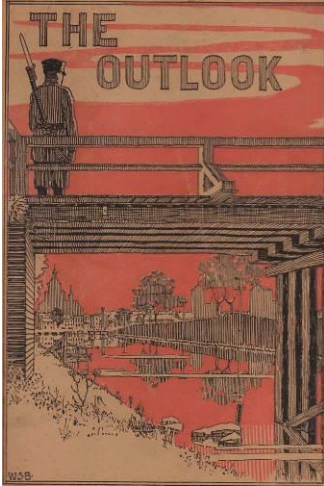


“While the kettle boils”

Part 1 - Internment in the prisoner of war camp at Dänholm-Stralsund



Many prisoner of war camps in Germany could boast the publication of a camp magazine during the Great War. “The Outlook” produced by the British officers held in the camp at Dänholm-Stralsund is a fine example, noteworthy for its entertaining stories and poems and charming illustrations. Only one issue was published, in November 1918. The officers were “...*fitting ourselves out as well as possible to weather the coming Baltic winter*”¹. Written and ready for print in the final weeks of the war the men were also “*waiting for the kettle to boil*”², well aware of the revolution happening around them and that an armistice was days away. What would the next couple of months bring?

Dänholm consists of two small islands, Greater and Lesser Dänholm, situated in the strait between the coastal town of Stralsund on the North German mainland and the island of Rügen. Today a bridge connects Dänholm to both Stralsund and Rügen; during the First World War the only links were by ferry. Dänholm has a long history as a military base and had housed a Navy Base since 1850. Most of the fine buildings, built in 1894/95, still exist, some now in use as “Marinemuseum Dänholm”. A prisoner of war camp was created on the islands of Dänholm early in the war and was used as such throughout the war. It housed British pows at various periods; however for the majority of the time it held Russian officers. Once the war between Germany and Russia ended in 1917 the Russian prisoners were moved out. Following the German spring offensives of 1918 the number of British pows held by the Germans almost doubled. Accommodation needed to be found for them. Approximately 900 British officers and 340 other ranks were interned at Dänholm in the latter half of 1918. A record of their time at Dänholm, often in great detail, has been preserved in diaries and memoirs created by these pows. This material is the main source for the following work.



¹ “The Outlook”

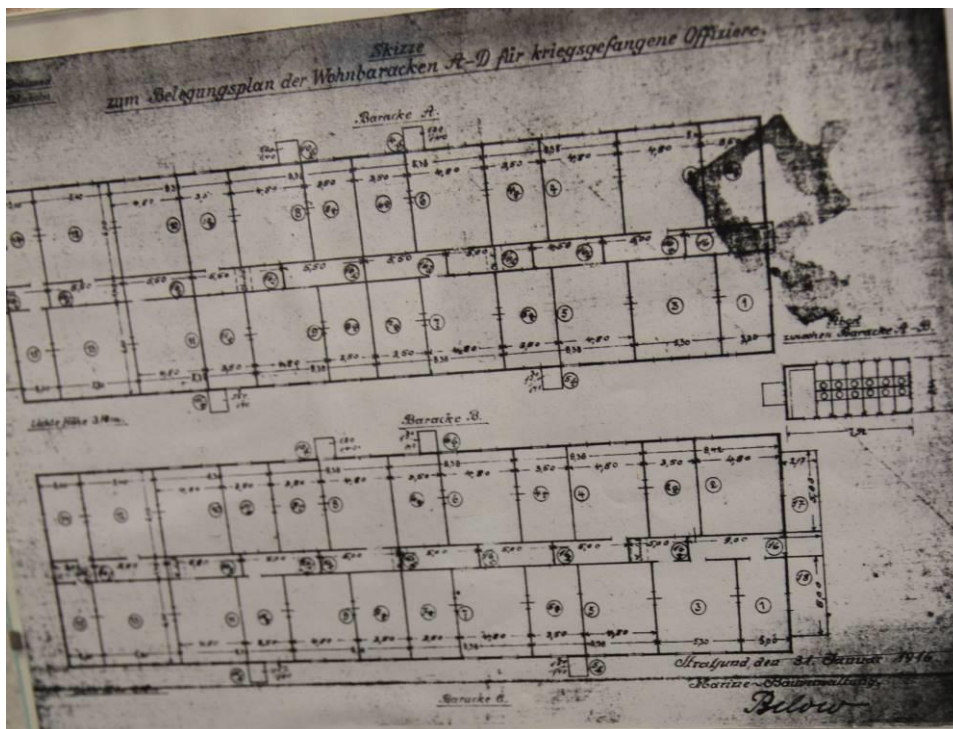
² “The Outlook”

What were the conditions at the camp on Dänholm-Stralsund and who were the pows?

The pow camp

The Lesser and Greater islands of Dänholm were joined by a bridge situated next to the harbour in the strait which separates them. The pow camp, enclosed by barbed wired, consisted of most of Lesser and a substantial part of Greater Dänholm which included the harbour basin. The red brick military buildings to the north-west of, and outside the camp, were in use by the German army, and the pows followed with interest the outdoor training of the young soldiers. The cage where the pows were held for some hours after their arrival on Dänholm stood near to where the Stralsund ferry tied up. A football field lay outside the camp boundary. Few Germans lived on either island; there were fish processing facilities and local fishermen anchored their boats here³.

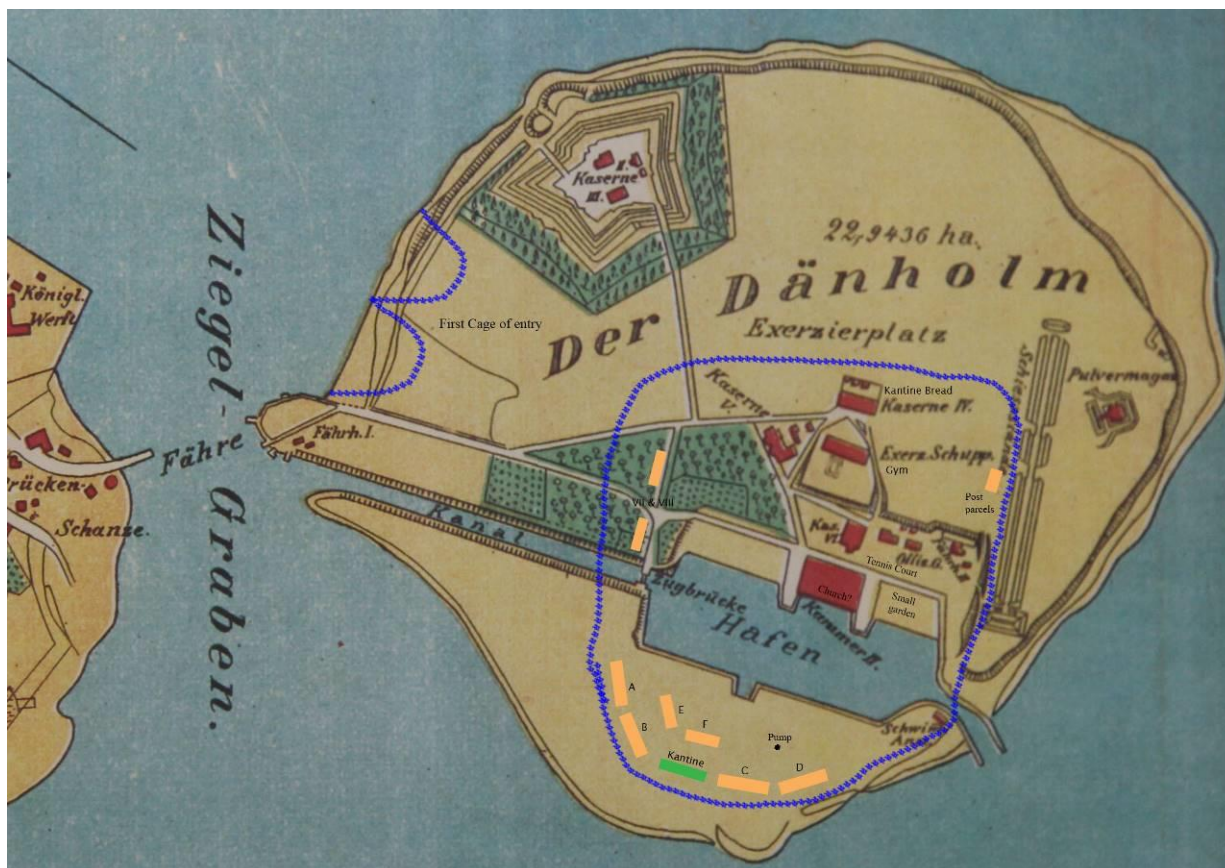
New huts had been built on both islands during the war to accommodate pows. There appear to have been six wooden huts on Lesser Dänholm, A-F, each housing about 100 prisoners. The huts had a central corridor and were divided into variously sized rooms to accommodate 1, 2, 5 or 8 men. Each hut was lit by electric lighting and had two rooms with stoves where the pows could cook their own food. The pows had to stay in the huts between sunset and sunrise although when darkness came early they were allowed to walk around in the central part of camp until 8 p.m. Small lavatory huts were positioned close to the huts and there were facilities for hot baths, twice a week, and outdoors for cold bathing. Lesser Dänholm had its own wooden dining hall/canteen.



Drawing for huts 31 January 1916

³ Garvey

The camp enclosure on Greater Dänholm was larger and at least two large brick buildings were in use for camp administration. These buildings also accommodated some of the pows. It appears that there were also two wooden accommodation huts. Greater Dänholm also had half-timbered buildings with a dining hall, a canteen, a gymnasium and the church within the camp. Also in the camp and opening onto the harbour basin was a very large wooden building originally built to house torpedo boats. The camp tennis courts were situated next to it. Several of these buildings still exist today. The pows were allowed to use a formal garden established by a commandant many years earlier and there was also a wooded area within the barbed wire enclosure. Capt. Boyle made a sketch of the camp in his diary but without much detail.



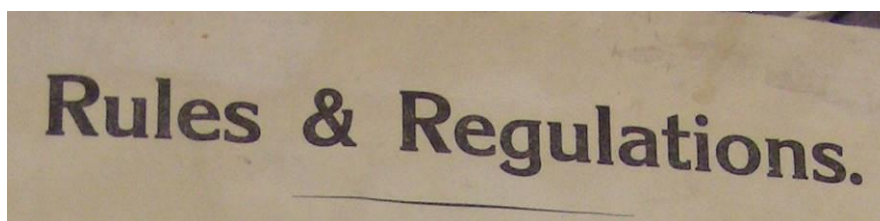
1912 map with camp from Captain Boyles sketch added

German Camp Organisation

Major D. von Bushe was commandant of the pow camp on Dänholm, and had been for several years. Captain C.R. Crowther, RAMC, in an official report⁴ to the Government Committee on the Treatment of British Prisoners of War described him and his adjutant - *"The commandant appears a just & human man. The adjutant was very accessible & would often go out of his way to oblige some of us, and was generally liked. About a fortnight after our arrival at Stralsund the Commandant called the hut commanders together and said as commandant of a prison camp he no longer looked on us as enemies, & desired us to be as comfortable & as happy as possible. I think he acted in that spirit throughout"*. This sounds too good to be true but this positive description of the top brass at Dänholm is voiced in other contemporaneous accounts.

⁴ Written on his repatriation in London late October/early November

On their arrival at Dänholm the prisoners were addressed by the camp adjutant in English. He told them it was a fine camp and if they obeyed orders then all would be well. The adjutant, whose father had managed the London Branch of the Deutsches Reich Bank for many years, spoke excellent English having been partly educated at Oxford. Sergeant Joe Garvey, an orderly, remembered that he *“liked him and trusted him”*. Others didn’t have quite such a good opinion of them. 2/Lt. R.S. Robertson, Machine Gun Corps (MGC), wrote in his memoirs many years later *“On the day after our arrival on the island we were lectured by the Prussian Camp Commandant who was a pig, but life was made more bearable for us by his deputy who was a Bavarian Count and had lost an eye in the fighting”*.



The “Rules and Regulations” for the camp at Dänholm, with 28 specifications, were printed in both German and English and posted around the camp. They were pretty straightforward, stipulating the dos and don’ts one might expect in a prisoner of war camp. To make things absolutely clear; *“sentries and guards were instructed to use their arms without hesitation in case of flight or gross disobedience”*. Peculiar to Dänholm however were rules 22, 23 and 24 *“Rod-fishing in the basin between the Great & Little Dänholm is allowed, only on the board of the Little Dänholm. It is strictly forbidden to dig for worms in the park, on the paths and roads, fields, gardens and lawns.” “It is also forbidden to walk or lie down on the grass, except on the grass between the chief road leading to the exit and the Water basin.” “Bathing and swimming in the basin is prohibited”*. The Rules and Regulation⁵ poster isn’t dated, and since bathing apparently was allowed at one point, perhaps the rules were flexible on occasion.

Crowther records that there were only two forms of punishment used at Dänholm. The mild form for minor misdemeanours such as being late for appell, was to report four times a day to the office. The more serious form for breach of camp regulations, attempts to escape etc. involved confinement in the cells, generally for 5-6 days.

The first British arrivals

The camp was empty of prisoners by mid-June 1918 and available for an influx of British officers. A group of 400 arrived from the distribution camp at Rastatt on Thursday 27 June 1918. These officers were all taken prisoner during the German spring offensive, many taken on 21 March and on 27 May. Lists with their name, rank, regiment, date and place of capture, last pow camp, date and place of birth and next of kin can be seen on the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) website. Somewhat confusingly these lists don’t contain the date these pows arrived at the Dänholm camp. They are mainly listed in groups of 42, some lists are alphabetical but otherwise in no other obvious order. It would appear that lists were created on the day they arrived “en masse”, and the information was typed up later to be sent to the ICRC. Behind this basic information each man had his own story and a family waiting for news at home.

⁵ Poster in Liddle Collection, Leeds University – Arthur Simson Witherington – in full on pages 36, 37 and 38

The Denton twins

The Denton family in Rushton had four officer sons. One brother had already lost a leg and following the action on 27th May 1918, the family received a “missing in action” wire on 6th June. This news was not only of the gravest concern for their family but was of widespread interest among cricket followers. A brief note was printed in the local paper the next day about “Jack” and “Billy” Denton *“Famous Northants Cricketers reported missing”* and by 8th June the worrying news had reached the papers in Australia and New Zealand *“Prominent cricketers missing”*. It was 28 year old identical twins 2/Lieutenants W.H. and J.S. Denton, both of the Northamptonshire Regiment, who had been taken prisoner. An



update in the paper appeared on 14th June and reported the hope given by a “midnight soldier visit” to the Denton household from one of the few from the regiment who had managed to get away. On one of the first days in July postcards, dated 1st June, arrived from the twins saying they were alive and well and prisoners in Germany. After a month in suspense and anxiety the family was pleased to be able to spread the good news and thanked all, via the local newspaper, for the many inquires made to them about their sons.

George Coaton

The Coaton family in Burton-on- Trent had received the worst possible news. A telegram from the war office arrived on 12th June 1918, their only son 24 year old Lt. George Coaton MGC had been killed in action on 27th May. This was supplemented by a detailed account of the circumstances by his regimental major. Well attended memorial services were held at two local churches where the young man had been a popular vocalist. Precisely a month later sorrow changed to joy when George’s parents received a postcard from him saying he was unhurt and a prisoner. The next day the local newspaper spread this wonderful news, and fed the hope other distraught families had that their loved ones reported killed may yet be alive and held as pows.

89 orderlies were also transferred to Dänholm on 27 June 1918; 11 came from Schneidemühl via Altdamm where they were joined by 77 from the camp in that town and 1 from Stettin. They were a mixture of men taken prisoner throughout the war, from the “veteran” prisoner Pte. Joseph Garvey of the Scottish Guards, captured on 29 October 1914 at Ypres to those who had only been prisoners since April. Garvey, a postman, wrote his memoirs in the late 1950’s. He describes how, after assaulting a German guard whilst part of a working party, he had spent three months in solitary confinement. This may be why he hadn’t been transferred to Holland under the prisoner exchange scheme. Back in Schneidemühl camp a sympathetic officer suggested he be transferred to the camp at Dänholm. The camp shortly to reopen was in need of two interpreters (presumably for the orderlies). 30 year old Pte. Joe Garvey agreed to go and says how he nominated his comrade Jim Wiltshire as the other. Private Wiltshire, of the South Wales Borderers, had also been taken prisoner on 29 October 1914. Garvey tells of reporting to the commanding officer in charge at Dänholm, himself to be interpreter on the greater island while Jim was to be on the lesser.

While Garvey and Wiltshire were taken on as orderlies because they could speak German it is unclear whether the other British Other Rank (OR) pows sent to the camp as orderlies were those men unable to do hard physical work because of injury or poor health. Certainly some had been wounded.⁶ Two officers, Capt. Crowther and Lt. Ortweiler, both back in London from Dänholm before the war ended noticed *“that when a new batch of orderlies were drafted in, they appeared very thin and exhausted”*. And *“At Stralsund some men came to act as orderlies who had been working on the Western front. They had evidently had a ghastly time, being underfed, overworked and roughly man-handled”*. The orderlies ranged in age from not quite 20 to over 50 and even included some merchant seamen. Among them were men from as far afield as Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Canada.



Pte. Joe Garvey

Charles Edwin Robinson, a sapper with the Royal Engineers, one of the orderlies who came from the Altdamm camp had been taken prisoner on 27 March 1918, wounded in his right shoulder by a bullet. He had been treated at lazaret III Stuttgart then transferred to camp Stuttgart II in the beginning of May, and then on to Güstrow camp. It was about this time that his family, back home in Darlington, were informed that he had been taken prisoner. On 31 May Charles's mother Emily wrote to his regiment inquiring whether she was still entitled to the allowance which had been made to her by her son, explaining he was now *“a prisoner of war in Germany, which is no fault of his.”* Charles, 22, had been an apprentice joiner before the war. Mrs. Robinson was directed to send the post she had received from her son to the regimental paymaster, which she did asking them to be so kind as to return the card to her when they were done with it. Robinson is a good example of how a pow could be moved from camp to camp and of why without a permanent camp address it took so long to establish the all-important contact with home.

Arrival at camp - reception

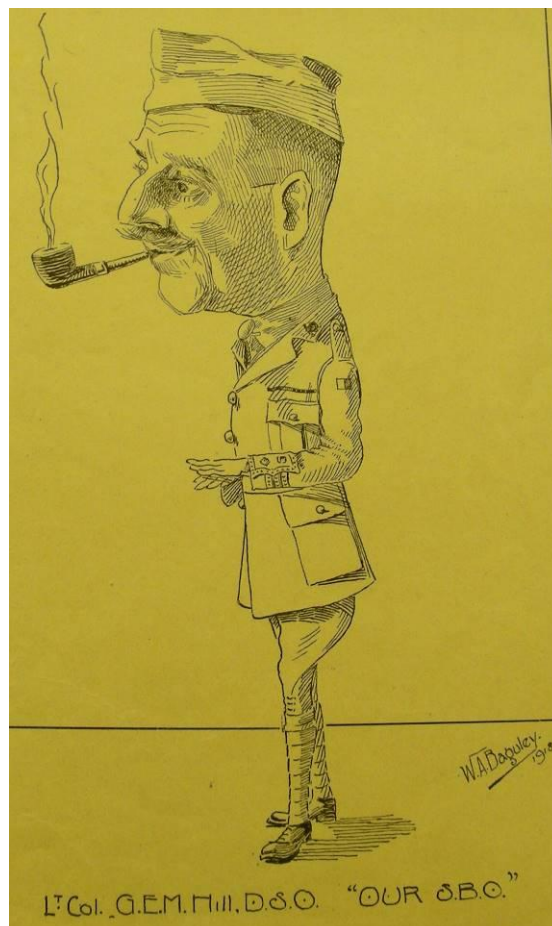
Captain Henry Wilkinson, 8bn Durham Light Infantry, wrote a diary which contains details of the train journey experienced by the first 400 British officers to arrive at Stralsund camp. They left the station at Rastatt on Tuesday 25 June, arriving two days later at the docks in Stralsund *“from whence we crossed, by means of a small hand-worked ferry, to the island of Dänholm. Here in a small compound, our names were taken, we were searched, and finally marched across to another part of the island.”* The train journey from Rastatt, to Stralsund had taken 47 hours. Of his arrival on 27 June Lt. Col. de Renzy Martin, a regular officer who had commanded 11bn Lancashire Fusiliers, noted in his diary *“Arrived at Stralsund about 6am. Marched to small ferry across to a small island – we were collected in the hospital grounds, given a good hot meal, the first since the evening of 24th & then searched again. My wrist compass was at last discovered & confiscated! It was a slow business & very badly run. The last lot were not finished till 9pm!”* Taken prisoner on 10 April 1918, he took advantage when moving to a new camp to leave his old “syndicate” and team up with another set of officers. Syndicates were informal groupings of officers who pooled their food supplies and organised the cooking of their own meals, often these groups were formed of those officers sharing a room. He was initially allocated a two bedded room, sharing with a Colonel Sarson. He had travelled from Rastatt with a group of senior officers Hill, Tod, Sarson, Fisher and Griffin. Captain Henry Wilkinson and his comrades however managed to bag single rooms *“containing bed, table and every convenience. It was certainly the best place we had yet seen”*. Of the Denton twins' arrival at Dänholm, Billy

⁶ Looks like it

noted that their quarters were quite comfortable, there were sheets on the beds and they had a good nights' sleep.

Settling in

Colonel G.E.M. Hill East Lancashire Regiment, a 42 year old bachelor career soldier, prisoner since 27 May 1918 became the first Senior British officer of the Dänholm camp. He took stock of the situation and within days, supported enthusiastically by Lt. Col de Renzy Martin, complained to the commandant about the food rations and contacted the YMCA in Berlin and four Red Cross depots about bread and first emergency parcels on behalf of all the pows in camp. A list with the names of all pows was sent to The Copenhagen Bureau.⁷ As Copenhagen was only 60 miles from Stralsund they optimistically hoped that supplies would reach them from there in 10 days. Fisher⁸, another member of the Hill/de Renzy Martin "senior officer syndicate" (although occupying single or double rooms they operated a "food club") was active in the camp Help Committee and appears to have developed close contact with Copenhagen. The first couple of days were otherwise spent on fumigation and getting to know their new environment "*looking very much like England*". The camp's coastal position with fresh sea-air and sailing boats passing, birds singing, trees, climbing roses and all variety of wild flowers promising "*delightful walks*" led Capt. Boyle to think of picnics with his wife. The boundary of barbed wire and the guards then brought back the reality of their lack of liberty.



It was time too, now they were installed, to remind them that they were officers. Col. Hill called a meeting and gave them a severe ticking off about their appearance. Another more serious problem was that an officer had been caught stealing bread from another officer, a difficult situation to deal with. Col. Hill thought the culprit should be court marshalled but it appears that the Germans took it less seriously and he was put in a cell for three days and then moved to another camp. Another upset during their first fortnight at Dänholm was caused by an officer caught out in having written a coded message on a postcard home, punishment for this was that no one was allowed to send any post for 10 days. There was also a case of pilfering from the canteen.

⁷ It was via the information sent from The Copenhagen Bureau to Red Cross HQ in London that a number of families received the first news that "missing" were alive and held prisoner.

⁸ Possibly Major Edward Lindsay Fisher, Manchester Reg. or Lt. Col. Herbert George Fisher RFA.



More or less from day one they could draw money from the German Paymaster. According to the Hague Convention of 1907 officers were to receive the same pay as those of equivalent rank in the country of capture. Robert Spiers Robertson, Machine Gun Corps, took his “paybook”, issued to him on 28 June, home with him as a souvenir. A monthly deposit of 60 Marks was noted. Capt. Wilkinson wrote in his diary each and every time he withdrew money, and how he spent it. The officers could also draw money from their accounts at Cox’s but the rate of exchange given in the camp was low. There were a number of opportunities to spend money, such as at the barber’s, in the bookshop, sending out washing, and at the canteen. A range of products could be bought such as fresh vegetables and fruit, some groceries in the way of sardines, fish paste and ersatz products and the all-important matches, tobacco and cigarettes and smoked fish from the local fishermen. The Denton twins found the prices exorbitant and took pride in managing, buying as little as possible from the Germans. The canteen was also where the men met to socialize over a beer or a glass of wine and whatever music was being played on the piano.

Padres and doctors

De Renzy Martin was elected as a church warden and looked after the accounts. A church choir was also quickly formed. There were five chaplains amongst the officers from Rastatt, all taken prisoner on 27 May. Two were attached to 22bn and 23bn Durham Light Infantry, Rev. C.G. Brown and Rev. E. Herbert. Rev. Steer was attached to the RFA while Rev. Edwards was attached to 4bn East Yorks. Holy Communion was administered daily at 7.30 and there were prayers each evening at 8.30. Services were held every Sunday and for those interested discussions took place on Sunday afternoons at 2.30. A particularly impressive service was held on Sunday 4 August, the fourth anniversary of the outbreak of the war. The service held at 10 a.m. was led by Rev. Steers. It opened with singing the National Anthem which was followed by prayers for *“our leaders and peace”*.



The Rev. James Nolan attached to 25 Field Ambulance was a Catholic. Private Garvey tells in his memoirs how *“a little Irish priest named Father Nolan”* established a Mass centre, and how he supported this initiative. Later non-conformist services were also held. Many of the prisoners were church goers and it was clearly of importance to their wellbeing that they had the opportunity to go to church services and other religious meetings. The individual padres however weren't met with complete approval especially if they used slang in their sermons. One could imagine that they had adopted a more direct and earthy tone as padres on the battlefield which some felt was inappropriate in this makeshift but none the less more formal church setting. Religious discussions also appear to have created some ill-will but then that gave something to gossip about.

It must have been reassuring that a number of the officers were doctors. They were asked for two volunteers to be responsible for medical work in the camp. Dr. David MacNair and Dr. Charles R. Crowther volunteered; both were taken prisoner on 27 May and spoke German (and lived in Plymouth!). Another doctor was Captain R.W. Pearson, RAMC attached 22bn Durham Light Infantry who had distinguished himself in the performance of his duties during the war. He was noted for *“conspicuous gallantry”* and *“had rendered most magnificent services to wounded under heavy machine gun fire. By his courage, fine example and great devotion he has at all times inspired his stretcher bearers, and it was mainly due to him that so many of the wounded were got away by the bearers”*. Roland Wilfred Pearson was one of a pair of brothers, though not twins, taken prisoner on 27 May. They linked up at Rastatt before their transfer to Stralsund. It

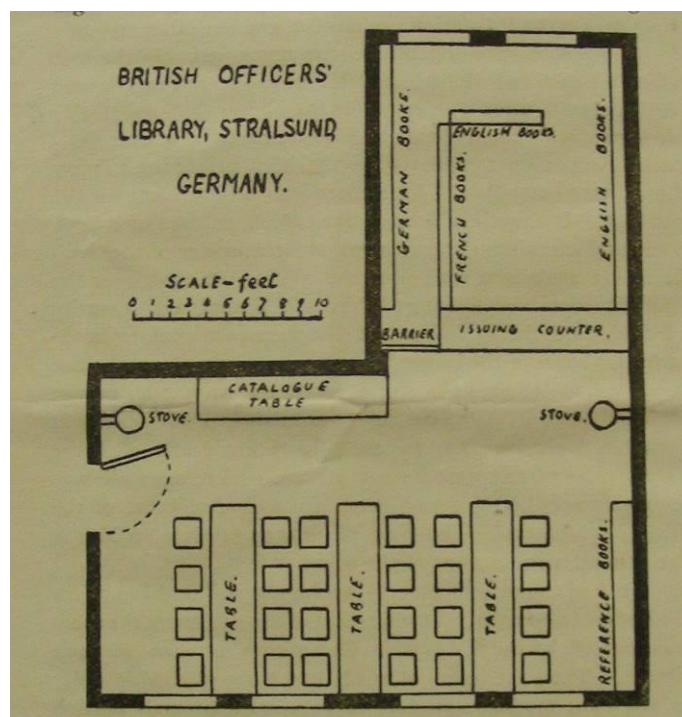
must have been strange for the Pearson brothers, Roland and 2/Lt. William Osborne from the Middlesex Regiment, both in their forties, to find themselves together after years of active war service, in the peaceful, beautiful setting of Dänholm. Another of the doctors, Captain Maberly Squire Esler, RAMC, a veteran of four years of war who later answered a question as to whether he had been frightened during the war with, it was *"So like a nightmare that I thought it must have been a nightmare.. that I'd wake up suddenly and find it was a dream"*. On being taken prisoner thinking *"that is the end of the war for me, I am alive and shall not be shot at any more"*.

According to the Hague convention captured chaplains and medical personnel were not to be treated as prisoners and they were to be exchanged when circumstances permitted. However there was some difference in how these guidelines were implemented and discussions between the governments about them continued throughout the war. At evening parade on 11 July the interpreter read out a response to their queries to the commandant *"that owing to the English holding back German doctors as prisoners for long periods ... there was no question of exchange"*. The RAMC officers interned at Dänholm held an on-going dialogue with the Germans regarding their repatriation. On roll-call on 6 October they were informed, perhaps to close further discussion until circumstances changed, that until German doctors captured in 1917 arrived at Aachen British MOs would be remain prisoners.

Some of the men had been wounded during the process of their capture. They would have been treated at a lazaret or hospital before arriving at Dänholm, but some would still have been in need of some medical supervision and care. Captain Norman Egerton Young, Royal Essex Regiment, had a thigh injury. He had been taken to the hospital at Langensalsa until he was well enough to be moved on to Rastatt and then on to Dänholm. Others exhausted by years of war, months surviving on a minimum of food in captivity and poor hygiene kept the doctors busy. Dänholm had German medical staff and in the report on conditions provided by Dr. Crowther he had only positive remarks to give about their treatment of and attitude towards their British patients. On arrival at the camp the prisoners were given a series of five inoculations. Boils appear to have been a feature of interment that plagued both other ranks and officers. Pte. Joe Garvey had at his former camp, out on a work group, acted as "nurse" to his comrades, amongst other things treating their boils. Grateful thanks were voiced in the editorial of "The Outlook" that *"The two Docs who so perseveringly punctured us, so many times and in so many places, deserve an especial vote, for the way in which they have attended our "kranks"*. If necessary, prisoners were taken to one of the four military hospitals in Stralsund for treatment, even for massage. There was a dental clinic at the camp. Lt Col de Renzy Martin had occasion to use the services of the Dentist on more than one occasion. One wonders if the poor nutrition the prisoners had experienced for a number of months contributed to the dental problems.



Less than a week after arriving Major Todd⁹, Royal Scots, who before the war had been a teacher at George Heriot's school in Edinburgh, had held his first lecture, on botany. Major Todd appears to have been a leader in the organization of the camp college, and was affectionately referred to in "The Outlook" as "*Todd, pillar of scholarly strength in tartan trews*". He had joined up at the outbreak of war and was sent overseas in November 1914. Major Todd had been wounded twice and was mentioned in dispatches. Coming up to his 40th birthday, he both impressed and inspired the pows and one marvels at his energy and enthusiasm. Another who immediately busied themselves for the benefit of the whole camp was Major Newcombe, 4bn Yorkshire Regiment, who set to work organizing a library¹⁰. Although the barracks at Dänholm in many ways were of a high standard, they were riddled with lice from the previous inmates. Both library and college had to wait until all the prisoners had undergone a rigorous three day delousing and fumigation program. The education classes got underway on 22 July while the Dänholm prisoner of war library, sharing the same premises, opened on 24 July. The library started with a membership of 467 and a stock of 993 books, over half of which were English, the rest in French and German. The library even serviced the poor chaps in hospital in Stralsund. Orderlies visited them once a week and changed their library books for them.



⁹ Photo given Captain James Reid Christie 7th November 1918

¹⁰ Newcombe, Luxmoore and Winston, John – "A Prisoner of War Library"

Further new arrivals

The next group of officers arrived on 14 July and this necessitated a minor reshuffle of quarters. These were 88 officers from Karlsruhe, all taken prisoner during spring '18 except 2/Lt. Hunt prisoner since February 1917. A few days later they were joined by 20 orderlies from Sprottau and 10 from Altdamm, and 34 officers from Landshut and 5 from Heidelberg. The officers from Landshut were all spring '18ers. Of the 5 from Heidelberg, all of them prisoners since 1917, a fellow officer at Heidelberg had this to say in his diary Friday 19 July "*Major Marris (Tanks), Captain Young, Lieutenants Nathan, Goldstein and Mann, all went to a new camp at Stralsund on the Baltic. They had tried to escape recently at different times and go to a sort of Strafe Camp on an island. AS THEY ARE FIVE RATTLING GOOD MEN THEY WILL NOT MIND*". For Captain Mark Aitchison Young, Royal Sussex Regiment the move to Dänholm also meant a reunion with his brother Norman. 2/Lt. Hunt had the good fortune to share a room for 7, in one of the red brick barracks on Greater Dänholm, with the Young brothers describing the group to his wife as "*a happy party*".



The majority of the prisoners who had arrived at Dänholm since 27 June were prisoners of recent date and had not managed to receive Red Cross bread or food parcels from home. They were already weak on their arrival in camp from inadequate supplies of food provided by their captors and their biggest problem during their first month's internment at Stralsund was the quality and quantity of the food rations provided there. Wilkinson noted on 30 June "*The food here seemed to be rather better than previous examples, but was still insufficient and only increased our general weakness and debilitas*". The pows were given tokens so they could buy black bread rations. They organised their own breakfast and afternoon snack in their own rooms. Soup for lunch and dinner with potatoes and fish/rissoles was served in the dining hall. Capt. Boyle RAMC wrote in his diary on 9 July "*felt weak all day – this diet makes one feel very much below par – unable to do any work (German etc.) [meaning his homework] – hardly had strength to walk 300 yards to buy bread for breakfast tomorrow*". He carried on the next day "*All camp feeling very weak – only just sufficient food to exist on – a walk of 200 yards is quite sufficient to exhaust one – all feel same. Diet said to be the same as civilian – certainly very small*". Capt. Boyle felt he could stand the diet better than most and felt quite well – but hungry.

Even when supplemented with food bought from the canteen there wasn't enough nourishment. Wilkinson wrote daily of the meals he prepared for himself and his roommates. Whether it be a soup he made from fresh vegetables or a dish of pickled carrots and turnips, which he felt he was an expert at, to suppers such as onion and lettuce salad with Bovril or red currants with sugar with Oxo (which he remarks went down well) this 23 year old young man from Gateshead sounds to have been very creative in the kitchen. Cauliflower for supper was also welcome one evening. Wilkinson was "buyer for the room" doing his canteen crawl in the morning and must have been a valued customer at the shop. A cauliflower cost 3s 6p, and although he thought a boycott of the canteen sounded like a good thing, believed it to be impossible. One wonders how he served the cauliflower! Johnny Denton sought to supplement his diet by fishing, one unfortunate day this resulted in him falling off a loose rock into four feet of water. Wet through Johnny had to borrow clothes from their orderly Clarke. The officers still only had the clothes they were wearing at capture. The great news on 13 July was that bread and first parcels had been sent from Copenhagen on 9th. During the third week of July some of the prisoners of longer standing began to receive parcels from home, sent on from their previous camp.



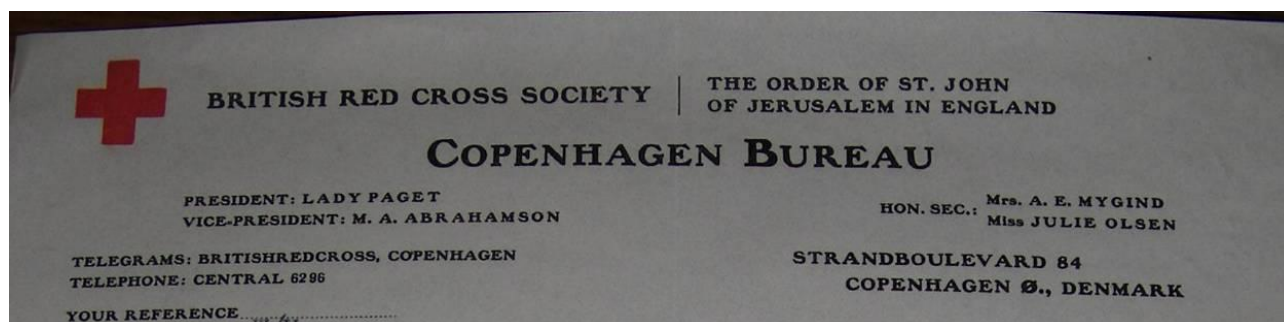
The first group had made themselves at home. Wilkinson together with fellow DLI officers Turnbull, Burrell and Johnson were in the comfortable huts on Lesser Island, with orderly Wood to give a hand with the domestics. The single rooms they had first been allocated were now needed for senior officers and they had been relocated to an 8 bedded room after a couple of days. Their orderly Private Leonard Wood, Duke of Wellington, West Riding Regiment, had been a prisoner since June 1917 and came from the Altdamm camp. 21 year old Wood, presumably as a veteran prisoner, had apparently, as opposed to his officers, received a parcel. Named orderlies don't turn up very often in officers' memoirs. Wood achieved this distinction for giving Wilkinson a Woodbine. Six weeks after capture he wrote in his diary that it *"turned me quite dizzy, but was just delicious. Oh how I wished for more of them!!"* Another orderly, this time anonymous, made an impression on Lt. Boyle who wrote in his diary 17 July, *"Sitting out two days ago – suddenly a Tommy comes across (unknown to us) and offered us a cigarette each a Woodbine – big ones – had them from home – what a treat to meet men like him."*



Tobacco taken home from Dänholm 1918 as souvenir IWM© IWM (EPH 3799)

General von der Goltz inspected the camp on 23 July. According to de Renzy Martin he was very affable and listened to their complaints. He ordered a wire to be sent concerning the hold up in parcels being sent on from former camps. He tasted the food rations they were given, described by Boyle as *"our pet abomination – (peas, beans in pods all mixed up with potatoes – all stringy, horrid mess)"* and apparently von der Goltz agreed and *"complained about it bitterly we hear"*. He inspected the camp later on at least one more occasion.

The 24 July was, according to Billy Denton, *"a red letter day"*. A consignment of YMCA parcels had arrived which when issued were to be shared between two. Each parcel held biscuits, soap, chocolate, tobacco, cigarettes, tea, rice and condensed milk, *"all luxuries which"*, as Wilkinson put it, *"they had not seen since capture. We tea-d in state, and supped luxuriously on rice (my cooking) raspberries, biscuits, fish paste and tea, thus closing the happiest and best day we had spent for some weeks"*. Capt. Boyle wrote the same day about receiving his ½ parcel *"an excellent start – morale greatly improved. Has been much controversy who should have parcels for some time now (old captured) should they have them or not? Thoroughly enjoyed our first parcel – what should we do with the rice – had the best meal in the world – a cup of English tea with milk – our cup of happiness is full"*. Bread from Copenhagen, albeit stale, arrived a couple of days later. Emergency parcels arrived on 27 July and improved their food situation further, with Wilkinson describing a dinner at 8 of fresh fried fish, potatoes, carrots, bully, toast, biscuits, cheese and cocoa, and feeling REALLY satisfied. At the same time it appears that the soup provided by the Germans deteriorated very badly.

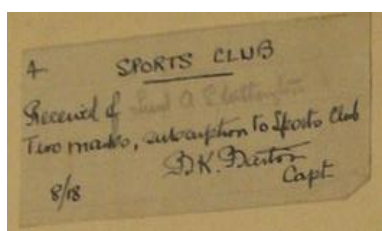


Next arrivals

Around 25 July a group of 66 officers, including doctor Capt. A.S. Findlay, arrived from Rastatt. Amongst this group was Canadian Lt. Alvin Ferguson who had been taken prisoner on 12 March 1918 when his plane crashed over enemy lines. He had been treated at a series of lazarets for his leg injury, recording in his diary that he was kindly and well treated by the German medical staff. His leg was saved by a Russian doctor. Perhaps this was the inspiration for his desire to use his time usefully at Dänholm. With a view to a future career in medicine, he joined classes to study chemistry and botany and recorded his disappointment that the proposed courses in physiology and anatomy fell through.

During the last week of July another group of spring 1918 officer pows arrived from Karlsruhe together with orderlies from Schneidemuhl and Landshut. This last group must have more or less cleared the officer distribution camps of Rastatt and Karlsruhe, of those taken in the German spring offensives, for the next group which arrived on 4th August was a mix of officers taken prisoner in June and July 1918. Orderlies

arrived from Stendal and Schneidemuhl. 28 year old Captain Arthur Simpson Witherington, RFA, from Sunderland, one of this group from Karlsruhe kept a very detailed diary. After studying law he had worked in his family's shipping business before the war and was newly married when he received his commission on 1st January 1916. He had been a POW since 27 May 1918. He described arriving at Dänholm late in the afternoon of 29 July, having not eaten since 5 in the morning. On promising to pay for it they were given fish and bread. They were searched and particulars taken and then experienced the joy on being given an emergency parcel. *"Parcel helped to dispel a pretty general 'fit of the blues', the worst since capture"*. Witherington kept with his syndicate from Karlsruhe and they moved into Barrack VIII room 21 on Greater island, *"one of the pleasantest in the camp"*. Witherington found the camp's situation splendid, had minor complaints about the dining hall and the latrines and was initially distressed by the fleas before fumigation had taken place. But *"Will be a good spot soon as services, lectures, concerts, games, library etc. all in process of organization"*.



He immediately joined up for a range of activities but had one problem however in the lack of orderlies, only 2 to 60 officers. Amongst Witherington's comrades from Karlsruhe was fellow Artillery officer Lt. Col. Moss-Blundell. He was now the most senior officer, albeit a territorial officer. He had been wounded when taken prisoner and perhaps that is why Lt. Col. Hill carried on for a while as acting SBO for the camp.

30 July entry in Witherington's diary:

8 am. Breakfast in rooms (homemade. officers in twos taking turns to do work), coffee provided in dining hall

8.45 am Roll call

Noon soup (generally a second course)

3.30 pm Tea in room (homemade)

6 pm Soup etc.

8.45 pm Roll call after which officers confined to huts

11 pm Light's out

Capt. Wilkinson noted in his diary a menu for German rations for the week beginning 29 July.¹¹

Next phase – full camp

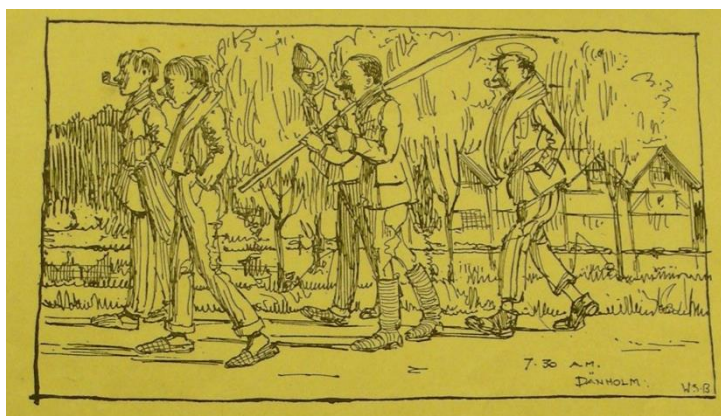
By the end of July the camp at Dänholm had housed British POWs for six weeks and with the last arrivals at the start of August they numbered approximately 740 officers and 180 orderlies. A week into August parcels started to arrive for the prisoners taken in May 1918. The prisoners taken in March and April whose letters and parcels had been sent to their former camps were still waiting for them to be forwarded. On 5 August de Renzy Martin handed a written complaint about this to the Commandant. He did however receive three letters that same day one of which had been sent on 22 June and it appears that things were finally on the move. 5 days later he wrote in his diary *"Got 1 parcel bread yesterday. It left Copenhagen on June 29th for Rastatt, so of course was mouldy, but we soaked it & squeezed most of the green & yellow mould out & then dried it & ate it! Also got 2 private Red X parcels, also been to Rastatt; they left England*

¹¹ Wilkinson diary app. A

on 3rd & 18th June. I hear there are more for me & am to get them on 12th. The German organisation for issuing is so bad that they can't compete with the numbers now getting parcels, so there will be a bad block when everyone is getting them". The flow of fresh bread and biscuits was on its way from Copenhagen and with their food parcels from home it meant that for the rest of their time at Dänholm the officer pows had, a somewhat erratic, but reasonable supply of nourishing food. Red Cross clothing arrived too: Wilkinson notes at this point being issued with new socks, pants and a shirt, all many sizes too big, but nonetheless welcome as it was his first change of clothing since capture. Robert Spiers Robertson had also finally received letters, food parcels and clothes from his family.

Entertainment

Some of the officers immediately busied themselves in setting up a range of different services and activities. It was in fact a good camp, and relations between the interned and their guards appear on the whole to have been cordial. The library increased its' stock of books, not least was a donation of 500 volumes from Bellibria, an organisation under the umbrella of the Danish Red Cross. Wilkinson kept a list of the books he read while at Dänholm, an impressive 64 volumes. Classes were arranged on a very wide range of topics, including a multitude of languages from French to Hindustani, skills from sketching to poultry keeping and more academic topics and lectures from the arts to engineering. German was taught too, however Lt. Col. de Renzy Martin opted for private tuition with Hr. Knecht one of the interpreters paying him 30 Marks a month for 3 days a week. Their paths had crossed many years earlier. De Renzy Martin was born in India where Hr Knecht had valued his father's house!



12

A drama group was established, and when instruments had been acquired an orchestra was formed. According to Joe Garvey excellent concerts were given by two piano players in the canteen, one played classical music while the other played popular "ragtime". A variety of sports were organized from PT to rugby, tennis to sea bathing (for a limited time) and of course cricket. The football ground was outside the barbed wire and when a game was played only 24 pows were allowed out to spectate. Indoors card games were popular; Captain Esler played bridge every evening with his roommates from 8 to 11pm describing it as a wonderful game. At least one pow 2/Lt. C.W. Brookfield took a pack of cards, made at the card factory

¹² The Outlook

in Stralsund, home with him as a souvenir. At least one barracks had a gramophone, although they could have wished for more records to play.

The prisoners settled in for the duration with the increasing awareness that their internment may not last much longer. English translations of current war news were made from the German newspapers each day and posted up in the Dining hall. Some pows however, having got the lay of the land and boosted by food from home, were planning their first attempt to escape. Acting Lt. Col. Eric Temperley, Northumberland Fusiliers, attempted to bribe a guard (and/ or a fisherman to take him to Denmark) and on 10 August was given five days in the cells while another officer got four for turning a knife into a saw. Apart from the potential escapees it appears that the Germans and the British were intent on rubbing along with as little friction as possible. The camp had been cleared of vermin and an acceptable flow of food, bread, clothes and letters had started to arrive from home and activities and entertainment were available to suit most tastes. It could have been worse and in many camps it was.

Another Intake

August also brought several new groups of prisoners. 202 long awaited for orderlies arrived in the first week, 4 from Schneidemuhl the rest from Stendal. 18 RAF officers arrived from Landshut, 50 officers came from Karlsruhe and on 18 August a large group arrived from Aachen and three from Holzminden: the 3 being thwarted escapees 2/Lt Hugh Durnsford RAF, 2/Lt Freddy Ortweiler RFC and Major Leonard Gilbert, Sherwood Foresters. Hugh Durnsford's book "The Tunnellers from Holzminden" published in 1920 ends with their transfer to Dänholm, the camp the German's proudly believed it was impossible to successfully escape from. Hugh Durnford was taken by the island's beauty which he described as "*indeed a pleasant spot*" and "*Venice viewed from the sea could hardly be prettier*", and had a fortnight's holiday before getting back to planning an escape.

The 128 pows from Aachen were on the other hand, and understandably so, extremely frustrated at being relocated to Stralsund. 2/Lt F.W. Harvey related later "*I was one of an unlucky party of prisoners who were warned to leave their camps for exchange to Holland. We started out full of hope and were taken as far as Aachen, a few miles from the Dutch frontier. Unfortunately owing to the sinking of the hospital ship "Queen Regent" the exchange was never completed, and after keeping us at Aachen for seven weeks we were then dispatched in a semi-starving condition to Stralsund.*" They were all veteran pows, taken prisoner in 1916. Their arrival at Stralsund appears to have upset the peace that had settled amongst the newly captured for whom it was a question of sitting it out without making too much of a fuss, for victory and release were in sight.

Lt. Chance

Young Lt Chance RAF explains in his memoirs their attitude "*We - the old hands - had to teach them the various tricks and devices we had learned during our two years of captivity*". Boyle wrote in his diary of how the "*New men against discipline – considerable discussion – refuse to stand at attention etc*". De Renzy Martin agreed "*All the officers on that island are queer, with no sense of discipline either for the Germans or to their own seniors. They are all for making trouble, but not for any reason except to annoy the Germans, & this can do no*



good.” Orderly Garvey too saw that these men so cruelly denied their exchange would be trouble makers right from the start and that their *“crass stupidity”* would end up costing dear. Not only were these officers “cheated” out of their repatriation, they had also been so close to getting home that they had cancelled their food parcels and were once more dependent on German food rations and whatever emergency bread and food parcels were available.

From the ICRC lists it would appear that on 22 August 909 officers and 340 ORs¹³ or were interned at Dänholm. Harvey had expected *“in an officers’ camp a number of beings from Sandhurst, Woolwich, and one or other of the universities, all belonging to one class, utterly typical, utterly conventional, utterly uninteresting”*. It wasn’t so, so late in the war. Capt. Esler described his fellow pows: *“the officers represented all trades and professions in civilian life. There were doctors, there were actors, artists, business men, school teachers and university professors.”* They came not only from across the empire but many had been born in exotic places, from China to Brazil with next of kin spread over the world. Harvey, the poet he was, was overwhelmed by the variety in the men he met as prisoners of war *“men who had been everywhere and done everything, men who had been everywhere and done nothing, men who had done everything and been (apparently) nowhere; a fascinating crowd”*. This large group of assorted well educated and active men found ways of burning off restless energy in sport, letting creative urges out in artwork and feeding intellectual need in classes and lectures; most coped.

Captain Boyle, RAMC only just managed and perhaps writing in his diary was what got him through. Alan Boyle’s problem was he *“hated being boxed up with 7 others”*; he detested the intimacy this forced upon him, confiding to his diary that this was *“by hundred times the worst month since last July 26th”*, that is during his year’s active service. He found his roommates at best unstimulating, the best of whom was Lt. Coaton, *“a good sort”*, and who had been mourned as dead in Burton-on-Trent a month earlier. One merited the description of being *“weird and hot tempered”*, another *“large with a curiously shaped head”* while the worst of them was Padre Brown who he described as a rough, rude, always hungry, uncultured North Country man. It was thinking of his wife and children that got Dr. Alan Boyle through the ordeal. For 2/Lt. Harvey the disappointment at being sent back into Germany from imminent repatriation to Holland threw him, an otherwise reasonably cheery man, into a depression. He had attempted to escape from Holzminden and had a book of poems he had written as a pow published in 1917. In a lecture he gave while in Schwarmstedt in 1917 he described what prison-life could do to a man *“there is no mould so thick, so gaudily green, as the mould which germinates in the minds of the men who are prisoners of war. Months-stale cake and the mouldiness of Gorgonzola cheese is nothing to this!”* He grew a beard, only got out of bed when necessary to be counted, and didn’t write a single letter even though he knew it was unkind of him. *“Not that Stralsund was a very bad camp – as a matter of fact it was rather good – but I was unspeakably mouldy”*.



2/Lt. Harvey

¹³ See chart

A pow with most reason to feel 'mouldy' was one of the newly arrived orderlies, Pte. Wilkins. Roman Catholic James William Wilkins was born in Ireland 1879, grew up in Liverpool and joined the King's Own (Royal Lancaster) regiment in 1899. After serving in South Africa he signed up for another 4 years in 1911. He married widow Margaret Brannon who had two sons from her first marriage. The couple had a son in July 1913 and their daughter was born the day James went overseas to war 21 August 1914. 5 days later James was taken prisoner at Cambrai on 26 August, the last day of the Battle of Le Cateau. He was therefore the pow at Dänholm who had been captive longest. His ICRC cards shows he had been wounded in the thigh and that he was moved a good number of times before ending on Dänholm on approximately 10 August 1918. Things hadn't just been tough for him. Back in England his wife had died in June 1916 and the daughter he had never seen, Violet Mary, passed away in February 1917.

It wasn't just the arrival of the unruly Aachen group than caused the pows concern in the latter half of August. On 14 August two slight cases of diphtheria were reported, a week later there were three officers with diphtheria. Capt. Crowther wrote in his report that *"the sanitary arrangements were fairly good though below level required in the RAMC. This is partly due to the fact that the Germans use human excrement as manure for their fields. Latrines were deep trenches, well covered, with good seats but not fly-proof. The worst latrines were those in the huts themselves, for use during the night only. These were exactly opposite the stoves used by officers for cooking their food; they were however closed from sunrise to sunset, so there was little danger of contamination by flies. No incineration was carried on in the camp, and there were always great piles of unclean tins. The water supply seemed good. A sanitary committee of English MOs drew up a list of suggested improvements; these were submitted to the Germans, who recognized their advantages but said they had not enough labour to carry them out."* Crowther also mentioned in his report that the two German Medical Officers Dr. Karrer and Dr. Schmidt were capable, energetic and agreeable. They did everything in their power to stamp out the small epidemic of diphtheria.

Autumn

By September many of the pows had received food parcels from home and they kept arriving if to a somewhat erratic and unreliable timetable. As the weeks went by entries in diaries, letters and memoirs all describe the apparent paradox of their food situation. The privileged classes even as pows lived in style, while other ranks in dreadful pow camps in Germany were starving. Esler wrote in his memoirs about the parcels he received from family, friends and even friend's friends *"Here was from Fortnum and Mason and contained many of the luxuries that the firm are famous for. Thus from starvation we reached completion during the next few weeks. In our room we pooled our parcels and the menu was decided upon for the following day. We were soon having three course lunches and four course dinners. The situation became ridiculous, because, at the same time, the sentries and guards outside our huts at night consisted of older soldiers who were not fit for duty at the front and they were starving as we had been. We used to pass bits of bread, legs of chicken, fruit and all sorts of things out to them, and these were most gratefully received. I have never heard of prisoners feeding their jailers before. For purpose of bribery, soap was a great thing"*. Even though written years later and not reliable for details he most certainly didn't imagine that (at least some of) the officers had more than enough of quality food and drink for the rest of their time at Dänholm.

The orderlies at Dänholm, with none of the luxurious delicacies but with no way less desirable if more affordable treats from home, could also feed themselves on nourishing food. The humanitarian desire to help others in need wasn't class defined and Pte. Garvey *"often scrounged a parcel from the orderlies, with*

Quaker oats, sugar, butter, cocoa, tea, biscuits" which he gave to Corporal Steyn a German guard with whom he had struck up a friendship. The guard who lived by the ferry in Stralsund was married with four children, all suffering from years of malnutrition.

The "Aachen officers" tried however whenever they could to get one-up on the Germans. Bemused Lt. Roberts described in his memoirs how the Germans grew vegetables next to their quarters on Dänholm. These were constantly guarded by troops. For Roberts and his chums it became a point of honour to take something from the officers' kitchen garden each time they passed, even if it was only a single small new potato!

Sufficient supplies of food



Many of the officers spent their time well, and even enjoyed cooking for their syndicates. But not Hunt as he explains in a letter to his wife *"The Youngs' cook luxurious and when we have guests rise to astonishing heights of chic. I am the sort that would eat the stuff straight out of the tin rather than go to the trouble of cooking"*. They had no problem in inviting friends over for dinner for *"For food we are doing splendidly in this room with an abundance of parcels"*. It must have been very reassuring for his wife to read, but then perhaps she didn't believe him at first! He even had to get his wife to thank a Danish acquaintance in Copenhagen and explain that he needed nothing from him.

De Renzy Martin, a man not prone to exaggeration, wrote in his diary on 1 September *"Letters still are very scarce & no one can be getting a quarter of what is sent to them. We have put forward a long complaint about all sorts of matters including letters, both to the Kriegsministerium & to the Dutch Ambassador. We are getting some Danish butter, cheese, macaroni & sausage through Fisher, so are now living very well &*

also forming a Reserve for winter in case we are cut off by bad weather etc." However good the news was from the front no-one at this stage foresaw the sudden collapse of the German nation.

Although a good proportion of the parcels arrived, and a good portion of them were without damage, some had been tampered with and contents stolen. Fewer parcels disappeared than they may have expected given the poor conditions experienced by the German populace. A German at Dänholm was caught stealing a parcel by a British officer. He was court marshalled. Perhaps this was the same episode that Witherington wrote of in his diary on 18 October when a German on the parcel wagon was found with 1200 cigarettes on him.



Pte. Barnes and his bread parcel

Recently, during building work at the Marinemuseum at Dänholm, they found part of the packaging of a bread parcel. The piece of cardboard has a Copenhagen bread bureau label stuck on it and the handwritten name and number of the pow it was sent to. This parcel was sent to Pte. William Robert Barnes 2bn Devonshire regiment and was sent between late August and late October. After 23 October the bread parcel system was changed, instead of bread being sent to named pows bread parcels were sent to camps to be distributed as needed.

Robert Spiers Robertson wrote to his sister Meg on 20 October *"This week I got your food parcel posted on 24th Aug and one from Cooper & Co of 6th Sept & a clothing parcel posted on 7th Sept with contents all correct. The food parcels were splendid but your own were greatly superior to Cooper's."* Once the pows were getting sufficient food, then other treats from home such as family photos and books were desired and anxiously awaited. Robertson requested useful items such as boot polish and fishing hooks to be sent over. Robert had turned 20 in September 1914 when he volunteered for the army. Now 4 years later he asked for an item to be sent, sure that this would shock his father, a bottle of port. It is quite clear from his letters home that Robert loved and respected his family. A boy when he left to be a soldier, a port drinking officer would hopefully return home to Glasgow. His family must have been anxious to know how else the war had changed him.



The pows could buy beer and wine in the canteen and some as mentioned above received bottles of various alcoholic beverages in their parcels from home. Strangely reports of drunkenness or self-medication with alcohol don't appear often in the Dänholm sources. De Renzy Martin however recorded that Lt. Mallabar, in mid-October, had been drunk on the hockey field and had apparently been "*talking pro German sentiments to a German*". This of course was "unforgivable". Who was this person that could sink so low? William Louis Mallabar was born in Stockton in 1875, his mother was American and the family were Quakers. The Mallabars had emigrated to the USA where William Louis trained and practiced as a doctor, and where he later had a number of short stories published. Mallabar volunteered for "The Friends Ambulance Unit" and arrived in Dunkirk on 31 October 1914. He left after a years' service and subsequently served with Royal Army Service Corps. Lt. Mallabar was taken prisoner on 27 May 1918. Perhaps the conscientious objector Mallabar should be given the benefit of doubt and his drunken small talk with a German taken for being no more than just that!

POW photos

Even though there was a tremendous backlog of letters from home waiting to be censored before the pows were given them, it appears that the letters and postcards sent by the pows did find their way to England. It must have been fantastic for family at home to receive a letter and even more wonderful a photo postcard. Local photographers did good business in the camps taking photos of pows and printing them up as postcards. The German authorities in most camps realized they could be good propaganda as they showed how well the prisoners looked, indicating how well they were being treated. Receiving such photos must have been a great comfort to parents, wives and children. These photos could also make their way to the newspapers in England too. The Hull Daily Mail printed such a photo, of a group of 8 officers "*who were now interned at Stralsund*". It was of interest to the local community that Capt. Basil Barton MGC, in civilian life a Hull solicitor, shown sitting in the centre, was alive and well and a prisoner of war. Another on the photo is Capt. Witherington, who I have quoted many times. This photo had been taken with others of the battalion at Karlsruhe on 21 July and with surprising speed Witherington received his copies and sent a couple home 3 days later. This group doesn't appear to have had new photos taken at Stralsund. Others kept a Stralsund photographer busy in August and September. Robert Spiers Robertson wrote in another letter home that he had borrowed tunic and breeches in mid-October for a photo session and jolly smart he looks (standing extreme left) too with the rest of his battalion.



Relaxation

From one type of picture to another: some of the officers spent time sketching and painting. Captain Wilkinson spent many hours, alone and with others developing his interest in drawing as well as going to classes in architecture. He sketched what he saw; the interior of the hut, a still life of his meal, a chum taking a snooze. A number of those sketches he was satisfied with he gave to friends. Also he had two exhibits in the Art exhibition held in the camp in September. He described it as an excellent show and his own work as poor. Fortunately this didn't stop him from continuing. He took his sketch book home with him and it is a charming souvenir of his time at Dänholm.¹⁴

Concerts and entertainments were put on in the Greater Dänholm dining hall on Saturday evenings. There appear to have been a number of pows with talents in the performing arts; whether it be singing, playing an instrument, acting or entertaining. Behind the scenes too they were lucky to have the *"Indefatigable George Patton"*, part of the Concert Committee. They collected whatever useful material that was available and *"with wonderful ingenuity, was turned into scenery and costume which would have done credit to any first class company of professionals and variety shows were produced which would have packed any London theatre with an enthusiastic audience"*. Lieut. G. E. Patton was fellow northerner, RFA and roommate of Witherington who was obviously very impressed by his friend's creativity. There are many diary entries which mention the good shows that were put on. Wilkinson reports that on 14 September *"we all went to the Concert; quite a decent show, especially the "Hole in her Stocking" song. Of course they had to have "Watchmen, What of the Night" and the "Green Eye of the Yellow God"!* However the following Saturday's concert was cancelled owing to *"difficulties created by the Hun"*. The next concert he remarks upon took place on 5 October *"The Concert in the afternoon wasn't as good as usual. We now had an Orchestra, but they were very poor, though they did liven things up a little"*. Witherington played the "double bass" in the orchestra, and they certainly practiced frequently, but then perhaps getting an amateur orchestra to sound good takes more than a couple of months' work. Orchestral concerts were performed in the gymnasium.



Witherington and Patton

¹⁴ See <http://www.durhamatwar.org.uk/story/11369/>

Major Leslie Boosey, London Regiment, from the well-established instrument producing and music publishing company Boosey & Co., was the perfect man to run the “theatre”. He not only knew the business side of the entertainment world, he went on stage himself. He was such a good performer that years later in his memoirs Witherington recalled his wonderful voice and that on one occasion he *“sang the Four Indian Love Lyrics. The crowded audiences were always enthusiastic and highly appreciative, but I shall never forget the vociferous applause which followed his rendering of these beautiful songs.”* One of the most popular acts of the period was a Pierrot show. Dressed and made up as white clowns the pierrots entertained by singing, dancing, telling jokes etc. Here too Boosey was *“a very pleasant tenor”* while Cecil Leon Roberts described himself as being an unfunny comedian. However from other sources it appears that Roberts, a young pilot from the Aachen group, was also a particularly talented entertainer.



2/Lt. C.L. Roberts in “The Barb” magazine – “a female impersonator”

Volunteer work in other camps

Two of the RAMC doctors volunteered to work as Medical Officers in the Dänholm camp. A request was circulated asking for volunteers to go to other camps. Three doctors took up this challenge and left Dänholm in September. The first to go, on 25 September, was Scottish Lieut. (Captain) John Findlay who had been attached to the Worcestershire Regiment. He was a 32 year old bachelor, who before the war had a GP practice in Blackpool. Findlay went to the pow camp at Cassel. Next day Lt. Francis William Mason Lamb who had been attached to the 26 Field Ambulance unit left for Lamsdorf. 23 year old Lamb had only been in France just over a month when he was captured so perhaps he felt he “owed” it to the others who had served for much longer. Shortly afterwards Capt. Frank Cyril Harvie Bennett left for Danzig. Captain Bennett was 34, married and with two small children. One has to admire the dedication and courage of these doctors, leaving a comfortable camp where they had friends, were receiving parcels from home and with the possibility of imminent repatriation for an uncertain future “off on their own”. It appears volunteers were also sought amongst the padres. Padres Herbert, Brown and Edwards¹⁵, 2 Church of England and 1 Roman Catholic left for other camps on 4 October.

Orderlies moved on

A group of 93 orderlies were transferred from Dänholm to Schneidemuhl around about 1st October. This is strange in a couple of ways. Firstly this upped the work load for the remaining 242 orderlies as they were not subsequently replaced. Also, even though some of the officers in their diaries and memoirs complain

¹⁵ Possibly Padre Nolan too

about how few orderlies there were, none found it worth noting that so many left the camp together. Some of these orderlies had been prisoners since 1914 but there is no clear reason they were moved. However within a few weeks at least five were repatriated back to England. The afore mentioned Pte. Wilkins had to wait it out at Schneidemuhl. His date for arrival back in UK is 1 December 1918, his 39th birthday. He would appear to be one of the first lucky ones repatriated after the armistice from this camp, sailing from Danzig on the Russ. One wonders how such a man put his life back together again in peacetime. He died aged 51 in 1930.

The first for repatriation

A number of the internees suffered to such an extent from ill-health that they were repatriated from Dänholm. Australian Pte. John Murphy 50th AIF, batman to a Lieut. had been taken prisoner on 2 April 1917 at Bullecourt. Uninjured, Murphy was interned at Limburg, Friederichsfeld and Altdamm before arriving at Dänholm on 27 June. Cards he sent to the Australian Red Cross in London show that he had regularly received food and bread parcels and he described himself as "*fairly well*" but wanting to hear from his sister. His mental health must have deteriorated quite quickly on the island for he was repatriated and admitted to the King George Hospital, London on 23 September. A fortnight before his 42 birthday, he was "*very poorly and terribly thin*". His diagnosis was "*neurasthenia and nervous debility*". However it wasn't too long before he was discharged, 6 November and he finally disembarked in Australia 18 April 1919.

Whether it was Harvey's "barbed wire disease" or just good luck is not clear, but he was one of the eighteen previously held at Aachen who left Dänholm in the afternoon of 9 October to retrace their steps to Aachen with a renewed promise of exchange. They reached Holland three days later. All these officers had been prisoners since 1916. Some of these officers needed specialist medical treatment and were sent on to England. 42 year old Bombay born Captain Albert O' Donnell, Royal Warwickshires, was admitted to "Prince of Wales Hospital" on 24th October suffering from "nerves". The others stayed in Holland until being repatriated to London 22nd November. Harvey must have perked up, finally out of Germany, for he wasn't repatriated with the others but detailed to a centre to distribute clothes and food for those crossing the border. He contracted Spanish flu and wasn't back in England until February 1919. Harvey had despite his mouldiness managed to write some poetry while at Dänholm, two of these poems appear in his memoirs published in 1920.

One orderly from Dänholm was repatriated with these officers. 42 year old Corporal William Rayner James, 1bn South Wales Borderers, had been taken prisoner on 26 September 1914 at Laon/Vendresse. The officer writing in the battalions war diary that day described it as "*The most ghastly day of my life but one of the proudest because my Regiment did its job and held on against heavy odds*". After which he noted dead and wounded and 12 missing. "*These 12 were of D company, and apparently surrendered. May they be spared to reach England again to be tried by court martial and get what they deserve.*" Corporal James arrived in Hull on 22 November, whether he had to explain himself when back with his regiment or not I don't know. The doubt would always be there, had the soldier let his comrades in arms down, had he been a coward and given up too easily?

Captain Arthur John Mack RFA was also repatriated in October¹⁶. He had been wounded on 27 May 1918 at Chemin des Dames with shrapnel wounds in his left wrist, in the right hand, shoulder and back. The first attention given him at a field dressing station was very rough and it took 12 days before he got to Heidelberg where he received proper medical treatment. Unfortunately it was deemed necessary to amputate his left forearm below the elbow. He arrived at Stralsund from Karlsruhe on 22 August. He left Dänholm early in October and arrived in England on 23 October and was admitted to the "Prince of Wales" hospital in London on 24 October with Captain O' Donnell from the "Aachen" group. An article in a New Zealand newspaper brought news in January 1919 that he was in London awaiting further treatment. The 34 year old spoke of being well-treated on the whole in Germany and the British doctors were quite satisfied with the amputation performed on him. Back home in Wellington, Mack was married later that year to a young lady, late of Devonshire, perhaps an acquaintance made whilst recuperating in England.

Another orderly who was up for repatriation due to ill health is nameless, but he was orderly to Capt. Pearson RAMC. He was paralyzed on one side of his body caused either by a shell explosion or by a blow from a rifle. His paralysis was worsening and he was admitted to hospital, seen by five German doctors and in the middle of October a recommendation was made for repatriation. At this late stage it is possible that he may not have been repatriated before the Armistice. A head count from a Red Cross chart of German POW camps 10 October 1918 has 865 British officers and 242 OR, 2 American officers, 21 Russian officers and 1 OR, 2 Serbian OR, 1 French officer and 2 civilians at Dänholm.

Escape

In Captain Esler's words the commandant *"was a man of great charm, and if there was any grievance in the camp, he was always willing to discuss matters and adapt things if he thought that our grumbling was justified. You may say what did we have to complain about, and what made men attempt to escape. The answer to that is, loss of freedom. The confinement to an area surrounded by barbed wire and armed sentries. Nobody likes being in a cage however gilded it may be."* Once Esler was louse free and food parcels and letters had started to arrive he was content to while away the time playing bridge and enjoying the talks and entertainments available; being a medical officer he could hope to be exchanged within 6 to 8 months. One of his roommates however was up for the challenge of escaping and all his roommates were involved in the ruse to give the escapees a head start.

Orderlies Joe Garvey and Jim Wiltshire were invited to join an escape committee, otherwise exclusively made up of officers. A pool of money was collected to provide the escapees with sufficient funds to help them on their way. The orderlies, both interpreters *"knew every nook and corner of both islands"*, and had chatted to the Germans gleaned all sorts of useful information such as where to find an unguarded boat. It appears from Joe's memoirs to have been Lieut. Col. Eric Temperley, already in trouble for trying to bribe one of the guards, who teamed up with Esler's roommate. Captain Arthur Leslie Chantrell RFA and Temperley, both keen yachtsmen, acquired a compass and a map of the sea route from the escapers club and hid in the bushes after roll call at 10 in the evening of 25 September. Next morning Esler describes how the remaining roommates tried to cover for their missing comrade but eventually the Germans called in the dogs and the hunt for the escapees was on. In the mean time they had managed to steal a boat and row about 8 miles towards Denmark where they got stuck on a sand bank. They were picked up by a German

¹⁶ Possibly with 2 others, 2. Lt. Mark Quayle, East Lanc. and Captain Thomas Phelan, merchant navy SS Rowenmore

gunboat and at 6 in the evening *"the gates were opened and two bedraggled figures with bare bleeding feet were marched in under prison guard and tucked in the prison hut"*. They were given a month in solitary confinement and were back on a diet of German rations. Their comrades managed however when the guards' backs were turned to push chocolate, chicken wings and other delicacies through an opening over the cell window to keep their spirits up.¹⁷ This wasn't the first attempt to escape from Dänholm. On 9 September another two brave men, Col. Griffin and Capt. Charters, tried a similar route out to freedom.¹⁸ They too had got stuck on a sand bank and were brought back to the camp.

Others worked on other ways of getting out. Captain Robert Spiers Robertson wrote in his memoirs of digging a tunnel which collapsed (although this seems more likely to have occurred at Rastatt). 2/Lt. C.L. Roberts could do more than sing and dance in a pierrot show, he had been a champion swimmer before the war. The prisoners were allowed it appears at this time, to bathe in the harbour basin, which the Germans had wired in to prevent escape. Roberts discovered a hole in the wire. One day he swam a reconnaissance swim through the hole out into the straights, it was a wonderful day and he felt a marvelous sense of exhilaration at being out. He was already picturing himself back at home when he heard a guard shout "Halt". Seeing a rifle being pointed at him Robert dived and swam at championship speed back and through the hole to where his comrades were waiting for him. They covered for him so that when the guards arrived, he was not discovered. The Germans guessed where he had swum out and extra wire was put up which foiled any further attempt to escape in this way. Witherington noted on 23 August *"shower baths closed as officer went under wire for a swim"*.



The next and partly more successful escape attempts took place in October. One week saw 6 prisoners willing to risk their lives even though by this stage they were aware that the end of the war was within reach. Perhaps this was indeed why, it was their last chance to make a successful escape, what a story to tell the folks at home and have on ones' military record. Col. Pollitt of the Lancashire Fusiliers made his attempt to escape on the 13th but was *"shot at and caught"*. For Ortweiler, Durnford and Gilbert, the 3

¹⁷ Compiled from Boyle, Garvey and Esler

¹⁸ Presumably 2/Lt. Robert James Charters attached to the Yorkshire Regiment from the Royal Irish Guards and Lt. Col. John Arnold Atkinson Griffin, Royal Berkshire regiment.

unsuccessful escapees from Holzminden, it was now or never. They made their escapes separately: Ortweiler and Durnford made successful home runs. Durnford relates in his book the detail of their preparations, including a visit to the hospital in Stralsund for a massage during which trip he acquainted himself with the town and Lt. Lockhead's forgery of permit card, and his own escape. Ortweiler's report given when he reached the UK can be seen online. Gilbert was caught and brought back to the camp.

During the same week two nameless young officers tried to escape in a tub. Robertson may be referring to this in his memoirs *"Then one of our colleagues with help got a barrel down to the beach one night and by means of a short oar set out to escape. He passed all night paddling but, unfortunately for him, the tide turned and when daylight came he was only 50 yards from the shore"*. Witherington, perhaps in relation to the same escape attempt, relates *"2 tried cross water in tub which would only go round in circles, sentries threw down their rifles and threw stones and conkers at them"*. Lt. Col. De Renzy Martin wrote in his diary of an escape attempted a couple of days later. *"Lt A. C. Crone M.G.C. & Lt I. A. Lauder M.G.C. on Oct 31st tried to escape by swimming to Stralsund. At 8pm they were seen & had to swim to the bank. They had floated past a sentry with a dog on a leash. As they came ashore, four sentries came running up, 2 from each end of the canal & were only 10 – 15 yds off when they loosed the dog on them & they were forced to take to the water again until the dog was put on the leash again. Sarson & others have seen these dogs being trained to attack a man."*



German guards patrolled the barbed wire fence which surrounded the camp with dogs. According to Boyle several dogs were also set loose after 10 in the evening, which was the curfew after which the pows had to stay in their own huts or barracks, they *"growled at khaki"*. Boyle thought the Germans were kind to animals, in particular he noticed *"no cruelty to dogs – thin but always kind to them"*. The dogs were guard dogs and the pows knew very well to keep their distance from them. The dogs were used to track escapees but other incidents did occur where British pows were attacked by dogs. Lt. Col. Moss Blundell described the dogs as savage and that many officers had been bitten in daytime, citing the case of Lt. Nelson. According to 2/Lt. Leavitt RAF *"we used to watch them sometimes when the keeper taught them to attack a*

well-padded man in khaki. One day he was leading three dogs through the camp on a rope; an officer was walking along minding his own business when the Hun let them go. If a crowd of British officers had not hurried to the scene with clubs the dogs would have killed him. As it was the poor fellow will wear teeth marks of the dogs in his face for life". Leavitt's doesn't name the victim. It may be that "many officers had been bitten" was somewhat of an exaggeration, but certainly at least one victim was badly bitten. Australian Lt. Nelson RAF reported the incident in the statement he gave after repatriation in Ripon. Out walking he had been passed by four Germans with 6 or 7 dogs. When he came from behind a building *"one of the Germans growled and then the dogs charged me. The dogs pulled me to the ground and I was severely bitten on the right leg and left arm, not one of the Germans made any attempt to pull the dogs off till they saw the other officers rushing to help me and then only one made any attempt to get them off and it was a difficult job as by this time the dogs had worked themselves into a fury."* Asked why they did it a German replied *"The dogs must have practice"*. Reginald Carlyle Nelson spent several days in bed, his wounds needed to be attended for several weeks and he wasn't allowed to see an English doctor. Nelson complained to Commandant von Bushe wanting the incident to be reported to a neutral consul but he *"received no satisfaction"*. To top it all *"during the struggle my trousers were torn off"* which of course was no minor problem considering that many pows had little or no spare clothing.

Numerous snippets appear in the Dänholm pows' diaries and memoirs about escape attempts made, of which only two were successful. Often the information is brief, such as 'Captain Martinson apparently escaped and was caught and returned to the camp'. So far it has not been possible to piece the snippets together to get a complete picture of how many tried to escape and what the consequences were both for the recaptured men and for the other prisoners. Joe Garvey wrote many, many years later about Ortweiler's escape and of his subsequent action of posting the disguise and map he used back to the Germans at the camp. Garvey found this shockingly inconsiderate behavior, and as a result of it security at the camp was tightened.

Punishments

One of the consequences of the escape business was felt among the "readers" of the camp. The Germans had found maps and German money hidden in the binding of a book sent in a parcel to a prisoner. They consequently started stripping the binding off all the books that then came into the camp, greatly to the irritation and frustration of the librarians who already had difficulties keeping their much used stock of books in the library in a useable state. They took the matter up with the Commandant and persuaded him to let books for the library be exempted from this destructive scrutiny. Another who found this molesting of books totally unacceptable was Lt. Col. De Renzy Martin. He took it as a personal insult and *"had rather a row with the German adjt as they wouldn't take my word of honour that my books had no maps etc. I also saw the comdt & said it would be bad for German prestige when I & others said our word of honour was not taken. Shortly after, they ceased cutting our books about"*.

Repatriation for padres and doctors

While some thought of escape others were given the happy news that they were to be repatriated. Finally, and after numerous rumours of the imminent departure of both the padres and the doctors, either together or separately, it finally happened. 14 of the RAMC doctors still at Dänholm and the 5 padres, i.e. including those recently gone to other camps, were for home. Those still at Dänholm left on 21st October,

joining others being repatriated and the group of 90 arrived in London on 1st November. The only British doctor left at Dänholm was Capt. A.S. Findlay. Services carried on being held at the church, and it seems that the officers who took over the running of them were more than an acceptable replacement for the padres who had been repatriated.

New outbreak of illness - Spanish flu

Early in October there were one or two cases of suspected diphtheria in the camp. Later in the month the first case of Spanish flu. De Renzy Martin *"took them all in hand with medicines which I got from the hospital- English stuff kept by the Germans. I also got a supply of medicines to keep so as to be able to dose officers or men requiring it."* Strangely enough there is no more mention of Spanish flu among the pow in diaries etc. while at Dänholm.

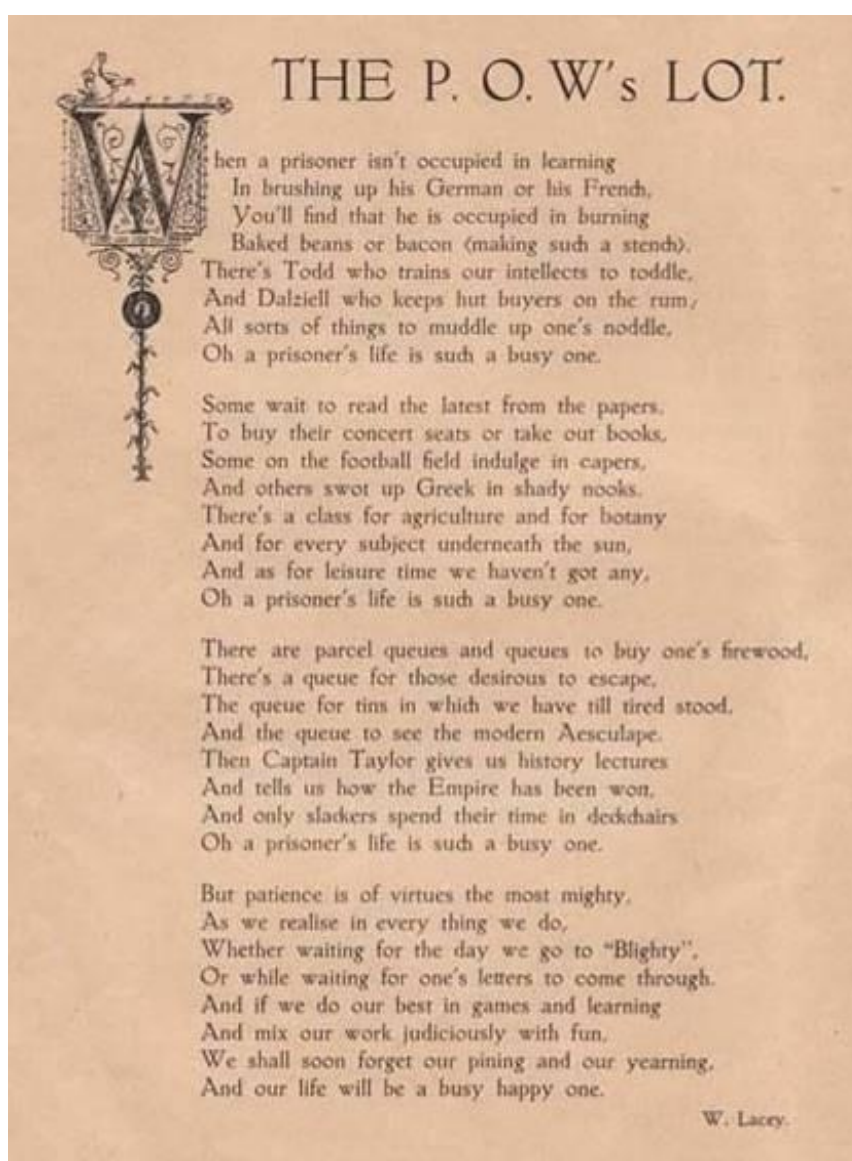
Pte. Albert Howell died on 19 October. 41 year old Howell had been taken prisoner at Cambrai in November a year earlier. He had been injured and been treated at a lazaret in Stettin before being transferred to Altdamm before transfer to Dänholm. Whether he was the previously mentioned orderly who was up for repatriation because of ill health is not clear. Pte. Howell was buried in Stralsund. There are no details of his funeral. Late in November De Renzy Martin with 2 other officers went to the cemetery to make sure that a gravestone had been put up for him.

The last weeks before 11.11.18

Autumn had set in and the men, although still active in sports, were turning more to indoor activities that could help take their minds off the very exciting and hopeful news from the front. The very active dramatics society usually put on a cabaret type show each Saturday evening. Even Harvey left his hut on one evening to entertain with a song. However the pows must have found the stage they used in the Greater Dänholm dining hall in need of equipment. On 19 October the officers built, and paid for themselves, a new stage. The commandant initially refused them extra lighting unless they agreed to lights out ½ hour earlier on each concert night. This wasn't a problem for the thespian pows's and they *"agree to ration lighting unconditionally!"* A couple of days later they were so far on in their construction work that they could address their next problem – to obtain a stage curtain. Their contacts informed them of a disused cinema in Stralsund, and the old lady who owned the property was approached. She wanted 300 marks but after negotiations she sold them the stage curtain for 175 marks and a packet of chocolate. The first concert was held on the new stage on the 26 October, and a couple of German officers and a civilian sat in the audience. Commandant von Bushe too occasionally saw a show and appeared to enjoy himself. On the 2 November they played "Arms and the man" a comedy by George Bernhard Shaw. Originally set in the Serbo-Bulgarian war of 1885, for this performance the setting was moved to Mexico. Its moral was that war wasn't a wonderful, romantic adventure and the main character, Captain Bon-bon a Swiss mercenary, carried chocolates in his ammunition pouches rather than cartridges. Wilkinson thought it *"really excellent"* but it would be interesting to know if the choice of play had been controversial. The same evening in Stralsund the Stralsunder Stadtheater held a festive evening in aid of the Ninth War Bond and raised 14,000 marks.

A lot of work went into the one and only issue of "The Outlook", the Dänholm camp magazine, printed by "Carl Boldt, Hofbuchdruckerel, Rostock. The editors were Capt. J. Hirst, a 27 year old who had supplied

cartoons for his local Hull newspaper and Lieut. J.J. Holme 29, a professional in the newspaper business. Art editor was Lieut. W.S. Beaumont, a 42 year old architect. Many others contributed stories, poems, jokes and illustrations, unfortunately most only named with initials. The editorial was written after the new stage had been taken into use and the last page was a memorial to Lieut. Hill who died on 6th November. The magazine must have been sent to print almost immediately after.¹⁹ Strangely, but perhaps in order not to tempt fate, there is no feel of the excitement felt towards the countdown to the armistice. They were on the surface “waiting for the kettle to boil” and preparing for the Baltic winter. What was important was a good sense of humour, plenty of physical and mental exercise and parcels and letters from home. The magazine is full of “insider-jokes”, not easy for us to decipher 100 years later. What sense can we make of “*We doff our caps to the hero who holds the lights off*” without the knowledge of the light limitation brought on by the new stage lighting. Also sent to print around the same time was the camp Christmas card.



¹⁹ Witherington got a magazine on the 29th November.

Whereas one hears of some isolated pows out on work kommandos not knowing of the armistice until days later the pows on Dänholm were very aware as the days passed in October that the end of the war was in sight. Not only could they read the German newspapers and follow the news from the front line, the attitude of the Germans towards the pows also changed. Major von Bushe had been a well-respected commandant by most of the pows during their internment. They had brought their complaints to him and where possible he had done his best to alleviate problems. On 28 October he called the hut commanders to a meeting and Witherington noted in his diary of how the commandant appeared to have given up and decided to agree to everything, it was a *“reversal of positions on front exactly reflected here. Commandant made profuse apologies re orderlies etc. Brit. Officers gaily put in complaints most placidly recorded by Commandant re parcels, letters etc. even that sentries made too much noise when they came round rooms to count us!”* One immediate improvement implemented was that 2 wagons were used for transporting parcels instead of one.

The revolt started by German sailors on 27 October was spreading from town to town and could have developed badly for the pows in Germany. What would the consequences be for them? There they were stuck on the island, separated from the town by a sliver of water. In the event of a revolution they would be vulnerable and a convenient scapegoat for all Germany's problems. On Dänholm rumours ran riot but strangely the pows don't appear to have let it affect their daily routines, which of course is another survival mechanism. Hunt wrote a cheery letter to his wife on 31 October. The academic school inspector described to Dorothea all the sporting activities he took part in and that he was playing *“ more games now than any time since schooldays and enjoy them more.”* The Young brothers he shared a room with had planned and carried out a changing around of the furniture in their room creating a cosy sitting room portion next to their stove *“a great white brick edifice in the corner”*. While writing 13 letters from home were brought in for him, one written as early as 15 August. He asked his wife to explain to friends that he couldn't reply personally as he was limited in number of letters he could send. He also asked her to answer their inquiries with *“I am in need of nothing”*.



"What do you think of the Denmark rumour, then?" Asked the R.M. (Rumour Merchant) unmoved.

"Don't know it"

"Well the Copenhagen people have wakened up to the fact that we shall want to recultivate the whisky habit before going home. So all our bread in future is going to be soaked in the stuff."

"That's more like it now" cried Cramp visibly brightening "though the expression stuff is rather sacrilegious."²⁰

²⁰ The Outlook

Unfortunately de Renzy Martin only made a couple of entries to his diary between the end of October and 20 November. Wilkinson and Witherington's diary entries in the week up to the armistice are brief and more or less the same. *"We got no news, as the trains weren't running and there were no papers coming in."* The Commandant had gone to Berlin. For both men their own daily sporting activities gave them something else to concentrate on. Tennis wasn't possible any more but the rugby and soccer matches they took part in were what was important, although it appears that there might have been a problem with the football. So confident were the pows that victory was near that on 3rd November they made a camp sweep on the date of the armistice.

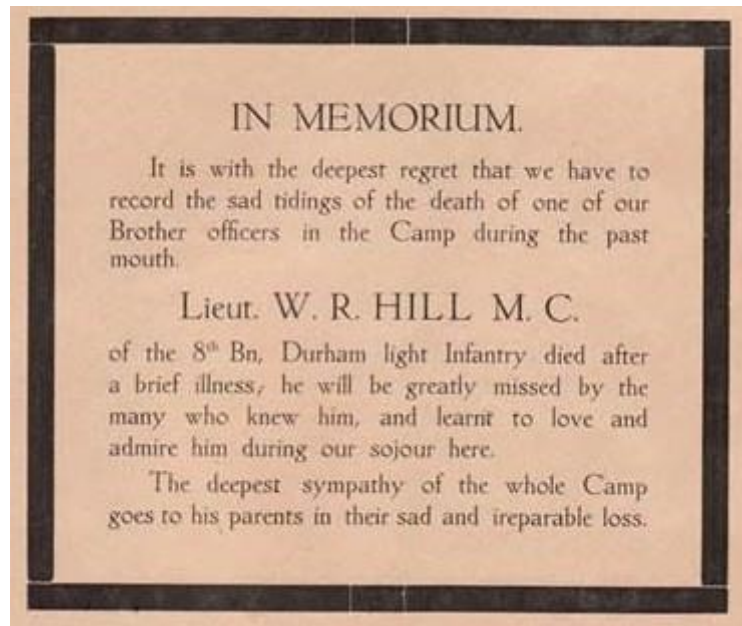
The sudden death of 22 year old William Reginald Hill on the 6 November came as a shock. Captain Hill, attached to 12bn DLI, had been taken prisoner at Craonne on 27 May. He doesn't appear to have been wounded. Hill had studied at Cambridge before the war and, a very sporty young man, played on both cricket and football teams. He was to have played at a rugby trial on the day he died, so he doesn't appear to have been ill before a boil on his neck caused his death that morning. Wilkinson, as well as the rest of the camp, felt the loss of a *"friend and fellow officer"* and the rugby trial was postponed out of respect.

Diary entries from 7 November note that a German officer had been killed on Rügen and the pows on kommando work there had been moved off the island in haste. The parcel cart was followed by a crowd and one of the senior German officers from the camp, while in Stralsund, had had his hat knocked off! And perhaps most interesting of all, Witherington wrote *"We are requested in event of being approached to assist riot in Stralsund to remain neutral by German officers of camp"*.

On 9 November the Kaiser abdicated and went into exile. At 5 o'clock in the afternoon in the restaurant "Panzer's Garten" a group of soldiers decided to form a "soldatenrat" and the revolution was a reality in Stralsund. The commandant from the town garrison sent a company of soldiers to bring them to order but they turned coat and joined their comrades. Even though blood was not shed and it sounds reasonably undramatic, some of the townspeople saw this as an opportunity to contact the pows. Capt. Wilkinson noted in his diary *"People Stralsund come for food and promises their help in getting them to Denmark."* The next day the red soldiers took over the garrison itself. A machine gun was placed on Alten Markt, but it all appears to have happened without much drama and the authorities told the townspeople to carry on working as usual. The most exciting event seems to be the arrival of two torpedo boats flying red flags; revolutionary workers from Kiel had come to Stralsund to get potatoes! This was the 10 November, in the afternoon of which Capt. Hill was buried.



SBO Hill and De Renzy Martin with 25 selected officers were present at the funeral at the cemetery in Stralsund. Each officer at the camp had given 4 pence towards the expenses and many beautiful wreaths were bought. A party of 30 German soldiers fired three volleys over Hill's grave.



De Renzy Martin found it *"Most interesting – about 90% of German soldiers had torn off the Imperial cockade from their caps; 80% had also torn off the state cockade. Only 5% saluted their officers & about 60% had the red ribbon of the "strike" as they called it, on, including some of the firing party. The attitude of soldiers & people to us was quite polite & friendly. Men, women & children all look ill for want of food"*. Witherington, also at the funeral, wrote in his memoirs *"It was hard lines indeed to come so far and then to go West almost at the last hurdle"*. Capt. Wilkinson played rugby against Kaserne IV in the morning and was part of the funeral party in the afternoon. He noted that they had attended *"- a funeral under curious conditions. The revolution is now an accomplished fact, but Stralsund itself was fairly quiet" and "The armistice seems imminent"*.

Dorothy 02.05.2016 & 21.04.20

edited by M.A. Jones

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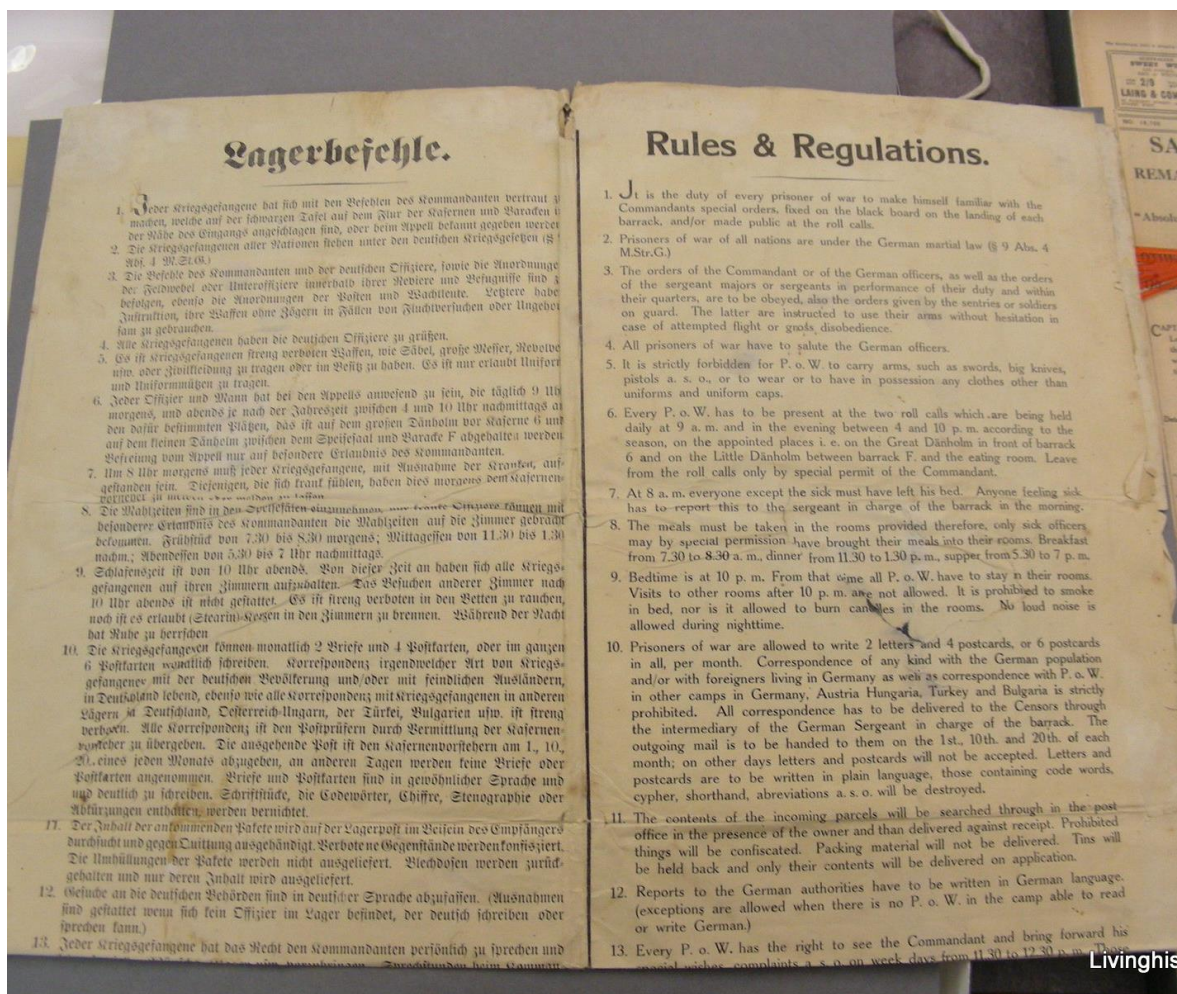
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Other

Burkhard Koop

Caroline Russel-Clark

Rules & Regulations



Rules & Regulations.

1. It is the duty of every prisoner of war to make himself familiar with the Commandant's special orders, fixed on the black board on the landing of each barrack, and/or made public at the roll calls.
2. Prisoners of war of all nations are under the German martial law (§ 9 Abs. 4 M.Str.G.)
3. The orders of the Commandant or of the German officers, as well as the orders of the sergeant majors or sergeants in performance of their duty and within their quarters, are to be obeyed, also the orders given by the sentries or soldiers on guard. The latter are instructed to use their arms without hesitation in case of attempted flight or gross disobedience.
4. All prisoners of war have to salute the German officers.
5. It is strictly forbidden for P. o. W. to carry arms, such as swords, big knives, pistols a. s. o., or to wear or to have in possession any clothes other than uniforms and uniform caps.
6. Every P. o. W. has to be present at the two roll calls which are being held daily at 9 a. m. and in the evening between 4 and 10 p. m. according to the season, on the appointed places i. e. on the Great Dänholm in front of barrack 6 and on the Little Dänholm between barrack F. and the eating room. Leave from the roll calls only by special permit of the Commandant.
7. At 8 a. m. everyone except the sick must have left his bed. Anyone feeling sick has to report this to the sergeant in charge of the barrack in the morning.
8. The meals must be taken in the rooms provided therefore, only sick officers may by special permission have brought their meals into their rooms. Breakfast from 7.30 to 8.30 a. m., dinner from 11.30 to 1.30 p. m., supper from 5.30 to 7 p. m.
9. Bedtime is at 10 p. m. From that time all P. o. W. have to stay in their rooms. Visits to other rooms after 10 p. m. are not allowed. It is prohibited to smoke in bed, nor is it allowed to burn candles in the rooms. No loud noise is allowed during nighttime.
10. Prisoners of war are allowed to write 2 letters and 4 postcards, or 6 postcards in all, per month. Correspondence of any kind with the German population and/or with foreigners living in Germany as well as correspondence with P. o. W. in other camps in Germany, Austria Hungary, Turkey and Bulgaria is strictly prohibited. All correspondence has to be delivered to the Censors through the intermediary of the German Sergeant in charge of the barrack. The outgoing mail is to be handed to them on the 1st., 10th. and 20th. of each month; on other days letters and postcards will not be accepted. Letters and postcards are to be written in plain language, those containing code words, cypher, shorthand, abbreviations a. s. o. will be destroyed.
11. The contents of the incoming parcels will be searched through in the post office in the presence of the owner and then delivered against receipt. Prohibited things will be confiscated. Packing material will not be delivered. Tins will be held back and only their contents will be delivered on application.
12. Reports to the German authorities have to be written in German language. (exceptions are allowed when there is no P. o. W. in the camp able to read or write German.)
13. Every P. o. W. has the right to see the Commandant and bring forward his special wishes, complaints a. s. o. on week days from 11.30 to 12.30 p. m. Those

- who wish to take advantage of this, have to assemble at 11.30 on the landing in front of the Commandant's office.
14. Visitors to P. o. W. are on no account admitted.
 15. The Commandant appoints a Senior for the camp and one for each room, as a rule this will be the officer highest in rank. The seniors will be held responsible to the Commandant for the good behavior of their brother officers, who have to obey their orders.
 16. The names of the inhabitants of each room are to be written on a paper fixed on the outside of the door under consecutive numbers. The Names of the Senior and his substitute on top.
 17. Every officer is personally responsible for the cleanliness and the tidiness of his room and for all things given to him for his use, such as bed, sideboard, chair a. s. o. The cleaning of the rooms is being done by the orderlies, and doors and windows must be open during cleaning time. At night i. e. after the evening roll call the windows must be shut, only the top windows may be kept open during the night. Open windows are to be secured by the window hoops.
 18. Every P. o. W. is being held responsible for any damage caused by him intentionally or carelessly. Slamming of doors is prohibited.
 19. It is forbidden to use any part of the things provided for, be it furniture or anything else, but for its proper purpose. Plates, pans coffee-cans, spoons, table knives, forks a. s. o. provided for by the German authorities in the eating rooms and kitchens are not allowed to be taken into the rooms and used there.
 20. Careful attention is to be given to the kitchen ranges and stoves, especially to the regulation stoves, while using them.
 21. Eatables, which are sent to the P. o. W. or which are being sold in the Canteens may be cooked on the small kitchen ranges, specially provided for in barracks and in the camp, but not in the great camp kitchens.
 22. Rod-fishing in the basin between the Great & Little Dänholm is allowed, only on the board of the Little Dänholm. It is strictly forbidden to dig for worms in the park, on the paths and roads, fields, gardens and lawns.
 23. It is also forbidden to walk or lie down on the grass, except on the grass between the chief road leading to the exit and the Water basin.
 24. Bathing and swimming in the basin is prohibited.
 25. It is strictly forbidden to play football, hockey or golf inside the camp or to practice therein.
 26. Spitting on the floor of the barracks is forbidden. There are spittoons in the rooms, which serve also for gathering tobacco ashes, ends of cigars and Cigarettes and matches. It is also forbidden to spit through the windows or to throw anything through them.
 27. The senior of each room has to see that the Barrack regulations are observed by his brother officers and the orderlies. He is responsible for the good order and cleanliness in his room and will be made liable for any damage. Disobedience to his orders by his brother officers or the orderlies as well as against the Rules he has to report to the German officer in charge of the camp. Having taken over the room, the Senior is responsible for the things therein.
 28. All private property is to be kept on the appointed places. It is prohibited to put nails into the walls or doors.

von Bushe, Major and Commandant.