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**The New Zealand prisoner of war
pamphlet: official pamphlet of the
Prisoners of War enquiry office of the Joint
Council of the Order of St. John and the
New Zealand Red Cross Society**

No.4 (July 1942)

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TĀMAKI PAENGA HIRA AUCKLAND WAR MEMORIAL MUSEUM

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Prisoners of War Pamphlet

ISSUED BY

The Joint Council of the Order of St. John and The New Zealand
Red Cross Society

SICK AND WOUNDED FUND

Hon. Assistant Editor—Mrs. J. W. JACK.

Hon. Editor—Mr. J. ABEL

All the official information supplied is taken from the monthly bulletin issued by the International Committee of the Red Cross, Geneva.

Next-of-kin are invited to send copies of letters to any of the below mentioned offices. It is intended to publish as many as possible, but naturally we cannot guarantee to publish all those that are received. Please do not send any letters posted from Prisoner of War Camps, dated earlier than March, 1942. Also make sure that the date of the letter is given, also Camp when known.

Relatives are requested to send pictures, particularly of camps, for reproduction in this pamphlet.

The Editor.

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Telegraphic Address: "JOINTCIL."

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CANTERBURY & WESTLAND PROVINCES:

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P.O. Box 1098, Christchurch.

OTAGO AND SOUTHLAND PROVINCES:

2nd Floor, Queen's Buildings, Princes St., Dunedin
P.O. Box 456, Dunedin.

The following has been issued by War Organisation of the British Red Cross Society and Order of St. John, Prisoners of War Dept., St. James's Palace, London, S.W.1.

PRISONERS OF WAR.

SOME QUESTIONS ANSWERED.

1.—Why are parcels not addressed to individual prisoners?

- (a) Because prisoners may be moved from camp to camp.
- (b) If part of a consignment of parcels is lost, the remainder can be divided between camps.
- (c) To ensure that new prisoners may receive parcels before their names reach London.
- (d) As the parcels sent in each consignment contain similar articles, there is no advantage gained by addressing each parcel to a Prisoner of War by name.

2.—How are the parcels acknowledged?

British Camp Leaders sign and return forms of acknowledgment for parcels received. The Red Cross and St. John also receive reports from the International Red Cross Committee at Geneva and the Protecting Power of the numbers of parcels received in each camp.

3.—How long do parcels take in transit?

Under present conditions anything from two to four months from London, chiefly because of the difficulty and dangers of sea voyage; lack of rolling stock in Spain preventing overland transport from Lisbon; time taken to cross Germany if camps are in Eastern districts.

4.—What route do parcels take?

By sea to Lisbon in British ships; by sea from Lisbon to Marseilles in specially chartered ships under the auspices of the International Red Cross Committee; by train from Marseilles to Geneva; by train from Geneva to camps.

5.—Who is responsible for despatch and transport of parcels?

Parcels are collected by the General Post Office and shipped to Lisbon. From Lisbon to Marseilles transport is arranged and paid for by the Red Cross and St. John in collaboration with the postal authorities. From Marseilles to Geneva they are in charge of the French and Swiss Post Offices. They are under the supervision of the I.R.C. Committee all the way from Lisbon to the camps.

6.—Are special parcels sent to sick and wounded prisoners?

The Invalid Comforts Section sends large consignments of invalid foods, drugs and disinfectants, etc., direct to the

main hospitals and camps, and also to the International Red Cross at Geneva for sending out against requisitions received from camp leaders and doctors.

7.—Can photographs be sent in letters?

Only snapshots or unmounted photographs of a personal nature may be sent in letters. They MUST NOT be enclosed in parcels.

8.—Can parcels be sent to men of the Forces interned in neutral countries?

Yes, n.o.k. parcels may be forwarded through the Red Cross and St. John.

9.—Can parcels be sent to men of the Forces detained in North and West Africa by the Vichy Government?

Yes, n.o.k. parcels may be forwarded through the Foreign Relations Dept., British Red Cross and St. John.

10.—What is the status of merchant seamen in internment camps?

If in service camps they are regarded as service prisoners of war. If in civilian camps, as civilians.

11.—What is the translation of the German camp names?

OFLAG means officers' camp.
STALAG is an abbreviation of Stammlager, which means base camp.

STALAG LUFT means air-force base camp.

DULAG means transit camp.

FRONT STALAG is a camp in enemy occupied territory.

KOMMANDO means detachment or section of main camp.

MARLAG means naval camp.

MILAG means merchant seamen's camp.

ILAG—Civilians, internees and others.

DULAG LUFT—Transit camp for airmen.

*LAZARETT—GERMAN word meaning MILITARY HOSPITAL.

*LAZARETT—FRENCH word meaning QUARANTINE HOSPITAL.

* Note difference in spelling and meaning.

WHEN WRITING LETTERS.

It would be of immense assistance to the Post Office censors and would also make it easier for mails to be sent off, if correspondents would comply strictly with the rules laid down for correspondence to Prisoners of War. The name of the prisoner and number must be put on the left hand corner of the letter and on the right hand corner the sender's name and address. The full name and address of the sender also to be written on the flap of the envelope.

The Censor also would like attention to be drawn to the fact that, although only one page can be sent, it is not meant that this page should be written on from edge to edge, as this makes the censoring very difficult. Also, if the letter is typed, would the writer kindly use double spacing and leave fair margins.

Correspondents are also asked to remember that if too many letters are sent to the same prisoner at the same time, there is bound to be unavoidable delay in the delivery of the letters. If five people out of the one house sent every week a letter to the same prisoner it is very unlikely that those five letters will reach him, as naturally five multiplied by perhaps 2,000 means an enormous amount of work for the Censor.

For letters addressed to Prisoners of War in Germany and in Italy with camp address but no number, please follow directions on pages 2 and 3 of Brochure. Remember it is NOT necessary to wait to write until the Prisoner of War number comes to hand.

PARCELS.—Please read carefully "When to Release Parcel" on page 10 of Brochure and remember that when the Enquiry Office issues labels that means they may be used and parcels despatched immediately.

FOOD FOR PRISONERS OF WAR. BRITISH EXPENDITURE.

In a statement of the British Red Cross and St. John Fund, published in February, 1942, out of a total expenditure of £6,356,000 the amount spent on Prisoners of War food and comforts was £3,046,000.

ITALIAN CAMPS VISITED.

Early in December M. Pierre Lambert sent the Red Cross International Committee the following information:—

A camp visited on the 9th December contained mostly Australian Prisoners of War. The Red Cross parcels were arriving regularly and clothes had been issued to them. They were housed in wooden huts. The delegate advised that they were being well treated.

He also gave a good report of the hospitals at Ravenna and Bologna which gave the prisoners all the necessary care. The food was good and distractions such as theatrical performances and cinematograph shows were provided for the prisoners. These men had all been visited by the Mixed Medical Commission.

QUARTERLY PARCELS CONTAINING CHOCOLATE ONLY.

The Packing Centres have come across a few cases where next of kin desire their quarterly parcel to contain chocolate only. Owing, however, to lack of explicit advice by senders, inasmuch as postal notes were sent to packing centres without next of kin stating that chocolate was the only article to be sent on that occasion, the Packing Centres have naturally held up those postal notes indefinitely awaiting the arrival of a clothing parcel. Next of kin are therefore specially requested to in future notify their enquiry offices regarding their intentions in this respect.

POSTAL NOTES FOR CHOCOLATE. It has been noticed by the Packing Centres that in a considerable number of instances next of kin have sent postal notes for chocolate as long as six weeks before a parcel has been forwarded on for censoring. On the other hand, there are a large number of cases where a parcel has been sent before the chocolate slip and postal note, and quite a few parcels were censored and forwarded on before the chocolate slip was received. Next of kin are particularly requested to make sure that their postal note and chocolate slip are sent as near as possible to one week before the parcel is posted, so as to ensure that the notes and instructions are in the hands of the Prisoners of War Enquiry Office a day or two before the parcel is received.

CONTENTS SLIPS.

Where next of kin are sending chocolate instructions and postal notes for inclusion of chocolate in parcels, it would greatly assist the Censoring and Repacking Depots if they would write on their contents slips that chocolate is to be included.

UNNECESSARY OVERLAPPING.

The Prisoners of War Enquiry Office is still receiving a large number of enquiries through indirect sources such as Patriotic Committees, R.S.A. Committees, Mayors, Guilds and other organisations. The attention of next of kin and their relatives is particularly directed to the fact that the Prisoners of War Enquiry Office exists for the sole purpose of executing work in connection with prisoners of war and their next of kin. As the office is in possession of files for every officially known New Zealand prisoner of war, also the addresses of their next of kin, it is specially requested that in order to avoid unnecessary correspondence and additional work, all enquiries in relation to prisoners of war be made direct to the Prisoner of War Enquiry Offices either in Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch, or Dunedin—which ever office controls the enquirer's provincial district.

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BRITISH RED CROSS AND ST. JOHN ACTIVITIES. STORES.

Thirty tons of soap, barbers' clippers, scissors and razors to Geneva for British Prisoners of War, occupational therapy equipment to R.A.F. and other hospitals and War Organisation convalescent homes, nearly a million cigarettes and some 3,600 ozs. of tobacco to accredited hospitals, and 10,000 lbs. of wool to C.H.S.S. depots, were among the various supplies sent out by the Stores Department during the FORTNIGHT ended 11th February. In all, 29,361 cases, bales and packages were dispatched.

FOOD.

Components of the final consignment of bulk food supplies for Geneva were also assembled and dispatched by the Shipping Section during the above period. In addition, the Section handled four consignments from Canada, comprising some 35,500 food parcels for Prisoners of War, as well as 10,000 blankets for British civilian internees, and sports requisites, indoor games, musical instruments, Indian comforts and books for prisoners of war.

PARCELS PACKED.

During the period from 16th to 31st January, 180,508 parcels were packed at the packing centres of the Prisoners of War Department and delivered to the General Post Office. They comprised 153,152 food parcels, 11,896 invalid comforts, 6,095 tobacco, 8,708 next-of-kin, and 657 clothing parcels.

MILITARY HOSPITAL OF CASERTA, ITALY.

In the vast hospital of Caserta a special quarter is kept apart for the Prisoners of War in a big building surrounded by barbed wire. All the officers live together on one floor of the central building. There has been no notable change since the last visit of the International Delegate. The same well kept equipment, the same attention given by the very competent medical staff of which the prisoners express their satisfaction. They appreciate the way they are housed and praise the food and the treatment given them. One should mention the fact that the room for the dentist has not yet been fitted up.

At the actual time of the delegate's visit, cases from Geneva containing milk products were arriving at the hospital. Some of the Hindoo patients ask for books written in their own language, and one prisoner asks for a book of Jewish prayers written in English.

PRISONERS MOVED FROM ROUEN.

(Taken from London "Times," March 18th, 1942.)

The War Office states that the present location of British Prisoners of War formerly at Heilag, Rouen, is now understood to be as follows:—The majority of these prisoners are now at Stalag XXI A, some at "Gym O" and others in another building in the same town. Others are at Obermassfeld Hospital (Stalag IX C), while the remainder were moved from Rouen on February 15th to a hospital attached to VIII B.

U.S.S.R.

The Ambassador of the U.S.S.R. at Ankara officially advised Dr. Marcel Junod, Delegate of the International Committee of the creation of an official Russian Bureau of Information about Prisoners of War, at Moscow. This office, organised by the Alliance of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is responsible for the collection of information concerning Prisoners of War of the opposing nations, and the information received from the International Committee concerning Russian soldiers captured by the enemy; to receive and despatch letters and parcels for Prisoners of War; to collect articles belonging to the killed and to send them to the International Committee; also to deal with all technical questions relating to Prisoners of War.

Official offices of information about Prisoners of War have been set up in the following countries:—Finland, Rumania, Hungary, Slovakia.

PRISONERS' LETTERS

OFLAG VI. B.

Taken from the London "Times," March 18th, 1942.

The writer is a private in the R.A.M.C.

"I feel the best thanks for your books is a scrapbook picture of Christmas here. You know there are 3,000 officers here—every kilt and tartan, Aussies and airmen, Maoris and Indians (with genuine turbans); in fact, the cap of every regiment can be seen and it looks rather like an undress rehearsal of the Coronation.

"During Christmas week there was a carol service with nine lessons read by a warrant officer, subaltern, captain, field officer, doctor, padre, R.A.F. pilot, Fleet Air officer, general officer. Then there was a pantomime 'Citronella' whose fairy godmother, dressed as a girl of eight, was Princess Bardia, who reigned from Benghazi to Sollum, also a villain, much hissed. On Boxing Day a match, officers v. orderlies, and a band in the interval, whose master was swathed in gilt and canvas with a broomstick, while the cellist wore a sun hat and rode in a kiddy-cart.

"The most popular item was a five day race meeting. Betting was prodigious—the Christmas Plate Thousand Marks—for money has little use besides. There was a Fun Fair with all manner of competitions, opened by Citronella who sang 'The Deepest Shelter in the Town.' The Mayor was likewise present and dropped his aitches. At New Year the Scots went mad and made peculiar noises; 1942 was greeted with tremendous cheering.

"I fear this is a dull picture, because Christmas was 'dry'—we drink eternal cups of tea instead. But of this I am certain—that all is well with us, as we feel sure it is with you."

From Flying Officer F. C. PARKES, dated 23/10/41.

At last we have moved and I am now in an Army and R.A.F. camp of about 3,000 officers including most New Zealand officers from Crete and Greece meeting several I know. Was absolutely thrilled to get Stewart's letter yesterday, the first I have had from New Zealand.

From Lieut. D. R. BRICKELL, dated 24/2/42.

Capt. Findlay has calcamined our hut in cream and green, much better than the bare boards. A few more improvements and we will be up to Maclaggan Street standard.

(N.B.—Maclaggan Street is one of the early Streets in Dunedin and has "seen better days.")

From Lieut. I. F. RANDELL.

Dated 4/1/42. We had four days racing and there was a lot of fun. A tote was run, also a number of bookies on the course. It was run the same as aboard ship. Excitement was just as high as if real horses were racing. Since then we have had a couple of fun fairs with the usual hoop-la, darts and gambling devices. We raised 5,000 marks (£350) for our benevolent fund on one day alone. We all keep very fit well and warm during the winter although we do not take as much exercise as we would like.

Dated 8/1/42. I am occupied at present attending lectures on fruit, market gardening, veterinary science, forestry, cattle and sheep, and occasionally I hear words of wisdom and write them down. I have not got the farming bug but it serves to keep one from mental stagnation. If you were here you would realize what an easy groove this is for one to slip into and apart from that knowledge is always useful. A lot of officers here are from a Scottish Division so I have heard a lot about sheep from there. Their sheep and methods seem very backward compared to ours and are certainly not applicable to New Zealand.

Dated 14/1/42. It is surprising what we do for amusement. Lately I have been busy figuring out costs and methods of manufacturing meat-skewers. I believe we use at least a million a week in New Zealand, all imported. Also pencils make an interesting subject to dwell on. Among the officers here we probably have an expert of every trade and profession,

and we have a body called Careers Advisory Committee who put one in touch with someone who can advise on a particular subject.

Dated 18/2/42. We are about 3 miles from a station. Most of my time is spent reading these days, 3 books every two days and a short tramp around the camp daily to stretch the legs. We have just had an exhibition of paintings, drawings, models, etc., and it was a marvellous show for these conditions. How are stock prices these days. An English pen friend tells me 32-36 lambs are 60/- . At that price you want to be like me and forget what they taste like.

Dated 15/3/42. Thrilled to bits with parcel (dispatched from New Zealand November), especially slippers. I was just like a kid opening up a birthday present. Everything just what I wanted. The camp received what we call a bulk issue from Argentine. The prize of this, of course, is half a pound of butter each. We also get a 1 lb. tin in Canadian Red Cross parcels. Our issue mostly this year has been 1 a parcel per week each. We have a laundry service which helps to overcome the wash problem, but we can't always use it as one must have a change before they are returned. No one has had New Zealand mail for some time now. With the advent of better weather I hope P.T. classes start soon as we are very lazy through keeping indoors during the cold months.

From Capt. C. V. C. KELSALL, dated 15/3/42.

Some New Zealand clothing parcels have arrived. We had an excellent Xmas dinner under the circumstances; we received two Red Cross food parcels for the Xmas week. Received an issue of battledress.

From Lieut. C. M. COOTE.

Dated 4/2/42. In January I received four letters from you dated 31st August to 2nd November.

Dated 19/2/42. A letter from Auckland came via the Red Cross, Geneva, and took 105 days to reach me. One New Zealander has just received a letter dated 4th January. It mentioned the death of Major Rawle. Two of the boys here have had word that their personal gear (trunk, suitcase, etc.) has arrived in New Zealand. Am still as fit as ever.

Dated 3/3/42. The parcel sent 1st November arrived on 24th ultimo and was the cause of much rejoicing in this part of the world. I think I can safely say that the majority of New Zealanders here have received parcels from home—if not—then the one sent from New Zealand House last year and received here early in November. Your first one sent in August is still on the way (the Red Cross, London, advised on 25th November that it had reached them and was being repacked and forwarded on). We have simply galloped through the worst of the winter, having had plenty of warm underwear—at least the men in this hut have enjoyed this luxury. You would die laughing if you could see me in long underpants. Thank you a million times for sending the parcels. Incidentally, the parcel received on 24th ultimo arrived as you sent it—in perfect condition.

From Capt. S. M. PORTER, dated 15/3/42.

He had just received his clothes parcel sent from here last August (at least I presume it was that one) but he did not say all that it contained. The snow was melting on the ground and it was very wet underfoot; they were looking forward to the summer.

From 2/Lieut. J. D. CARNACHAN, dated 14/2/42.

I'll relate my doings for a typical day: Up at 8.30 a.m. in the dark, hot Ersatz, coffee and parade in the snow for counting. Breakfast about 9.30, toast, margarine and tea. Then perhaps change library books, help tidy room, then exercise or read till lunch. Bowl of soup at 1 p.m., then give lecture or study for a couple of hours. Tea at 4 p.m. Bread or Red Cross biscuits, jam, margarine or whatever is offering from rations or Red Cross parcels and anxious wait for mail delivery at 4.30 p.m. Roll call again at 5.30. Supper at about 7.30. Hot meal cooked in our oven concocted from rations of potatoes, Quark cheese or saurkraut, plus Red Cross trimmings. Lights out at 11 p.m. Evenings spent reading, talking, making hot drinks, etc. Concerts and plays usually held in theatre at night. With 12 in a room, life is necessarily disciplined and routinized.

Restraint and compromise is always to be cultivated. It's amazing how harmonious everything is.

From 2/Lieut. T. N. S. WATT, dated 24/2/42.

Received on February 24th the first personal parcel. All's well with the world. (It was not actually the first one sent, but the second which went in October). 2/Lieut. Spackman has received his first from home. We are getting Red Cross food parcels regularly and very grateful. The New Zealanders are as fit as fiddlers.

From Y.M.C.A. Secretary.

Dated 20/2/42. Life with me continues much as before. At present we are running an arts and crafts exhibition, displaying the handiwork of those who are gifted in art, carving and needlework, etc. It is really a remarkably good show, especially considering the difficulties and lack of proper facilities. We are having special services during Lent and I have been invited to speak on the second last Wednesday, John 19-30. The New York office is keeping me well supplied with books. I have asked Geneva to arrange for American food parcels to be sent to us. These should be showing up soon.

Dated 1/3/42. This year seems to be speeding along. With Easter coming on our church choir is preparing to give the "Messiah." It certainly will be unique—all male voices. Yesterday I received more letters. I write regularly and our mail goes out every five days. The weather is becoming milder. Snowballing occupies the time of those who have nothing else



Stalag VII. A.

to do and believe me there are some great fights. Bader, the legless R.A.F. Wing Commander, usually leads a team out. He sits on a stool and has to be picked up every now and again after he has been knocked over. To-day received a parcel of new books from New York for which I am very grateful. The Y.M.C.A. are keeping me well supplied with books and reading matter.

From 2/Lieut. J. G. BUCKLETON, dated 15/3/42.

No parcels arriving yet. There have been no tobacco or book parcels arriving since early November. Some have received second parcels direct from New Zealand. Days are lengthening but still don't rise till about 8.30. Keeps the days shorter. Malay class every morning, geology or Japanese in afternoons. Evening play some game or just talk. Mostly light too poor to read. Lights out 11 p.m. While we have fires, have a cup of tea when we get up. Then parade, after that two slices of toast. Lunch is provided. A bowl of soup? About 4 p.m. two more slices of toast and tea and evening meal from Red Cross parcel. A tin of sardines or 1 tin of bully. Appetites so small that can't eat much more. Preferably little and often. I try to keep occupied all the time. Passes the time and keeps the brain working. Feel I'll be alright. Men's camps much better run. Plenty of discipline which is sadly lacking here.

From Lieut.

To-day's on March 3rd most of it is sweet of it n been a lot w it was a big receiving a p Not very sur folks at hom well and very

From Capt.

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From Lieut. O'N. CANAVAN, dated 14/3/42.

To-day's big news—I received a clothing parcel from you on March 3rd. It contained my zippy jacket. I am wearing most of it now. Both cardigans and the body belt. It was sweet of you to remember my old back, though it could have been a lot worse this winter, only occasional spasms. In fact it was a big day. Wonderful the link with home one gets on receiving a parcel. No mail since the makers on 13th February. Not very surprised though. We feel a bit worried about you folks at home, but just hope for the best. Still very fit and well and very optimistic.

From Capt. E. S. McLEAN.

Dated 24/1/42. I am still fit and well; gladness day to-day, more mail from you; so glad to know all you good folks are well. Red Cross parcels continue to arrive, thank goodness; received a clothing parcel from New York, whoopee! Heard too that New Zealand parcels are nearby. The papers are brighter every day. We acquired an ice-rink recently. Doug Bader is a wizard, can't keep him off the rink. Played a scratch game of soccer in the snow. Visited Butch, Popham, Digger Fry, Brickell, Reid and Findlay, all are well.

Dated 25/3/42. Quite a number of New Zealand parcels have arrived and all our boys are really thrilled. Postman popular, eh? Fun and games yesterday; we made an ice-rink, only about a dozen or so pairs of skates, our turn yesterday morning. Gee, I am stiff, pretty good though, stood up twice, once going on and once after I came off. Rollers, nothing so common.

From Lieut. D. C. ALLISON. Dated 1/2/42.

Things "inside" are going along quite steadily, we just manage to find something to amuse us in our spare time! Yesterday afternoon I had my first experience on ice skates and I'll guarantee to have split your sides with laughing if you could have been here. I couldn't stand up and the ice seemed to get more slippery as I progressed. Needless to say to-day I feel like a badly bruised tomato. I have still hopes of becoming a passable skater. Have received no parcels as yet but they must be getting closer. Your mail has been coming in nicely though and I have now received the colossal total of twenty from you and fifteen from Rona.

From Lieut. W. R. T. HAMILTON, dated 4/3/42.

Yesterday we had cigarettes and half a Red Cross parcel.

From Lieut. H. J. RADFORD.

Dated 15th February, 1942. Goodness knows what's happened to the mail. Very little has been happening here—the weather has been very cold with continual snow. Had a great battle with the R.A.F. after appeal last night. The symphony concert gave performances this week and they were very good. The next show is another "swing" session. Have managed to get hold of some insurance books with the intention of doing a bit of swat.

Dated 15th March, 1942. One letter since I last wrote—10th November—still nothing much to report from here. No parcels yet to hand, although there are some November ones from New Zealand in the camp. I'm still very well, but I must say I get a bit bored at times. I haven't received any photos. (Wife has sent about three dozen snaps and he hasn't received any yet.)

From Flying Officer J. M. KERR, dated February 28th, 1942.

Well, here we are and another month has slipped by. I feel the worst of the winter is over now. I know you will be glad to know I've kept very well throughout. I haven't had a letter from you since mid-November, but under the circumstances had rather expected this to be the case. I received your October clothes parcel the other day and was delighted with it. Please thank all the donors for me. I have lots of clothes now, so suggest you miss out sending me any for six months. A few days ago a food parcel from Egypt arrived for me. Amongst it was a tin of oysters and one of toheroa soup, so I imagine my feelings. Naturally we here are somewhat worried by the situation out East, but are hoping for the best. There has been a most interesting series of lectures on advertising in the camp by several people in the game. I have learnt quite a lot which should be useful in the future.

From Major L. H. VEALE.

Dated 24th February, 1942.

Some folk have had lots of letters up to the 2/1/42. There is no sign yet of any parcels (personal parcels). Feeling very fit and well, but lost a lot of hair and well streaked with grey.

Dated 28th February, 1942, received June 15th. Some of our chaps have had their November parcels from New Zealand. It's about time I got one. You've no idea what excitement parcels cause here.

Dated 14th March, 1942. We had no letters this month and no sign of any parcel for me yet. You are always asking what you can send—honey, razor blades, boot polish, boot laces, tooth paste and tooth brushes are very scarce, also boot brushes.

From Major J. A. S. MACKENZIE, dated 5th April, 1942.

I have just received your letter dated January 12th. I hear there is quite a bit of New Zealand mail in, so I hope I am one of the lucky ones. No need to worry about me, I am fit and well and more dental work than I can cope with. I have had one parcel from Clutha (Mackenzie) and the notification of two more which I should get any day. I have had one clothes parcel and one food parcel from the Anzac War Relief of New York, so I have been very lucky. Some time ago I got a clothes parcel from you. I know there are some more on the way, so I am waiting for them to turn up.

STALAG LUFT I.

From Pilot Officer R. G. STARK.

Dated 22/2/42. Mail in January treated me excellently as I got two (Oct., Nov.) letters from you. For weeks now we have had snow lying around us. Outside our window an ice skating rink upon which we gavor and gambol. It has given us no end of amusement and has helped to keep us fit. The Padre continues his good work and altogether we are as happy as we can be in this life.

Dated 3/3/42. How pleased I am to know that you managed to receive a letter from me on December 20th, but what a long time they are in getting through to you. Your letter of December 29th, however, reached me in marvellous time, February 10th, but this is an isolated example. Regarding clothes parcels and other personal ones for me—nothing has arrived for months, but they will turn up. Meanwhile I am well equipped and the Red Cross are looking after all of us very well indeed.

From Sgt. H. G. HEDGE, dated 21/2/42.

I received your letter dated 20/11/41 on 21/1/42, also some old August mail. It is funny how irregular the mail is, and believe it or not I can receive mail from you by the new method in the same time as I can get letters from England. Yes, we do get pay—mine is 45 marks every three months, equal to about £3 English money, which is ample for what one can buy in the canteen. We receive a Red Cross parcel each week. The only meal supplied by the Reich is the midday one. Breakfast, tea and supper are all cooked by ourselves, supper being the big meal of the day. We usually have it about 8 o'clock at night, which is just after roll call and we have been locked in for the night. When I am not playing in a bridge tournament or other game I go down to the wireless and reading room, which is quite comfortable until 11 o'clock lights out. Of course, we are only allowed the German radio. Well there is one thing I have accomplished and that is I can now ice skate. We have had a spell of 40 below and believe me it's pretty cold.

PARCELS RECEIVED.

Dated 23/2/42. I received another personal parcel from you this morning. It was sent off at the beginning of October—thanks so much for all the things. I was going to put on some clean pyjamas to-night, so now I'll be able to sport my silk ones for the amusement of the boys. They are rare things in a prison camp. I am expecting December mail from you any day now.

From Sgt. L. MABEY, dated 12/2/42.

I have been spending a great deal of time skating and I guess going for a skate in every sense of the word. Although



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Location of Prisoners of War Camps
in Enemy Countries

CAMP	LOCATION
GERMANY	
Oflag IV C	Colditz
" IV E	Saxony
" VI B	Warburg
Stalag III D	Berlin area
" III E	Kirchain
" IV A	Elsterhorst
" IV B	Muhlberg
" IV C	Wistritz bei Teplitz
" IV D	Neuburgdorf
" V B	Villingen
" VII A	Moosburg
" VIII B	Lamsdorf
" IX C	Bad Sulza
" XI B	Fallingsbostel
" XIII C	Hammelburg Mainfr
" XVII A	Kaisersteinbruch
" XVIII A	Wolfsberg Graz
" XVIII D	Maribor
" XX A	Thorn
" XX B	Marienburg
" XXI A	Schildberg
" XXI D	Posen
Marlag X B	Sandbostel
Marlag und	Westertimke
Milag Nord	
Dulag Luft	Oberwesel
(Transit)	
Stalag Luft	Barth Vogelsang
ITALY	
1 Hospital Caserta	6 Sulmona
2 Candeli	7 Gargasesc (Tripoli)
3 Montalbo	8 Capua
4 Prato All'Isarco	9 Gruppignano
5 Rezzanello	10 Chiavari
OTHER CAMPS	
1 Kokinia Hospital	3 Dulag 183 Salonika
2 Polytechnic Hospital	4 Crete

the feast at Xmas proved too great an obstacle, I made a gallant effort to cope and went down with flags flying. I hope you all enjoyed yourselves and had a grand time. I wish I could thank all the people properly for their kindness in writing to me and the interest they've shown since I've been a prisoner and makes me really proud to belong to New Zealand. Well, folks, I guess you should receive the photograph I sent by the time this letter arrives home.

STALAG VII. A.

Dated 11/1/42. I have just received four letters from you. Strange to say the September ones arrived before the August ones. I think I have had more mail than any other Colonial. My fears were justified when I thought that you would have an wounded and missing, and I knew that you would have an anxious time. As I said before I was dressed at our own M.D.S. and our Captain got off Crete. However you will have heard from me by now. We have sufficient food, our beds are warm

and comfortable and I have clogs and boots which keep out the wet and sufficient clothing despite the temperature being well below zero. We are in a well-organised camp with street and footpaths which are swept twice daily. I am enclosing a snap so you can see for yourself. We had a very good time at Xmas. The barracks were nearly all decorated and we had concerts in the evenings and afternoons. We also had pork and Xmas pudding in a special Red Cross parcel, which we received along with an American one. In the square there was a Christmas tree covered with electric lights which was very pretty in the snow. Last night I went to a concert of classical music played by an orchestra of 35 French. We also have pictures occasionally, the last one including shots of the Crete campaign.

From Bdr. H. C. BARKER, dated 27/12/41.
To us 50 cigarettes and 1 litre (1 pint) of beer each. No morning parade or work—on Boxing Day lights till 1 o'clock. They allowed us to decorate huts to our individual tastes. Owing to generosity and splendid forethought of Red Cross I was able to keep up the Barker tradition and invited two Frenchmen to dine. With some forethought and a little ingenuity I was able to prepare and serve a 9 course dinner which I am sure would not have shamed you, Mum. We thoroughly enjoyed it (2 1/2 hours) and were a trifle tight round the belt line. We then spent 3 hours on a tour of inspection of all huts to see the decorations. Honestly, I haven't the words or space to tell you of them. They were absolutely magnificent and one really left Stalag VII A outside in the blizzard wandering through streets scenes of Paris, Algiers, Poland &c. and spent time as if at a travel film. We British gave our issue meals two days to Yugo Slavs and they were highly appreciated.

Dated 27/12/41. This Xmas I understood deeply those words Peace on Earth, &c. You would have been amazed at the generosity of the men here towards those who had not so much as we British even gave chocolates, cigarettes to the German guards shows a wonderful feeling when we can do that. We had quite a few German officers coming through to look at the decorations. One brought his son, aged 6 and he got loaded with cats and chocolate. We have lots to be very thankful for in our Red Cross. They gave us a grand food parcel well thought out for Xmas dinner, &c.

STALAG XVIII. A.

From Sgt. E. H. Everton, dated 24/1/42.
Everything goes well here. For various reasons we have not been able to send mail for some six weeks. Have settled down to this existence and as time goes on we find more books arriving, and what was before a shocking waste of time is now being used to good purpose. Have discovered five grand advertising books, printing, paper, etc., which are 'right up my alley.' Tons of historical and suchlike works, and though tons of room for improvement I don't feel now as if I had just had a large slice carved off my life completely wasted. Lectures every night, concerts, much bridge and suchlike completes the weekly round. Parcels of food are regular, thank goodness, and the winter is now so far advanced that it can't get any worse at least. Water supply is always frozen up at this time of the year, but we still get a shower every 8-10 days, and, inside the wire, sufficient exercise to keep fit. 20-30 degrees frost has been common, so you can imagine winter in a Lager is not exactly heaven. Have received letters—all written so far as I can judge—up to November 15; several snaps, so count myself very fortunate. Personal parcels seem slow to arrive, but the essential food parcel is almost always reliable. I shall be an ardent subscriber to the Red Cross after this lot. It is a wonderful and grand organisation. Am still in the Base Stalag—not now at a working camp. Have some fine mates with us in this temporary exile.

STALAG XVIII. D.

From R. C. McKENZIE. Dated 22/3/42.
We are into spring now, all the snow has nearly gone. There has been snow on the ground since October and until last week it has been very cold.

Thanks for parcel. It was great to get it. We have been fitted out with new battle dress and overcoat. Ern. and I were lucky, we got new boots. I was lucky as I am that big that it was a job to get anything to fit me.

We are still out on the road gang, but there are only 80 here now, the rest are on a farm. We might be there soon, too. We get so much to do each day, finish about 3 instead of 6, if it looks too big we loaf all day.

I have just had a feed of spuds and bacon; we live pretty well with the Red Cross parcels.

From J. ALLPORT. Dated 22/2/42.

I was very pleased on the 8th February when I received the parcel you sent. I believe it was sent the first week of August so it took six months to arrive. I must have just missed it in the Stalag and so it was about a fortnight late in getting me. The parcel so far has come in very useful, for as we start work at 6 and finish at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, I can at least make myself fairly presentable at tea time and the pullover looks quite smart. I have just had to knock off writing to go and draw my parcel for the week, and it was a Canadian one, and very good they are too. I have just received two air mail letters from you dated 13th and 31st December.

From R. C. AMTMAN. Dated 28/2/42.

Just another little note to let you know that I am still okay. My parcel arrived on Friday and you have no idea how welcome it is. The boots were a great surprise and I wonder what made you think of them, as boots are the most wanted article of clothing of all. The pullover is a beauty and I bet you put in a lot of work to get it finished in time. The socks arrived just in time as the pair I had kept for the winter has at last given up.

From Gnr. G. C. IRVINE. Dated 16/2/42. I have finished working inside now and go out each day to the country to do all sorts of jobs. Later on I hope to go out to live on a farm. The few days I have had have made a great difference as I have already got some colour and feel much better for the fresh air. Quite a lot of N.Z. parcels have come to hand. Now would you send me a pair of khaki shorts next time you send anything, but if I get the first parcel I will be pretty well set up as the Red Cross have sent lots of clothes. Really they are marvellous.

STALAG VIII. B.

From C.Q.M.S.G. BUCHANAN, dated 11/1/42.

New Zealand food parcels were distributed yesterday and were much appreciated. As only a few have come so far we received one between five persons. This was an extra issue above the English, Scottish or Canadian parcel we all receive each week. The English boys shared with us and this was only right. They were excellent parcels and I am glad we are doing our bit. Please send a donation of say £2 to the Fund out of my money.

From Sgt. T. M. McKOY, dated 18/1/42.

This week I have to record the arrival of the first letter addressed directly to the Stalag—yours of Nov. 3rd, 1941. Find conditions very invigorating. I'll certainly be able to give some good lessons on different types of weather next year. The Red Cross ration is certainly great as so far we have not missed one weekly parcel or our weekly issue of fags. I am becoming very handy with a needle, so what with my exceptional ability in both cooking and washing I will be doing mum out of a job.

From Dvr. J. IMLACH.

Dated 22/2/42. The parcel all complete arrived two days ago and very many thanks. The clothing was excellent and just what I needed. Do not worry about anything else, I will write if I want anything.

Dated 8/3/42.

I received your letter card written on Boxing Day, also a parcel from London. It was a grand parcel, I have now more than sufficient clothing. Do not send anything more.

From J. K. BARCLAY, dated 4/3/42.

Last week received your letters of October 20th and December 7th. Your curiosity about my ankle will give you details—July 3rd fractured the Extl. Maluolus, set in plaster by an English doctor. Had two weeks in hospital in Crete and on July 17th reached Salonika. August 12th plaster removed at Greek hospital in Salonika. September 2nd reached our destination in Germany and September 16th went out to work. When taken out of plaster my leg was very thin and weak, and except for being a bit stiff at times my ankle is as good as ever. Would like to have a good game of Squash just to see how good it is. Out in the woods we see and hear very little so there is not much to write about except the weather. It is getting warmer but the ground is still covered with snow.

From G. CLOUGH.

I drew my first pay yesterday. It seems like old times to queue up for pay. I am still in the sugar factory and still haven't seen any sugar. I get one mark twenty pfennigs a day and get paid every fortnight, so I am able to buy little odds and ends for myself. It seems funny to have an escort when you go out shopping, makes you feel like a sheila. We get a Red Cross parcel once a week. My word they will get all my spare sixpences when I get home. I never realised what a big organisation they were. I am billeted in a little town somewhere in Germany and walk to work every morning. And I have a lovely spring bed to sleep in and plenty of blankets.

From Cpl. E. SUTHERLAND.

Just a few lines to let you know how I am; and well and happy. I have sent £5 to you for Xmas to spend on Dad and yourself.

(Note—This money was received by parents early in March—Editor.)

From Gnr. W. ACTON-ADAMS, dated 31/12/41.

Just a note to say all's well. We have had a real snowy Xmas and a most successful dinner. The Red Cross parcel was excellent, containing 1 pudding, 1 cake, and 2 tins cooked meat. Had a tremendous blow out for us.

Extract of Letter written in Crete from Cpl. A. K. BROWN, dated 2/11/41.

I break the silence of the past four months with the good tidings that I am quite fit and well. During this time I have been a wanderer in the hills taking French leave from the first compound on hearing an obscure rumour of a boat to Egypt. It must be painfully apparent to you, as well as to me, that the said vessel only existed in dreams and Dame Rumour. About three weeks ago a party of us were recaptured and once again survey the world through barbed wire. Very few English occupy this jug, an unfinished building, but these few do not lack for company as the place is crowded with ex-Greek soldiers; not a bad mob on the whole, still the hours are easily employed. The food could be worse, and I manage to secure sufficient to keep myself in good working order, which no doubt is the exact requirement the Germans require, neither more nor less. Daily I leave this residency at 6.30 a.m. by transport to the works, where I lean on a shovel, pick, or hammer, for most of the day. In the first camp we had absolutely nothing to do but lie around and sunbath, an inviting pastime at home, but liable to become painfully boring after six weeks. So as soon as a poisoned hand cleaned up, I beat it, as mentioned above. The experiences I have been through have been varied, and positively eye-opening, particularly the hospitality of the peasant people, who at the risk of all sorts of reprisals, gave us all the assistance we asked for; not a large requirement except for food, which was always forthcoming. I never credited that such hospitality could be possible to a foreign race, which failed in an attempt to hold the island for them; but all of us who have been "OUT" will never forget it. I think it to be more an expression of religion rather than to be the popularity of the English strangers to some of the remote villages—(cut out by censor)—friends who bring us small parcels, and do and buy odd things for us, also some kind of Society does something every Sunday for all the prisoners, ourselves included. Last Sunday it was a parcel of very much needed clothes; to-day a helping of potatoes in oil, olives and raisins.

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Corpora

From Pte. I

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From Sgt.

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From C. H.

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From Pte. V

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From Pte. I

A red l received your received a Also a card a parcel is c by the tim

Very nice. You will be pleased to hear that I can eat practically anything (garlic excluded!) and even sit down with relish to a tasty dish of potatoes and snails. Everything here is cooked over an open fire in oil, and I can tell you that to acquire the taste takes some weeks. I have been nearly a vegetarian since my last birthday, June 1st, the date the enemy initially captured us. You may rest assured they will not get me down, and I can still smile, laugh and work a little.

Corporal Brown is now at Stalag VIII B.

STALAG 306 XVIII. D.

From Pte. F. J. C. COATSWORTH.

Dated 18/1/42. The Red Cross issued some clothing. I have a beautiful hand made polo jersey.

Dated 22/2/42. Sunday afternoon is here again. Anybody would think I was going places, the way I am toffed up, just as gussy as ever. My pals say I take the prize of the room. They certainly admire my parcel, especially the socks and jersey. I had an idea the second parcel would come before the first. During the week I've received eight letters, most of them written on Christmas Day, and one on 15th December. They are coming through pretty good. That makes my tally 49 now.

Dated 8/3/42. We have all been issued with new English battledress and boots. It's grand to dress complete again. The overcoats are double-breasted.

15/3/42. For the last month I have mated with two Lancashire lads. The three of us share alike and get on famously. We even work side by side. At present I am working with two horses and wagon. Last week the Red Cross sent us some cod-liver oil. I'm always into the tin. I certainly know what is good for me.

From Sgt. D. W. DICK. Dated 15/3/42.

How's everybody, no letters from you this month—the latest 29th December. The New Zealanders are getting parcels but mine hasn't shown up yet. I am keeping well, have been on farm nine weeks now and feel much happier than in the Stalag. Have got a course on shipping on the way from Oxford through the Red Cross.

From C. HAYNE.

Dated 22/2/42. With the snow plough continually passing along, the highway is about 4in. wide; still it is pleasant work, and all of us working together the time passes very quickly. I'm looking forward to my next parcel, especially when I know it will be as good or better than the last.

Dated 1/3/42. Another of the boys received his parcel from New Zealand; in that line we are doing better than the English chaps. Auntie posted me one last October and it has not yet arrived.

From Pte. W. T. DAVIDSON. Dated 15/3/42.

I got your parcel about three weeks ago and am feeling the benefit of it as it is still very cold. In your last letter I got you were saying it had been very wet. Get no rain here in winter, only snow and frost. We have done quite well for ourselves during the winter months. Have a stove in our lager and fire every night, and make ourselves a hot drink, either cocoa, tea, or ovaltine, thanks to the Red Cross. I don't think I told you there are eight of us there altogether, and we go to our farms every morning—six New Zealanders, one English, and one Aussie. My platoon sergeant is here with me.

From Pte. R. GALLY. Dated 22/2/42.

A red letter day for me was on the 13th February. I received your parcel on that day, that you sent in October. I received a letter from you to-day, written on December 11th. Also a card from N.Z. Prisoners' Parcels Dept. in London, saying a parcel is on the way from Uncle Bill. You will have received by the time you get this, my card saying I had received a

swag of your earlier letters. I am working away from the main camp now and enjoying the job. It is hard work, but it is keeping me fit which is the main thing at present. We have a nice comfortable lager for the 30 of us who are on the job and we are still getting the Red Cross food parcels.

From Pte. R. A. ANDERSON.

Dated 15/2/42. There's great excitement in the house today for one of the boys received the first home parcel from New Zealand. It was despatched on 8th September, so my hopes are soaring. Have had no mail for a while owing to the post being held up by the snow, but I still head the Kiwi pack with 31 letters. I don't think I've mentioned before that we have cards for poker and 500, and several cheap mouth organs. One lad has a mandolin.

Dated 24/2/42. I must write to tell you how delighted I was when my parcel arrived last night. It had taken just a little over four months, which I reckon is pretty good going. Everything came through all right and arrived in top-dog order. After the papers had been signed, I brought the contents into the lager, dished out some chewing gum all round, and everything was inspected and admired to the accompaniment of appreciative grunts emitted from numerous ruminating jaws. It's great having comfortable feet again—the rug is a beauty. I've wanted a mouth organ like that for a long time; in fact, I'm very, very grateful for everything and many, many thanks to all.

Dated 15/3/42. In case you have not received my last letter, I was delighted to get my home parcel on 23rd February. Some of the lads have also had parcels similar to the next-of-kin ones from the London Branch of the N.Z. Red Cross. I daresay we'll eventually all get these. They certainly look after us well. We have had no N.Z. mail for some time. I expect it is coming by another route, and consequently taking longer to reach us. The buses began running again last week, which will also speed up the mail a bit, but the Red Cross packets have come regularly all winter. We have started carting sand, with the two oxen waggons, for the farm's new pig-sty to be built this summer. The pit is about three miles away and it's not a bad job although bullocks are damnable things to drive after being used to horses.

From L. H. COUPER, Palmerston North.

Since writing to you with regard to parcels for Private J. A. Couper, I have had advice from him to say that he has received two parcels from me. In his letters he also mentions the wonderful work the Red Cross is doing for the prisoners. I thank you most sincerely for all you have done for me and for my son, for if it was not for the help of the Red Cross the next-of-kin would not be in a position to assist our prisoners in any way whatever.

From Gnr. J. BRADSHAW. Dated 22/2/42.

I have had a good week this week, as I received two letters, one from you written on Christmas Eve and one from Ngaire written on Boxing Day, and I also received a parcel from you. I don't know whether it was the first parcel or the second one you sent, but it was certainly acceptable and very much appreciated. I am working in a different part of the country now, so I am certainly seeing places.

Dated 8/3/42.

Lately the weather has improved a good bit, but yesterday we had another heavy fall of snow, and believe me I don't want to see any more snow for the rest of my life. Still I think this place will be very pretty in summer; it is very much like the Hutt Valley only larger. There will be plenty of work on the farms here in summer. We do about 14 hours a day. I am keeping pretty fit now and I am heavier than I've ever been in my life before, but that is through looking after myself and working in the country. But, Gee! there are a lot of things one misses—social life and amusements of any sort, and it is a relief to get back at night to our lager where we sleep and hear English voices. I am picking up the Deutsch fairly well. We had nine new pigs born on this farm yesterday, so we had quite a busy day.

From Pte. C. N. PONT.

Dated 6/1/42. I am now working on a farm and I like it, though the hours are long and it is very cold. The people are very kind to me and the food is a lot better than at the lager. They are Austrians. The woman has her husband and four brothers at the front. They have a few strange ways. One of them is at meal times they put a bowl of food in the centre of the table and you have a spoon each. They say grace, and then off to a good start—all out of the same bowl. After I recovered from the shock, I finished a good second to the old yokel that works here. Then a jug of cider is put on and we all drink out of the jug. There are six of us on the same gang. We are all on separate farms and go back to the lager at night time. All have a good laugh then at what happened during the day.

Dated 22/1/42. In the morning I groom the oxen and give the pigs bedding, and the rest of the day do odd jobs. The Red Cross gave us a very good parcel for Christmas that helped to make it. It is marvellous the way the women work here—I bet the N.Z. girls could not do it. They seem to like work here. I have received ten letters, but not a parcel yet from home.

From Corp. E. C. CASTELL. Dated 22/2/42.

Today (22nd February) I received my first next-of-kin parcel, for which I thank you and please thank the Red Cross for me.

The socks, shirts and pullover are great, and a god-send. The hold-all is the best ever, with razor and blades and all the usefuls. Everything was in good order. Was thrilled with shoes, and gums; also pencils.

I am in a furniture factory, so you see I am inside out of the cold, and as you know it's my hobby, and I am keeping my hand in for when I come home to you.

Again, please thank the Red Cross for all their goodness to Prisoners of War, for it is their efforts which help to make our prison life happy.

STALAG IX. B.

From Pte. T. J. KAY, dated 25/12/41.

Christmas Day! I wonder what you are all doing to-day. We were awakened about half-past mid-night this morning, by the French and British medical doctors and orderlies, one dressed as Santa Claus, presented us all with two packets of cigarettes (a gift from the French Red Cross); we also had an extra Red Cross food parcel, much appreciated. The French and British here all had dinner together, meat and vegetable stew and custard, provided by the Red Cross. At three o'clock we had hot chocolate and biscuits and a sing-song until tea time. One song in French and one in English. Chins up!

From Gnr. W. J. MORGAN, a New Zealand soldier who was wounded and taken prisoner in Crete, written from hospital at Stalag IX B, Germany.

Dated 3/12/41. This is the first letter I have written for a few weeks due to my transportation from Athens to Germany where I am now installed in a German hospital. Every consideration was given to us in transit, and this establishment is comfortable and warm though it is cold outside. We have received several Red Cross food parcels which have been very welcome. I commend this Organisation to your financial support on my behalf.

Dated 14/12/41. My foot is making good progress. I can hardly realise that I have been disabled for nearly seven months now. I have not yet received any mail from you, worse luck, but my hopes still run high. It would facilitate delivery if you

KHAKI SHIRTS.

There seems to be some doubt regarding whether khaki shirts can be sent to men in Italian camps. Next-of-kin are advised to study the brochure instructions which apply at the present time to both Italy and Germany.

were to type your letters to me, and thus make censorship easier. We are fortunate in being able to walk in the garden here and thus get some needed exercise. It is cold outside but quite warm within.

Dated 27/12/41. Christmas Day for us commenced with a visit from Santa Claus bringing a present of cigarettes from the French Red Cross. Breakfast consisted of bread, margarine and jam and herrings in tomato sauce. The day being very mild, a walk in the garden followed and a breath of fresh crisp air was very enjoyable. Dinner was served at 12.30; sardines followed by vegetable stew and topped off with custard. I then had a private feast of jelly and apricots and cream and "knocked off" a cake of chocolate. Afternoon tea of biscuits, margarine and jam and steaming hot cocoa and followed up with a sing song left everyone not feeling like much tea but I had a few more apricots and ginger nuts for supper. For this successful feast day our thanks are due in great measure to the British Red Cross.

STALAG IX. C.

Mrs. W. J. Gomm, of Gisborne, advises that she has had two cards from Pte Gomm from Stalag IX C, one is dated 5/12/41 and the other 7/1/42, stating that he has received next-of-kin parcels. A receipt card has been received signed by him and sent to the Canadian Red Cross.

STALAG XX. A.

From Pte. A. E. MATTHEWS, dated 27/12/41.

Life here is not so bad that I can't take it. For another year if necessary. Had a photo taken on Boxing Day; posting it later. Plenty of warm clothes and a fire in the room. The cigarette question is solved. The Red Cross gives us 50 per week. We have a library and all sorts of table games. Pantomimes ("Snow White" and "Aladdin"), and dancing. Some of the lads make good girls, snow fights and tobogganing, football, etc. Am getting back to normal weight.

From Cpl. A. J. SPENCE, dated 25/12/41.

We have had a rather good Xmas dinner with home made cakes out of dried fruits and biscuits from our Red Cross parcels. I shall be able to show you a thing or two when I get home. We had our photographs taken and I shall send you a copy shortly. Don't forget to send me lots of photographs.

ITALY—TUTURANO.

From L/Sgt. D. C. GRAY, dated 21/2/42.

Just at present am in hospital but owing to excellent treatment in here am nearly O.K. again. The climate up here is very bracing with beautiful days but cold, biting winds which come off the snow-capped mountains surrounding us. They say the summer is very hot, but that is a pleasure to come. The Aussies and Kiwis who have been at this camp, which is for Colonials only, have things wonderfully organised as far as games, concerts, etc., are concerned and all the chaps who have been here any length of time are as fit as fiddles and as fat as pigs. I am hoping to be the same myself before long. Don't worry at all over me.

P.G. 52.

From Driver C. H. KEEGAN, dated 28/2/42.

Since arriving in Italy we have had two Red Cross parcels and they were very welcome. We are housed in wooden huts, which hold 100 men who sleep in beds built one above the other. I was very thankful for my mittens, scarf and balaclava you knitted me and which I was lucky enough to bring with me. We are able to stay inside and keep warm. Everybody is very cheerful and optimistic as regards the future.

Dated 8/3/1942. Another week has gone by and it won't be long now before I receive your first letter. We received

another parcel good—very good—what we want, oh, boy, since leaving 1lb. tin of daily this parcel the Italian sometimes and to pass things and here in the pillow and camp?

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another parcel last week. It was a Canadian and was very good—everything in it was very satisfying and filling, which is what we want. There was 1lb. of Maple Leaf butter, and boy, oh, boy, did it taste good! It's the first butter I've tasted since leaving the ship. There was also 1lb. biscuits, 1lb. prunes, 1lb. tin of dried milk, 1lb. chocolate and 1lb. tin of jam. Normally this parcel lasts one man a week. We have the news from the Italian and German papers read out to us every night and sometimes the Jap. bulletin. Time is beginning to drag now, and to pass the long evenings we have lectures on all sorts of things and they are jolly interesting, as there are all sorts here in the camp. We have double bunks to sleep in, with a pillow and sheets. What do you think of that for a prison camp?

CAMPO P.G. 57.

From Pte. M. BRADY, dated 31/1/42.

We get a Red Cross parcel every week, fifty English cigarettes and an issue of the local brand. In the parcel we get two ozs. of tea and two ozs. of sugar, also milk, and we have our regular cups of tea. We get other tinned stuff as well and that combined with the prison issue of food we live quite well. It has snowed twice since we have been in this camp and the lads have had a lot of fun with snow fights. We pool our parcels etc., and they last longer. I also have an Aussie friend, he comes from Brisbane and after the war says he is coming over to visit us. He is only twenty and has been a prisoner for nine months; he was taken in Egypt in April, 1941, so he is an old hand at prison life, and has helped Johnny and I a lot. Don't worry about me or listen to any horror stories about prisoners, as we are warm, well-fed and more or less contented; actually I think I am putting on weight.

From Pte. G. A. FANNING, dated 7/2/42.

We have received some parcels from Canadian Red Cross and they are exceedingly good.

From Bdr. D. A. NEILSON, dated 10/1/42.

(Bdr. Neilson was a prisoner in Bardia for 20 days and then transhipped to Italy. This is his first letter received since November.)

Our permanent camp is well organized and we are quite well fed and housed. After the heat of the desert we find the cold rather intense as it is midwinter. We receive an excellent Red Cross parcel each week and it is eagerly looked forward to. In your next parcel please send gloves, scarf, balaclava, cardigan.

From Spr. W. V. SMITH, dated 7/2/42.

Received letter from New Zealand House stating that parcel of underclothing, toilet gear, chocolate and cigarettes was on the way. They are doing everything possible for us, so please don't worry. Mail is coming in again and am expecting a letter or two shortly. Although we had a further fall of snow yesterday think the worst of the winter is over.

FROM CAMPO P.G. 66.

From Pte. F. G. PASLEY, dated 21/1/42.

Hope you have long since been officially notified as to my whereabouts. We are all hoping our Xmas parcels will be forwarded on through the Red Cross, but don't think there is much hope. We are paid here one lire (about 2½d.) per day, which is deducted later, but won't hurt. Hard to realise we have been over three weeks in Italy. Had our third hot shower to-day and was shaved again and last time I had a hair cut. Lost nearly all gear in battle but Italians make up absolute necessities, thank goodness. Diary, pen, etc., all went west, but borrowed one of the two pens in our tent of eighteen men for address. Have very good pals in Jim Dudley and Bob Madden of our Battalion.

From Pte. W. J. WAKELY, dated 10/1/42.

I am safe and well in a prison camp near Naples. We are being well treated and meals are good. We received an excellent parcel from the Red Cross—had jelly on my birthday. If you

send a parcel, do so through Red Cross. My Bible is a wonderful help to me.

From Pte. H. R. PUDDLE, Dated 20/1/42.

I wrote a few lines about ten days ago and hope you have received it safely. I suppose it will take some time for letters to reach you. We were captured south of Tobruk on Monday, December 1st, and eventually reached Italy on New Year's Day. When we landed we were taken to a bath-house and had a lovely hot shower, which you can guess was more than welcome. There is nothing to worry about as our treatment is quite O.K. I told you in an earlier letter about our Red Cross parcel. This is sent to prisoners of war by the British Red Cross and Order of St. John, and contained all sorts of tinned foodstuffs, etc., e.g. bacon, jam, honey, condensed milk, chocolate, meat loaf, pens, beans, tea, sugar (cocoa and ovaline in some parcels) lemon honey and 50 English cigarettes per man. Sox would be very welcome. Enquire from the Red Cross before thinking of sending parcels.

From Pte. M. G. N. WATSON, Dated 26/1/42.

I am very fit and with most of the chaps from our section have had great experiences and seen much new country. Michael (his brother) is in same camp with his friends. Great luck, eh? Both are safe, well and together. Absolutely no need for you to worry about us. We have regular meals, good bed and complete rest. Received most wonderful parcels from Red Cross on New Year's Day. Convey gratitude. We missed all our Christmas mail. Please thank senders.

From J. W. PALLISER, Dated 20/1/42.

I never had a chance to let you know how things were with me until last week. I expect you would be worrying a bit about me, but you can knock off now, as I am still in good health and getting enough tucker to keep me going. We hear a lot of rumours but never know how much to believe of them. I don't know how much I could tell you, so I won't start so as to make sure you will get this. I don't think I will be able to answer them all, but if I keep writing to you you can pass my letters on. I am not sure but I think we get one postcard a week and one of these (full sheet) now and again. We had one Red Cross parcel since arriving and they were very good. I wish I had all those that are back in Egypt for me.

From Pte. T. E. COLES, Dated 20/1/42.

The meals are—well; you will understand what I mean. I have been very ill and spent my birthday in bed thinking about my Christmas parcels I did not get. I was lucky to have warm clothing on when captured. Parcels are the only thing we live for now, and of course my home-coming.

From Sgt. H. W. LUCAS, dated 20/1/42.

The days are moving on quickly enough, even the most of them is spent in our tents; it's far too cold to do much else. Since we have been here we have had a parcel issued to us from the Red Cross, and it was very good. I believe they arrive very regularly when possible and they certainly help with our meals. We are provided with two meals daily, soup at mid-day and either rice or macaroni at night. We are paid a small amount and can purchase a few necessities. The main thing we are waiting for is news from home—that will be our big day. We have a priest in the camp who speaks a little English and he does what he can for us.

A PRISONER REFLECTS.

As I write you these few lines I picture you all at home and wish that I too were with you now, but war has decided otherwise. Since going into action and being taken prisoner I have suffered many hardships and privations but I have no regrets. I have learned to know the meaning of the words patience, tolerance and understanding, and as I look back on the past I realize that I have not been the son to you that I could have been nor have I been as fair to Dad as I may have been but I pray that I may be spared to return to you when I shall try and make it up to you. I am being treated well and am in good health but am feeling the cold a bit. I suffered a slight wound in the thigh from shrapnel but have completely recovered now.

From Sgt. R. G. MONTGOMERY, dated 20/1/42.

My main worry has been that I could not send you any word to relieve your anxiety. I sent you a card about ten days ago and that was the first opportunity I had. To-day I received this paper and another card. It is no good me saying what I need, it is more a case of what I will be allowed to have but I would like a pair of socks, smokes and papers.

From Pte. G. G. ROSS, dated 21/1/42.

I am as safe as houses, although the diet is a bit light, I think we can take it. We get coffee about 7, at 12.30 we get soup, and at 5 we get macaroni or rice or a couple of loaves of bread, but don't be mistaken—about the size of yeast buns. We are all sorry about the Xmas parcels we missed, but the Red Cross have supplied a parcel for us. I don't know what you can send, but I hear that the local Red Cross can get them through quicker. Well, I think we have finished travelling for awhile. One thing, we have had a trip across the Mediterranean, saw Vesuvius and a bit of Naples. By the way, tobacco is as scarce as hens' teeth. I've never been so careful over bumpers as now. It's a good place to give up smoking.

From Sgt. A. H. CARLTON, dated 10/1/42.

We received our first parcel from the Red Cross to-day, very good too. Send parcels by Red Cross, chocolate, etc., a pair of socks would be handy. Maurice Cameron, Peter Gale, Dick Allan, Chas. Charteris, Bill Dale are all here too, and O.K. Bob Creighton is a prisoner but not with us. Hope to be in New Zealand camp soon and get mail from you. Our unit may send Christmas parcels on to us. We get one a month from Red Cross. Must say we have had some great experiences this last six weeks. News is very scarce and camp rather wet, but the Italians are doing their best for us.

From L/Cpl. A. GOULD, dated 21/1/42.

We are not in a permanent camp yet. In among mountains with snow on is very cold. Can see (censored) in the distance, (censored) in the evening we get another cup of rice or macaroni. We were given a Red Cross parcel each about three weeks ago. They were wonderful and put new heart into us. Have two blankets each, one Italian and the other Red Cross, so we are warm at nights now. It hurts to think of your parcels that I will never get. Hope the wounded get them. If you are allowed to send me a parcel I would like a change of underclothing, cotton and another pair of your socks and a shirt. Besides the clothes I'm standing in the only other things I possess are my overcoat, your mittens and Jean's scarf. Could not do without any of them. We deserve to be here as the last three or four day's battle was a glorious mess-up, were clouting at both friend and foe. Have heard no news of the outside world for nearly three months.

From Cpl. S. C. WELSFORD, dated 20/1/42.

We were captured, as you probably know, in Libya, and had a pretty tough time of it in the matter of unusual food and practically no accommodation for a week or so. We were however, treated as well as possible under the circumstances and have now regained our normal spirits. We are at present reasonably comfortable at a transit or temporary camp. We now each have a mattress and enough blankets. The food in the camp is strange, but we are getting used to it. We have received parcels from the Red Cross, and they were greatly appreciated.

OSPEDALE MILITARE CASERTA.

From Pte. S. G. GLASS. Dated 27/1/42.

There was great excitement last night, for the Italians gave each of us 160 cigarettes and we have been promised a Red Cross parcel for next week-end. I believe they have all sorts of classes at the prison camp, so if possible I will learn Italian and French.

From Pte. J. B. WAFER. Dated 29/12/41.

I was in hospital in Libya and came across here on a hospital ship and was treated very well. I only arrived in Italy yesterday and came straight to hospital.

Date 4/1/42. I am doing well, so think I should be able to get out to a camp soon. I had a parcel from the Red Cross a couple of days ago and it was great, all foodstuffs such as jam, margarine, fish, green peas, a small tin of N.Z. honey, as well as 1 lb. chocolate, 1 tin ovaltine and 1 tin dried milk. Believe me it was very welcome. We also had an issue of 50 English cigarettes (Red Cross). They reckon we will get a parcel and the cigarettes every week, so everything will be fine. The chaplain on the hospital ship was a very nice man and went to a lot of trouble to help us all. He even bought cigarettes and handed them out to us, which was very good of him.

Dated 9/1/42. The last Red Cross parcel we got is just about cleared up so we are all wondering when the next one will be coming along. The things we look forward to most are cigarettes and chocolate. We are allowed to write two letters a week, not more than twenty-four lines.

From F. R. J. COLLINS.

We are well treated and with the Red Cross parcels we have plenty to eat. It seems a long time since I had any mail. It is eight weeks actually.

Dated 9/1/42. It is just six weeks to-day since I was taken and the time seems to have passed fairly quickly. I suppose it is because there is so little difference between one day and the next. I'm just about out of cigarettes again now, but it doesn't hurt us to go short for a few days. A few days after we were captured all of us except Buck ran out of tobacco. Buck had a tin of Pocket Edition and six of us had a cigarette after each meal out of it. I think they were the nicest cigarettes I had ever smoked.

Dated 31/1/42. I haven't had a real bath since I left home, and it is September since I had a shower, and November since I had a real good wash all over, so you can imagine how good it's going to be to have a real hot bath. I'll be able to scrape myself I suppose. My feet have started to peel and some of the skin coming off is like thick leather. I suppose my first letter is nearly home by now. We only get one letter a week to write now.

Pte. J. M. LINDSAY. Dated 9/1/42.

This is Friday afternoon and we have not long finished our afternoon cup of tea, and very welcome it is, too—good and hot, although without milk. About the first sight I saw on coming off the hospital ship was Mt. Vesuvius, the famous volcano. It was covered with snow almost to ground level and a great stream of smoke issuing from it, but at the time I can't say I was much interested in the scenery. A change of underwear will be welcome, but until I get properly settled in a camp I won't know what extra clothing we get issued. We may get that.

UDINE.

From Pte. R. A. SOUNDY, dated 4/1/42.

I am well and in good spirits; we are well treated here and are allowed to play games and have concerts. We receive a Red Cross parcel regularly. There is no need to worry about me. I am O.K. I think Italy is a beautiful country but find it very cold after the East.

From Pte FOSTER, dated 4/1/42.

We have arrived at last in a permanent camp and are being quite well treated. A few more clothes were issued to the needy yesterday and we are O.K. for wearing apparel now. We also get one very good Red Cross parcel per week. Chocolate would be very acceptable.