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Goettingen Praised by Military All Authorities.

SOLDIERS PERMITTED MANY LIBERTIES

University Professors Take Great Interest in Welfare of the Prisoners and Instruct Many of Them.

By Carl W. Ackerman.

(United Press Staff Correspondent.)
PRISON CAMP, Goettingen, Germany, June 18.—(By mail.)—Here is one spot in belligerent Europe where prisoners of war enjoy more personal freedom than they did at the front as soldiers. The camp is almost a "free city". The men do almost as they wish and after several months under rigorous orders at the

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All the Big Ones, Why Experiment.

front they are enjoying their "freedom" even if they can't go outside the grounds. Camp rules are the most simple and necessary to safeguard the health and comfort of the inmates.

When I came into the camp today the "Main street" was crowded with English soldiers, many wearing wooden shoes; with Frenchmen in tattered red trousers and blue coats; Scotch highlanders in plaid skirts and brighter plaid stockings and a few hundred giant Russians. Not a German officer or soldier except the two at the gate, could be seen.

For several hours I visited among the Canadians, the English and the French, entirely out of earshot of any German authority. I asked the men if my impression of their freedom was correct and everyone said it was a fact. Every man believed what an English soldier said: "Of course, it's fortunate to be a war-prisoner but we are fortunate to be in a camp where we are given so much freedom."

In what other prison camp, I asked, are the men permitted to gather in groups and talk as they please and do what they please. Many, who had been in other camps said Goettingen was the first of its kind and they attributed this fact to the administrative ability of the camp commander, whom every prisoner praised.

Ambassador Gerard and the Spanish ambassador in Berlin, who were here some weeks ago to dedicate the first American Y. M. C. A., ever built in a prison camp or prison, declare the commander is a "prison-genius". Gerard said if this officer could take charge of all the prisons in Europe there would be no complaint against the handling of prisoners of war. Even among Swedish investigators Goettingen is considered the finest camp in Europe. John B. Jackson, of Trenton, N. J., former American minister to Roumania, who has seen all the camps in England and Germany holds the same opinion.

Camp conditions are excellent, the spirit of the men is inspiring, the camp health is equal to that in the most healthful spots in the world. Less than 25 were in the hospital today. The men not only appeared happy but said they were happier than they ever expected to be as prisoners of war. And today there are about 8,100 former soldiers of the allies imprisoned here, among them 160 Canadians, members of the former 48th Toronto Highlanders who were captured at Ypres, April 24.

This camp was founded in a large field outside the old university city of Goettingen and at the foot of a high hill on top of which is Bismarck's tomb. It is made up of several hundred frame unplastered shacks, one story high and similar in every way to cheap cottages one sees in American summer resorts. Between every five cottages is a street, some so wide that the ex-soldiers have potato patches in front for flower gardens.

The Y. M. C. A. building is a large cottage with a library of French, English and Russian books and magazines at one end and a stage at the

other. This afternoon the English and French were preparing for an English concert. A Frenchman was painting scenery for the stage. Belgians were installing electric footlights and the English were marking the benches with the names of the audience, which because of the limited capacity of the hall, was limited to invited English soldiers.

This camp is famous in Germany, also, because of the interest the professors in the University of Goettingen take in the welfare of the prisoners. Many of them have classes in the camp and instruct the men in regular university courses. These are open to those who wish to attend.

In the post office, today 18 English soldiers were assorting mail packages which today's post brought from England. German inspectors were looking inside before the packages were handed out to see that the camp rules regarding the receiving of home articles were not broken. Working in this building were two Canadians, both of whom lived in Toronto and had often visited in Niagara Falls, Buffalo and Detroit.

Leaving the camp for the railroad station I saw 90 English soldiers being brought in. They were among the recent captives in Flanders and their clothes were torn and dirty. My guide in the camp, Lieutenant Gropp, who said he had a brother-in-law William Persson living at 732 Belden avenue, Chicago, declared these fellows would soon be given special baths and ordered to wash their clothes.

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