outside the city in a very unattractive spot next to the railway. An outbreak of

typhus fever prevented us from visiting the camp, although Mr. Jackson conversed with some of the prisoners from outside the barrier of barbed wire. When the typhus was finally driven out, Mr. Lithgow Osborne visited the camp and his report of conditions there was such that I visited it myself, in the meantime holding up his report until I had verified it.

With Mr. Charles H. Russell, Jr., I visited the camp. Typhus fever seems to be continually present in Russia. It is carried by the body louse and it is transmitted from one person to another. Russian soldiers seem to carry this disease with them without apparently suffering much from it themselves. The Russian soldiers arriving at Wittenberg were not properly disinfected and, in consequence, typhus fever broke out in camp. Several British medical officers were there with their prisoners, because, by the provisions of the Hague conventions, captured medical officers may be kept with the troops of their nation, if prisoners have need of their services. These medical officers protested with the camp commander against the herding together of the French and British prisoners with the Russians, who, as I have said, were suffering from typhus fever. But the camp commander said, "You will have to know your Allies;" and kept all of his prisoners together, and thus as surely condemned to death a number of French and British prisoners of war as though he had stood them against the wall and ordered them shot by a firing squad. Conditions in the camp during the period of this epidemic were frightful. The camp was practically deserted by the Germans and I understand that the German doctor did not make as many visits to the camp as the situation required.

At the time I visited the camp the typhus epidemic, of course, had been stamped out. The Germans employed a large number of police dogs in this camp and these dogs not only were used in watching the outside of the camp in order to prevent the escape of prisoners but also were used within the camp. Many complaints were made to me by prisoners concerning these dogs, stating that men had been bitten by them. It seemed undoubtedly true that the prisoners there had been knocked about and beaten in a terrible manner by their guards, and one guard went so far as to strike one of the British medical officers. There were about thirty-seven civilian prisoners in the camp who had been there all through the typhus epidemic. I secured the removal of these civilian prisoners to the general civilian camp at Ruhleben, and the conditions at Wittenberg

may be judged by the fact that when it was announced to these civilians that they were to be taken from Wittenberg to another camp one of them was so excited by the news of release that he fell dead upon the spot.

In talking over conditions at Wittenberg with von Jagow I said, "Suppose I go back to Wittenberg and shoot some of these dogs, what can you do to me?" Soon after the dogs disappeared from the camp.

The food in all these camps for civilians and for private soldiers was about the same. It consisted of an allowance of bread of the same weight as that given the civilian population. This was given out in the morning with a cup of something called coffee, but which in reality was an extract of acorns or something of the kind without milk or sugar; in the middle of the day, a bowl of thick soup in which the quantity of meat was gradually diminished as war went on, as well as the amount of potatoes for which at a later period turnips and carrots were, to a large extent, substituted; and in the evening in good camps there was some sort of thick soup given out or an apple, or an almost infinitesimal piece of cheese or sausage.

In the war department at Berlin there was a Prisoners of War Department in charge of Colonel, later General, Friedrich. This department, however, did not seem to be in a position to issue orders to the corps commanders commanding the army corps districts of Germany, who had absolute control of the prison camps within their districts. Colonel Friedrich, however, and his assistants endeavoured to standardise the treatment of prisoners of war in the different corps districts, and were able to exert a certain amount of pressure on the corps commanders. They determined on the general reprisals to be taken in connection with prisoners of war. For instance, when some of the Germans, who had been taken prisoners by the British and who were in England, were sent to work in the harbour of Havre, the Germans retaliated by sending about four times the number of British prisoners to work at Libau in the part of Russia then occupied by the Germans.

But while the British permitted our Embassy in Paris to inspect the prisoners of war at Havre, the Germans for months refused to allow me permission to send anyone to inspect those British prisoners at Libau.

Cases came to my attention where individual corps commanders on their own initiative directed punitive measures against the prisoners of war in their districts, on account of the rumours of the bad treatment of German citizens in England. Thus the commander in the district where the camp of Doeberitz was situated issued an order directing reprisals against prisoners under his command on account of what he claimed to be the bad treatment of German women in England. It required constant vigilance to seek out instances of this kind and cause them to be remedied.

I did not find the Germans at all efficient in the handling of prisoners of war. The authority was so divided that it was hard to find who was responsible for any given bad conditions. For instance, for a long period of time I contended with the German authorities for better living conditions at the civilian camp of Ruhleben. I was promised time and again by Colonel Friedrich, by the camp commander and by the Foreign Office that these conditions would be remedied. In that camp men of education, men in delicate health, were compelled to sleep and live six in a box stall or so closely that the beds touched each other in hay-lofts, the outside walls of which were only four feet high.

I finally almost in despair wrote identical personal letters, after having exhausted all ordinary diplomatic steps, to General von Kessel, Commander of the Mark of Brandenburg, to the commander of the corps district in which the Ruhleben camp was situated, and to the Minister of War: and the only result was that each of the officers addressed claimed that he had been personally insulted by me because I had presumed to call his attention to the inhuman conditions under which the prisoners were compelled to live in the Ruhleben camp.

The commander of this civilian camp of Ruhleben was a very handsome old gentleman, named Count Schwerin. His second in command for a long time was a Baron Taube. Both of these officers had been long retired from the army and were given these prison commands at the commencement of the war. Both of them were naturally kind-hearted but curiously sensitive and not always of even temper. On the whole I think that they sympathised with the prisoners and did their best to obtain a bettering of the conditions of their confinement. The prisoners organised themselves in their various barracks, each barrack having a captain of the barrack, the captains electing one of their number as a camp captain or *Obmann*.

The man who finally appeared as head man of the camp was an ex-cinematograph proprietor, named Powell. In my mind he, assisted by Beaumont and other captains, conducted the affairs of the camp as well as possible, given the difficulty of dealing with the prisoners on one hand and the prison authorities on the other hand. Naturally he was always subject to opposition from many prisoners, among whom those of aristocratic tendencies objected to being under the control of one not of the highest caste in Great Britain; and there were others who either envied him his authority or desired his place. The camp authorities allowed Powell to visit the Embassy at least once a week and in that way I was enabled, to keep in direct touch with the camp. At two periods during my stay in Berlin I spent enough days at the camp to enable every prisoner who had a complaint of any kind to present it personally to me.

The organisation of this camp was quite extraordinary. I found it impossible to get British prisoners to perform the ordinary work of cleaning up the camp, and so forth, always expected of prisoners themselves; and so, with the funds furnished me from the British Government, the camp captain was compelled to pay a number of the poorer prisoners to perform this work. Secretaries Ruddock and Kirk of our Embassy undertook the uninteresting and arduous work of superintending these payments as well as of our other financial affairs. This work was most trying and they deserve great credit for their self-denial. By arrangement with the British Government, I was also enabled to pay the poorer prisoners an allowance of five marks a week, thus permitting them to buy little luxuries and necessities and extra food at the camp canteen which was early established in the camp. I also furnished the capital to the camp canteen, enabling it to make its purchases and carry on its business. In this establishment everything could be purchased which was purchasable in Germany, and for months after the commencement of the war articles of luxury were sold at a profit and articles of food sold at a loss for the benefit of those who required an addition to the camp diet. There was a street in the camp of little barracks or booths which the prisoners christened Bond Street, and where many stores were in operation such as a tailor shop, shoe-maker's, watch-maker's, etc. Acting with Powell, I succeeded in getting the German authorities to turn over the kitchens to the prisoners. Four of the prisoners who did most excellent self-denying work in these kitchens deserve to be specially mentioned. They were Ernest L. Pyke,

Herbert Kasmer, Richard H. Carrad and George Fergusson.

The men in this camp subsisted to a great extent upon the packages of food sent to them from England. Credit must be given to the German authorities for the fairly prompt and efficient delivery of the packages of food sent from England, Denmark and Switzerland to prisoners of war in all camps.

In Ruhleben the educated prisoners volunteered to teach the ignorant: two hundred and ninety-seven different educational courses were offered to those who desired to improve their minds. A splendid orchestra was organised, a dramatic society which gave plays in French and one which gave plays in English and another one which gave operas. On New Year's day, 1916, I attended at Ruhleben do really wonderful performance of the pantomime of "Cinderella"; and, in January, 1917, a performance of "The Mikado" in a theatre under one of the grand stands. In these productions, of course, the female parts were taken by young men and the scenery, costumes and accessories were all made by the prisoners. There was a camp library of over five thousand volumes sent over by the British Government and a reading and meeting hall, erected by the American Y. M. C. A. There was even a system of postal service with special stamps so that a prisoner in one barrack could write to a friend in another and have a letter delivered by the camp postal authorities. The German authorities had not hired the entire race track from the Race Track Association so that I made a special contract with the race track owners and hired from them the in-field and other portions not taken over by German authorities. Here the prisoners had tennis courts and played hockey, foot-ball and cricket and held athletic games. Expert dentists in the camp took care of the poorer prisoners as did an oculist hired by me with British funds, and glasses were given them from the same funds.

The prisoners who needed a little better nourishment than that afforded by the camp diet and their parcels from England, could obtain cards giving them the right to eat in the Casino or camp official restaurant where they were allowed a certain indicated amount of wine or beer with their meals, and finally arrangements were arrived at by which the German guards left the camp, simply guarding it from the outside; and the policing was taken over by the camp police department, under the charge of the prison camp commander and committee. The worst features, of course, were the food and housing. Human nature seems

always to be the same. Establishment of clubs seems inherent to the Anglo-Saxon nature. Ten or more persons would combine together and erect a sort of wooden shed against the brick walls of a barrack, hire some poorer person to put on a white jacket and be addressed as "steward," put in the shed a few deck chairs and a table and enjoy the sensation of exclusiveness and club life thereby given.

Owing to the failure of Germany and Great Britain to come to an agreement for a long time as to the release of captured crews of ships, there were in Ruhleben men as old as seventy-five years and boys as young as fifteen. There were in all between fifty and sixty of these ships' boys. They lived in a barrack by themselves and under the supervision of a ship's officer who volunteered to look after them as sort of a monitor. They were taught navigation by the older prisoners and I imagine were rather benefited by their stay in the camp. I finally made arrangements by which these boys were released from England and Germany. With the exception of the officers and crews of the ships, prisoners were not interned who were over fifty-five.

The British Government was generous in the allowance of money for Ruhleben prisoners. The amount allowed by the German Government to the camp commanders for feeding the prisoners was extremely small, only sixty pfennigs a day. At first many of the camp commanders made contracts with caterers for the feeding of the prisoners and as the caterers' profit had to come out of this very small sum the amount of food which the remainder purchased for the prisoners was small indeed. As the war went on the prisoners' department of the war office tried to induce the camp commanders to abandon the contractors' system and purchase supplies themselves. A sort of convention of camp commanders was held in Berlin which I attended. Lectures were there given on food and its purchase, and methods of disinfecting prisoners, on providing against typhus, and on housing and other subjects. A daily lunch was served, supposed to be composed of the exact rations given at the prison camps.

The schedules of food, etc., made out by the camp commanders and furnished to foreign correspondents were often not followed in practice. I know on one occasion when I was at the camp at Doeberitz, the camp commander gave me his schedule of food for the week. This provided that soup with pieces of meat was to be given on the day of my visit, but on visiting the camp kitchen I found that the contractor was serving fish

instead of meat. Some of the camp commanders not only treated their prisoners kindly but introduced manufactures of furniture, etc., to help the prisoners to pass their time. The camps of Krossen and Gottingen deserve special mention. At Giessen, the camp commander had permitted

the erection of a barrack in which certain prisoners who were electrical experts gave lessons in electrical fitting, etc., to their fellow prisoners. There was also a studio in this camp where prisoners with artistic talent were furnished with paints and allowed to work. As more and more people were called to the front in Germany, greater use was made of the prisoners, and in the summer of 1916 practically all the prisoners were compelled to work outside of the camps. They were paid a small extra sum for this, a few cents a day, and as a rule were benefited by the change of scene and occupation. The Russians especially became very useful to the Germans as agricultural laborers.

Professor Alonzo E. Taylor of the University of Pennsylvania, a food expert, and Dr. D. J. McCarthy, also of Philadelphia, joined my staff in 1916 and proved most efficient and fearless inspectors of prison camps. Dr. Taylor could use the terms calories, proteins, etc., as readily as German experts and at a greater rate of speed. His report showing that the official diet of the prisoners in Ruhleben was a starvation diet incensed the German authorities to such fury that they forbade him to revisit Ruhleben. Professor Buckhaus, the German expert, agreed with him in some of his findings. I do not know what will happen to the Professor, who seemed willing to do his best for the prisoners. He wrote a booklet on the prison camps which he asked permission to dedicate to me, but the War Office, which published the book, refused to allow him to make this dedication. It was a real pleasure to see the way in which Dr. Taylor carried on his work of food inspection; and his work, as well as that of the other doctors sent from America to join my staff, Drs. Furbush, McCarthy, Roler, Harns, Webster and Luginbuhl, did much to better camp conditions.

Dr. Caldwell, the sanitary expert, known for his great work in Serbia, now I believe head of the hospital at Pittsburgh, reported in regard to the prison diet: "While of good quality and perhaps sufficient in quantity by weight, it is lacking in the essential elements which contribute to the making of a well-balanced and satisfactory diet. It is lacking particularly in fat and protein content which is especially desirable during the colder months of the year. There is considerable doubt whether this diet alone

without being supplemented by the articles of food received by the prisoners from their homes would in any way be sufficient to maintain the prisoners in health and strength."

Dr. Caldwell also visited Wittenberg and found the commander by temperament, and so on, unfitted for such a position.

The Germans, as Dr. Taylor has pointed out, tried to feed prisoners on schedule like horses. There is, however, a nervous discrimination in eating so far as man is concerned; and a diet, scientifically fitted to keep him alive, may fail because of its mere monotony.

Think of living as the prisoners of war in Germany have for years, without ever having anything (except black bread) which cannot be eaten with a spoon.

Officer prisoners were, after matters had settled down and after several bitter contests which I had with the German authorities, fairly well treated. There was, as in the case of the camps for the privates, a great difference between camps, and a great difference between camp commanders. Mr. Jackson did most of the visiting of the officers' camps. In many camps the officers were allowed a tennis court and other amusements, as well as light wine or beer at meals, but the length of the war had a bad effect on the mental condition of many of the officers.

A great step forward was made when arrangements were entered into between Germany and Great Britain whereby wounded and sick officers and men, when passed by the Swiss Commission which visited both countries, were sent to Switzerland; sent still as prisoners of war, subject to return to Germany or England respectively, but the opportunity afforded by change of food and scene, as well as reunion of families, saved many a life. By arrangements between the two countries, also, the severely wounded prisoners were set free. I believe that this exchange of the heavily wounded between the Germans and the Russians was the factor which prevented the entrance of Sweden into the war. These wounded men traversed the whole length of Sweden in the railway, and the spectacle afforded to the Swedish population of these poor stumps of humanity, victims of war, has quite effectually kept the Swedish population from an attack of unnecessary war fever.

Officers and men who tried to escape were not very severely punished in Germany unless they had broken or stolen something in their attempt. Officers were usually subjected to a jail confinement for a period and then often sent to a sort of punitive camp. Such a camp was situated in one of the Ring forts surrounding the city of Kustrin which I visited in September, 1916. There the officers had no opportunity for exercise except in a very small courtyard or on the roof, which was covered with grass, of the building in which they were confined. I arranged, however, on my visit for the construction of a tennis court outside. The British officers in Germany practically subsisted on their parcels received from home, and during the end of my stay a much better tea could be had with the prison officers than with the camp commander. The prisoners had real tea and marmalade and white bread to offer, luxuries which had long since disappeared from all German tables. On the whole, the quarters given to the officers' prisons in Germany were not satisfactory, and were not of the kind that should have been offered to officer prisoners of war.

At the time I left Germany there were nearly two million prisoners of war in the Empire, of whom about ten thousand were Russian officers, nine thousand French officers and about one thousand British officers.

As a rule our inspectors found the hospitals, where the prisoners of war were, in as good condition as could be expected.

I think this was largely due to the fact that so many doctors in Germany are Jews. The people who are of the Jewish race are people of gentle instincts. In these hospitals a better diet was given to the prisoners. There were, of course, in addition to the regular hospitals, hospitals where the severely wounded prisoners were sent. Almost uniformly these hospitals were clean and the prisoners were well taken care of.

At Ruhleben there was a hospital which in spite of many representations was never in proper shape. In addition, there was in the camp a special barrack established by the prisoners themselves for the care of those who were so ill or so weak as to require special attention but who were not ill enough to be sent to the hospital. This barrack was for a long time in charge of a devoted gentleman, a prisoner, whose name I have unfortunately forgotten, but whose self-sacrifice deserves special mention.

I arranged with the camp authorities and the German authorities for permission to enter into a contract with Dr. Weiler. Under this contract Dr. Weiler, who had a sanatorium in the West of Berlin, received patients from Ruhleben. Those who were able paid for themselves, the poorer ones being paid for by the British Government. This sanatorium, occupied several villas. I had many disputes with Dr. Weiler, but finally managed to get this sanatorium in such condition that the prisoners who resided there were fairly well taken care of.

An arrangement was made between Great Britain and Germany by which civilians unfit for military service were sent to their respective countries, and just before I left I effected an arrangement by which all civilians over forty-five years old, with the exception of twenty who might be held by each country for military reasons, were to be released. I do not know whether this arrangement was actually carried out in full. With the lapse of time the mental condition of the older prisoners in Ruhleben had become quite alarming. Soldier prisoners, when they enter the army, are always in good physical condition and enter with the expectation of either being killed or wounded or taken prisoner, and have made their arrangements accordingly. But these unfortunate civilian prisoners were often men in delicate health, and all were in a constant state of great mental anxiety as to the fate of their business and their enterprises and their families. In 1916, not only Mr. Grafton Minot, who for some time had devoted himself exclusively to the Ruhleben prisoners, but also Mr. Ellis Dresel, a distinguished lawyer of Boston, who had joined the Embassy as a volunteer, took up the work. Mr. Dresel visited Ruhleben almost daily and by listening to the stories and complaints of the prisoners materially helped their mental condition.

The Germans collected all the soldier prisoners of Irish nationality in one camp at Limburg not far from Frankfurt a. M. These efforts were made to induce them to join the German army. The men were well treated and were often visited by Sir Roger Casement who, working with the German authorities, tried to get these Irishmen to desert their flag and join the Germans. A few weaklings were persuaded by Sir Roger who finally discontinued his visits, after obtaining about thirty recruits, because the remaining Irishmen chased him out of the camp.

I received information of the shooting of one prisoner, and although the camp authorities had told Dr. McCarthy that the investigation had been closed and the guard who did the shooting exonerated, nevertheless,

when I visited the camp in order to investigate, I was told that I could not do so because the matter of the shooting was still under investigation. Nor was I allowed to speak to those prisoners who had been witnesses at the time of the shooting. I afterwards learned that another Irishman had been shot by a guard on the day before my visit, and the same obstacles to my investigation were drawn about this case.

The Irishmen did not bear confinement well, and at the time of my visit among them many of them were suffering from tuberculosis in the camp hospital. They seemed also peculiarly subject to mental breakdowns. Two devoted Catholic priests, Father Crotty and a Brother Warren from a religious house in Belgium, were doing wonderful work among these prisoners.

The sending out of the prisoners of war to work throughout Germany has had one very evil effect. It has made it to the financial advantage of certain farmers and manufacturers to have the war continued. The Prussian land owners or Junkers obtain four or five times as much for their agricultural products as they did before the war and have the work on their farms performed by prisoners of war to whom they are required to pay only six cents a day. When the *Tageblatt* called attention to this it was suppressed for several days.

At many of these so-called working camps our inspectors were refused admission on the ground that they might learn trade or war secrets. They succeeded, however, in having the men sent outside in order that they might inspect them and hear their complaints. There were in Germany about one hundred central camps and perhaps ten thousand or more so-called working camps, in summer time, throughout the country. Some of the British prisoners were put to work on the sewage farm of Berlin but we succeeded in getting them sent back to their parent camp.

The prisoners of war were often accused of various breaches of discipline and crimes. Members of the Embassy would attend these trials, and we endeavoured to see that the prisoners were properly represented. But the Germans often refused us an opportunity to see the prisoners before their trial, or even before their execution. The case of Captain Fryatt is in point.

Captain Fryatt who commanded a British merchant ship was captured

and taken to the civilian camp at Ruhleben. In searching him the Germans claimed that he wore a watch presented to him for an attempt to ram a German submarine. They, therefore, took Fryatt from the Ruhleben camp and sent him to Bruges for trial. When I heard of this I immediately sent two formal notes to the German Foreign Office demanding the right to see Fryatt and hire counsel to represent him, inquiring what sort of counsel would be permitted to attend the trial and asking for postponement of the trial until these matters could be arranged. The German Foreign Office had informed me that they had backed up these requests and I believe them, but the answer of the German admiralty to my notes was to cause the trial to proceed the morning after the day on which my notes were delivered and to shoot Fryatt before noon of the same day.

As to the evidence regarding the watch, the British Foreign Office learned that, when captured, Captain Fryatt had neither a watch nor any letter to indicate that he had tried to ram a submarine!

This cruel and high-handed outrage caused great indignation in England, and even in certain circles in Germany; and the manner in which my request was treated was certainly a direct insult to the country which I represented. In conversation with me, Zimmermann and the Chancellor and von Jagow all expressed the greatest regret over this incident, which shows how little control the civilian branch of the government has over the military in time of war. Later on, when similar charges were made against another British sea captain, the Foreign Office, I think through the influence of the Emperor, was able to prevent a recurrence of the Fryatt outrage.

As I have said, many of the camp commanders in Germany were men, excellent and efficient and kind hearted, who did what they could for the prisoners. It is a pity that these men should bear the odium which attaches to Germany because of the general bad treatment of prisoners of war in the first days of the war, and because certain commanders of prison camps were not fitted for their positions.

The commander at the camp at Wittenberg was replaced, but the Germans have never acknowledged that bad conditions had existed in that camp. Shortly before we left Germany the war department seemed to gain more control of the prisoners of war situation, and on our representations at least one camp commander was permanently

relieved. If examples had been made early in the war of the camp commanders who were not fit for their places and of those who had in any way mishandled prisoners of war, the German people as a whole would not have had to bear the burden of this odium. The many prisoners will return to their homes with a deep and bitter hatred of all things German.

The British Government took a great interest in the British prisoners in Germany. Nothing was omitted and every suggestion made by me was immediately acted on; while many most valuable hints were given me from London as to prisoners' affairs. Their Majesties, the King and Queen, showed a deep personal concern in the welfare of the unfortunate British in German hands; and this concern never flagged during the period of my stay in Berlin. Lord Robert Cecil and Lord Newton were continually working for the benefit of British prisoners.

At a time when the British prisoners were without proper clothing, the British Government sent me uniforms, overcoats, etc., and I hired a warehouse in Berlin as a distributing point; but, after some months, the German authorities refused to allow me to continue this method of distribution on the ground that it was the duty of Germany to provide the prisoners with clothes. But Germany was not performing this duty and the British prisoners had to suffer because of this German official woodenheadedness.

In the spring of 1916, quite characteristically, the Germans broke their "treaty" concerning visits to prisoners, and refused to permit us to speak to prisoners out of hearing. Von Jagow told me that this was because of the trouble made among Russian prisoners by the visits of Madam Sazonoff, but this had nothing to do with the arrangement between Great Britain and Germany.

I think that the Germans suspected that I had learned from fellow prisoners of the cruel and unnecessary shooting of two Irish prisoners at Limburg. It was not from prisoners, however, that I obtained this information. but from Germans who wrote to me.

In addition to the English and Japanese, I had the protection of the Serbian and Roumanian subjects and the protection of the interests of a very small country, the Republic of San Marino. Soon after the Serbians and Roumanians appeared in the prison camps of Germany we made

reports on the condition and treatment of these prisoners, as well as reports concerning the British.

I was able to converse with some Serbians, in the first days of the war, in their native tongue, which, curiously enough, was Spanish. Immediately after the persecution of the Jews in Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella and other monarchs, a number of Spanish Jews emigrated to Serbia where they have remained ever since, keeping their old customs and speaking the old Spanish of the time of Cervantes.

The German authorities, in the most petty manner, often concealed from me the presence of British prisoners, especially civilians, in prison camps. For a long time I was not informed of the presence of British civilians in Sennelager and it was only by paying a surprise visit by motor to the camp at Brandenburg that I discovered a few British, the crew of a trawler, there. It was on information contained in an anonymous letter, evidently from the wife of some German officer, that I visited Brandenburg where the crew of this trawler, deprived of money, were without any of the little comforts or packages that mitigate life in a German prison camp.

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