

From Dänholm to repatriation and home – Appendix B

- leaving Stralsund on 9 December 1918

31.07.18

Following the shootings which had taken place on the 4th and 5th December it was clear that repatriation from Dänholm had to be speeded up. Confirmation was received on the 8th that 200 officers and 71 orderlies were to leave via Wäternmunde for Copenhagen on the 9th. Wisely the Aachen “troublemakers” were amongst those chosen, with the number being made up by those taken prisoner before March 23rd, in alphabetical order. A list with the officers’ names can be seen under “name lists”. Unfortunately we haven’t found a list containing the names of the orderlies who were part of this group, however the names of a few are known e.g. Pte. Joe Garvey and Cpl. Wiltshire.

This party under Lt. Col. Peck, 19th King’s Liverpool Regiment, left Dänholm at about 1am on 9th December. It was rumoured that about another 30 officers had joined them, unofficially, at some stage of the journey. However, according to the head count from their train journey and arrival at the Danish camp the numbers are more or less what were expected. One can imagine the 31-year-old Lt. Col. John Norman Peck finding the journey very interesting professionally as before the war he had been a railway engineer. The state of the railway system in a Germany gripped by revolution, the route which involved several ferry crossings, and the triumphant journey through Denmark which included numerous stops at small town stations.

Pte. Joe Garvey

Pte. Joe Garvey wrote in his memoirs of being told *“I have some wonderful news, we are to be sent to a reception centre in Denmark. Get your things packed, it may be a very short notice”*. Lieut. Roberts, RFC, mentioned earlier in the Dänholm articles concerning his talent for entertaining, was one of the group too. He mentions in his memoirs, that on leaving the island *“The revolution was in full swing, and we were now given a guard to protect us from the troops in the town. We passed through without incident, and entrained. The train travelled to Stettin without signals, blazing its own trail. As we passed through hamlets we were obliged to crouch down. One or two windows were broken by rifle shots. No one was hurt. At last we got to the port, and embarked on a Danish ship.”*



Roberts was mistaken, they went to Wäternmunde, not Stettin. Here they met by a smaller group of 14 British former pows who were also on their way to Denmark on the direct Berlin-Copenhagen train-ferry route. 12 were officers from Fürstenberg camp who had volunteered for repatriation duty and were on their way to Copenhagen. With them on the train was Lt. Col. Lord Farnham¹. General Ravenshaw, from the pow camp at Clausthal travelling from Berlin also joined them on this train. These last two important individuals were on a fast track home.

¹ Lord Farnham was an Ulster politician, an MP.



The Danish welcome

Onboard this ordinary regular daily ferry from Wårnemunde to Gedser the former pows were met by “civilization” in the form of kindness and hospitality. Sitting at dining tables decorated with British and Danish flags they enjoyed a lunch made of fresh ingredients accompanied by wine. After their usual fare, tinned foods from their Red Cross parcels, they ate too much, and drank too much, but it didn’t matter, they were out of Germany. The ferry arrived at Gedser at 3 in the afternoon where they were met and greeted by the Danish authorities and Count Ahlefeldt-Laurvig from Danish Red Cross. All the former pows settled onto the train and each were given sandwiches and a beer. An hour or so later their journey included another short trip on a ferry where the pows were served with tea or coffee and cake. Arriving at Masnedø they were met by a crowd who wished them well and handed out cigars to the men as they once again settled on the train. At every station at which the train stopped Danes stood waiting to cheer and the ex-pows were showered with best wishes, fruit, cakes and cigarettes.

At Næstved station the Berlin-Copenhagen train left behind the carriages containing the Dånholm group which were to be attached to another engine which would take them to Jutland. The whole town turned up to wish the former pows well. In write-ups in the local newspapers their 20-minute stop-over in Næstved was described in detail.

Their 20-minute stop in Næstved

As soon as the train left Vordingborg a call was made to the station at Næstved with the information that the British were on their way. If the town’s people wanted to greet them, they had to put their own evening meals on standby and get organized. And that is precisely what they did in Næstved. The ladies working the telephones rang around and the news spread like wildfire that the British prisoners of war were on their way, and for everyone to hurry down to the station. The ladies also called the town’s grocers,

bakers, fruit dealers and sweet shops so as the crowds may have something they could give to the British after their terrible time in German prison camps. The whole population, male and female of all ages, strode down Station Road, including journalists from the town’s newspapers and the vicar, pastor Kalkar. The station was completely choc a block with people by 6.45 pm when the train was expected. Minutes passed and no train came, until finally at 7 o’ clock the train steamed into the station. Most of the soldiers were sitting sleeping, a few looked out of the windows. They had very little idea of where they were or where they were going to.



Then cries of hurrah and welcome rang out and woke them from their slumbers. And it was a bit like a dream to wake up to in Næstved. There could be no doubt now for any of them that they really were free men again, the war was over, and around them was a human sea of happy Danes who wished them well. The Næstveders generously handed out all of the goodies they had gathered from the shops; fruit, cakes, confectionery, tobacco and English magazines and of course whatever home-made tasty nibbles they had had at hand. Many of the Danes could speak some English and chatted to the now completely awake soldiers. They wanted to hear a little about their experiences of the war and the prison camps. But the men preferred not to, except to say that it had been terrible and that if they had not received food parcels from home, then it would have been very much worse.



The Danes noted that not only were there English, Welsh and Scots on the train but men from Canada, South Africa and Australia, and from all sorts of regiments, ranging from the tank to the cyclist corps. There were 11 Navy officers too in the Dänholm group, and the Danes thought they looked very smart in their black uniforms. Also noticed were the many young aviation officers, the military use of aircraft was still considered new and exciting. One of the young pilots, with monocle and in good spirits, entertained the willing audience around him. He opened a small box he had received as a gift with the hope that it was a toothbrush. He explained that his own had been abducted in the camp by a rat, and even though he had looked under the floorboards it was gone.

Boys selling chocolate and pop at Næstved station 1918

The only travellers who did not want to meet with the Næstved townspeople were the two VIPs in the group of 14 travelling on to Copenhagen. It was noted that the General had pulled the curtain on his compartment window obviously not wanting to participate in the fraternization with the happy Danes. The train for Copenhagen quickly moved on while the carriages with the Dänholm group were left to be attached to another engine. They were headed for Jutland, most didn't really know where that was, and didn't care, just as long as they were on their way home to England.

The gifts had been handed out and time ticked on. The soldiers wanted to repay the kindness shown, and numerous buttons were cut off their uniforms, and given as thanks, in particular to the attractive young ladies in the crowd. An errand boy, working afternoons for a grocery store stood with a basket of trapeze toys, or artists as they were also called. Quickly, people bought all he had, and they were hung in each of the carriages on the train as a souvenir of their 20-minute stay in Næstved. The children who had imagined that the British would have arrived singing "It's a Long Way to Tipperary" began whispering what they wanted to hear. Hands were shaken, carriage doors closed and just as the train was cleared to leave, their reward came. The soldiers started singing "It's a Long Way to Tipperary" and as the train slowly pulled out of the station the Næstved citizens joined in with cheers and waved their hats. The men had a long journey ahead of them, across to a camp at Hald near Viborg in Jutland.



The rest of the journey to Hald

According to the local newspaper the train arrived at Slagelse at 8.42. They had to wait here for 20 minutes until the express train had passed. Once again crowds of town's people had amassed wishing to greet the men. However there was one problem here, to be allowed onto the platform you had to have a train ticket! And many Slagelse citizens indeed bought a train ticket for the sole purpose of getting the chance of small talking with the men through an open carriage window, for they had been told to stay on the train, and handing over the small gifts they had with them. Then there was a lot of cheering and the train was off to Korsør.

A large crowd was waiting for their arrival at Korsør station at 9.30 and once again small items were handed over as welcome tokens. This had to be a much speedier greeting as all were on the ferry "Odin" ready to sail 15 minutes later. One wonders whether, after all the goodies they had been plied with since arriving on Danish territory, they had any appetite to tuck into the meal provided for them on the ferry: roast veal and sandwiches washed down with beer and snaps and rounded off with cigarettes being handed out.

The ferry docked at Nyborg at 11 o'clock where they were met by local officials and the station master who accompanied them to Nyborg station for a formal welcome and young ladies handed out baskets of fruit, cigars, cigarettes and Danish flags to pin on their uniforms. And then straight on, their next stop being in Odense. "Fortunately" for them by the time they got there everyone had gone to bed. That is apart from a local journalist. He was on the spot ready to interview any of the soldiers who stuck their heads out of the carriage windows. His article suggests that he did manage to chat to a few². They made it clear to him that the only reason that they looked as well as they did was thanks to the food parcels they had received. All were obviously looking forward to getting home but none were really willing to answer his questions about how they would vote in the upcoming election. The journalist

² Pte. Joe Garvey appears to have been one of them.

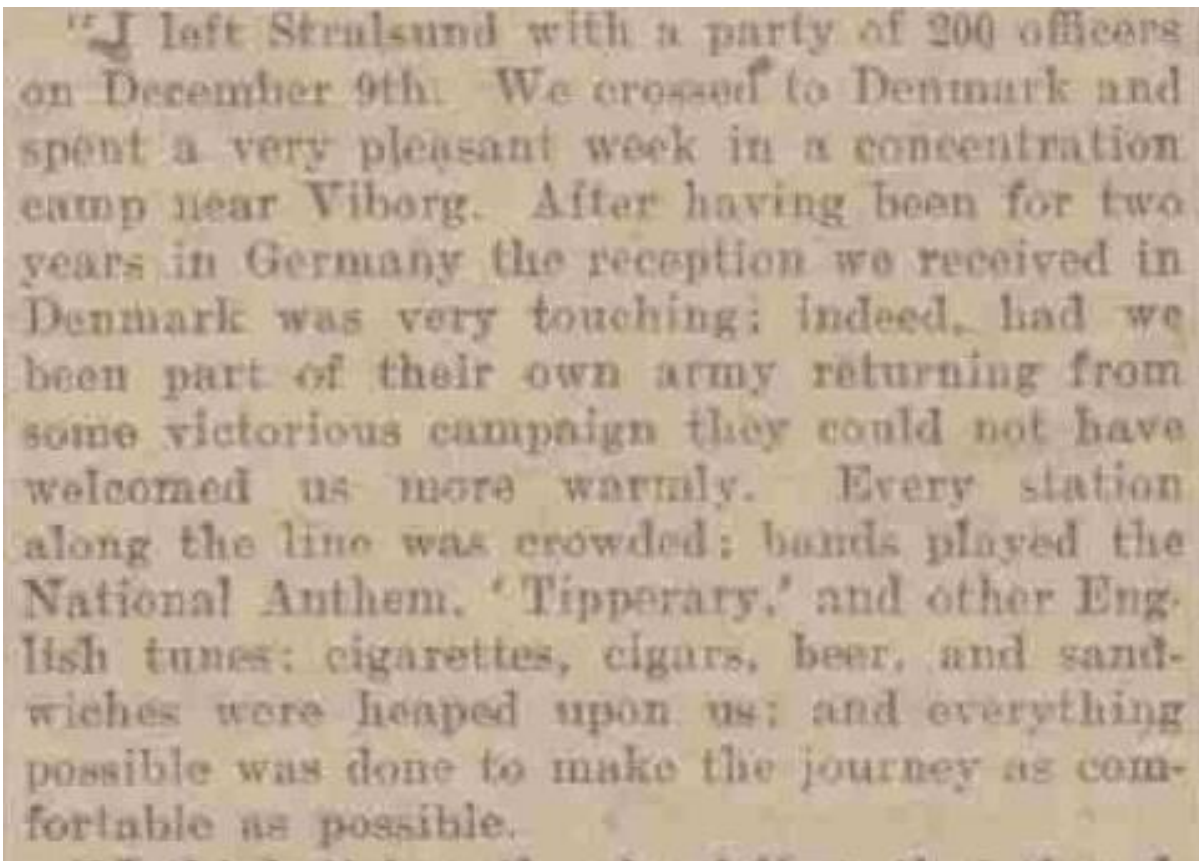
noted that all were wearing Danish flags in their buttonholes. "It's a beautiful flag, they gave them to us in Nyborg" one of the soldiers explained. Then as the train pulled away from the platform the journalist ran alongside shouting "Long live good old England" and 20 heads appeared out of the windows and replied "Thank you. Thank you. Long live Denmark".



24 hours after mustering to leave the camp at Dänholm they arrived at Strib at 1am. Another ferry trip, to Fredericia on Jutland. Then the last leg of their journey, travelling north through the rest of the night was peaceful. Bækkelund station is the nearest to the camp at Hald, a couple of kilometres distant. However the railway line runs close to the camp and trains with soldiers sometimes stopped here so there would only be a 5 minute walk. The men arrived at the camp at 7.25am on the Tuesday morning. Even if they had slept during the early hours of the morning they must have been exhausted, and this can clearly be seen on the photos taken of their arrival.



They had received an overwhelming reception during their triumphant journey across Denmark which was much appreciated and an experience they related to others and remembered in their memoirs.



"I left Stralsund with a party of 200 officers on December 9th. We crossed to Denmark and spent a very pleasant week in a concentration camp near Viborg. After having been for two years in Germany the reception we received in Denmark was very touching; indeed, had we been part of their own army returning from some victorious campaign they could not have welcomed us more warmly. Every station along the line was crowded; bands played the National Anthem, 'Tipperary,' and other English tunes; cigarettes, cigars, beer, and sandwiches were heaped upon us; and everything possible was done to make the journey as comfortable as possible.

From a long article in "The Rochdale Observer" on 21st December. about Captain A. N. Scott, East Lancashire Regiment, experiences as a pow.

Lt. Roberts recalled in his memoirs *"The Danish people gave us a wonderful welcome when we landed. We went by train ferry to a reception camp which had been prepared for us in Jutland. At every station the town had turned out to greet us. We were deluged with baskets of fruit, chocolate and sweet biscuits. People clamoured at the windows to grasp us by the hand."*

Why

The overwhelming welcome given to this group from Dänholm can to some extent be explained by, the unusual route these men took to get back to the UK from camps in Germany. The repatriation scheme organized by Captain Dix and his associates was still in its early stages and this was the only large group to travel cross country in this way. While those living in Copenhagen had the opportunity to see the released pows comings and goings on the repatriation ships and could meet the men as they walked around as tourists, this was the one chance for the people from the smaller towns to experience a piece of world history in their midst. And many Danish families had relations, even sons, who had emigrated and had fought for the Allies and wanted to celebrate with the servicemen that the war was over and that they had survived both combat and internment and finally were on their way home.



The camp at Hald

The camp at Hald had been constructed in 1917 as a lazaret to house ill, wounded and recuperating German and Austro-Hungarian pows from Russia. A similar camp had been constructed in Horserød for ill, wounded and recuperating Russian pows from Germany. The well-made red wooden barracks were constructed with all the modern facilities necessary for this purpose. The camps at Hald and Horserød closed as lazarets in the spring of 1918. A number of Danish doctors³ and nurses who had worked at these camps volunteered and sailed on the repatriation ships in particular those on the Danzig – Leith route.

The regiment based at Århus then used the camp at Hald for their recruits until the end of November, when they left without cleaning up after themselves. When the arrangement was made for the camp to be used for repatriation purposes an army of cleaning ladies and 40 soldiers worked from 5th December to get everything cleaned and ready. The first group of homeward bound arrived on 9th.

Colonel V. Giersing, of the Danish Army, was the camp commandant at Hald assisted by Captain Henriksen. A couple of days before the camp reopened all necessary staff were in place including kitchen personnel and doctors and nurses. They were working under the assumption that it would be the “weakest” of the former pows who would be sent to Hald and Horserød during their stay in Denmark. However it didn’t work like that as it was the flow of ships to and fro which determined who went where. Major Lloyd, Captain Cranford and Lt. Ryder accompanied by Lt. Bille-Brahe arrived at Hald on Saturday 7th. Both Major Lloyd and Lt. Ryder had been pows at Dänholm and could have been in the group that had left on 30th November and once in Copenhagen volunteered for repatriation duty. Captain Cranford may have been the American Military Attaché’s assistant who was sent over from Copenhagen to Hald for a couple of days.

<https://www.dfi.dk/en/viden-om-film/filmdatabasen/film/fangelejren-ved-hald>

³ Dr. Harald Abrahamsen who had worked at Hald volunteered and was head surgeon on the “Russ”. He wrote a wonderfully detailed diary during these weeks.

The camps were to be run as Danish military establishments as they had been in 1917/18 when holding German and Austro-Hungarian personnel. Just in case there was any trouble a translation had been made into English of "Danish Rules and Regulations regarding punishments, without forgoing trial of interned foreign military men; laid down by Danish War Office 03/07/1917". Under the Danish commanders the British officers would run the camp as a military institution.

The arrival of former pows from other camps to Hald

Almost 1000 other ranks and civilians arrived at the camp at Hald, on 9th December, the day before the Dänholm group arrived. These former pows were to travel from Wärnemunde to Århus in Danish ships working for the Danish scheme, not by rail like the Dänholm group. They had been expected in Århus harbour during the late afternoon of the 8th but very foggy weather had caused a delay and they had had to wait in Wärnemunde⁴ for the ships to arrive to pick them up. "Niels Ebbesen" and "Cimbria" arrived in Århus at 6.30am with 370 passengers on each ship. 650 of the men were OR soldiers while the rest were civilian seamen taken prisoner by the "Wolff" and "Mowe". Nearly all of these were Lascars (Indian). News travelled fast and British newspapers including the "Hartlepool Daily Mail" printed a piece on the evening of the 9th under the heading "A hearty welcome, from the Danes". It was a short piece about their arrival ".....*The ships were welcomed by a great crowd, including the municipal and military authorities and the British and American consuls. Cheers were given for the prisoners and Great Britain by the Danes*". They had been welcomed by Commandant Busck, chief of police Goll, doctors Mohr and Lassen from the local Red Cross society, British consul Thirsk and American consul Kehl, and a number of women, including Fru Kehl and English teacher Miss Falkner who handed out small presents.



At 8am they left by train for Hald via Viborg. This delay suited the Viborg townspeople as instead of passing through at midnight they were able to welcome the soldiers at the more civilized hour of 10.20. Even though it was a Monday morning 200 people turned up at the station and the men were welcomed by district bailiff Tolderlund then suitably cheered, hands were shaken and fruit, cigarettes etc. distributed. Then on to Hald where the train stopped on the track by the camp where Major Lloyd, Captain Cranford⁵ and Lt. Ryder were waiting for them. Once they were organized into lines this first group walked the short distance to the camp where they were welcomed to Hald in English by Colonel Giersing, and the doctors and nurses. A light lunch of jam and white bread, cake and tea had been prepared for them and then they could settle in.

⁴ Some newspapers say Stettin

⁵ Possibly American

The remainder of this group arrived at Århus harbour at 12 mid-day on the “CPA Koch”. However spaces in the camp were earmarked for the group en route by rail from Dänholm so there wasn’t enough space in the camp for all 520 of these men. So 220, all Indians, stayed onboard the ship which then sailed to Copenhagen and there they were billeted on the barracks ship “Fynen”. The 300 men who were to travel onto Hald were all given a warm welcome and small gifts before they boarded the train. They were all civilians and included Indians and a group of 86 Americans. It was very unusual for coloured people to be seen in mid-Jutland, they were thought very exotic and weird. It was reported that one young girl didn’t dare to give flowers to the “coloureds”, thinking they may be dirty. Some wore turbans and many were shabbily dressed and they carried strange luggage: one Indian’s only luggage was a canary, another’s a mirror while a third carried both a tin bath and a plank of wood! On the other hand a number of Americans appear to have carried gramophones and musical instruments, and they were very boisterous and jolly. They too had a 20-minute break in their journey at Viborg and were greeted by the town’s people, arriving at Hald at 4 o’clock.

And so they had time to settle in before the Dänholm group arrived early the next morning.



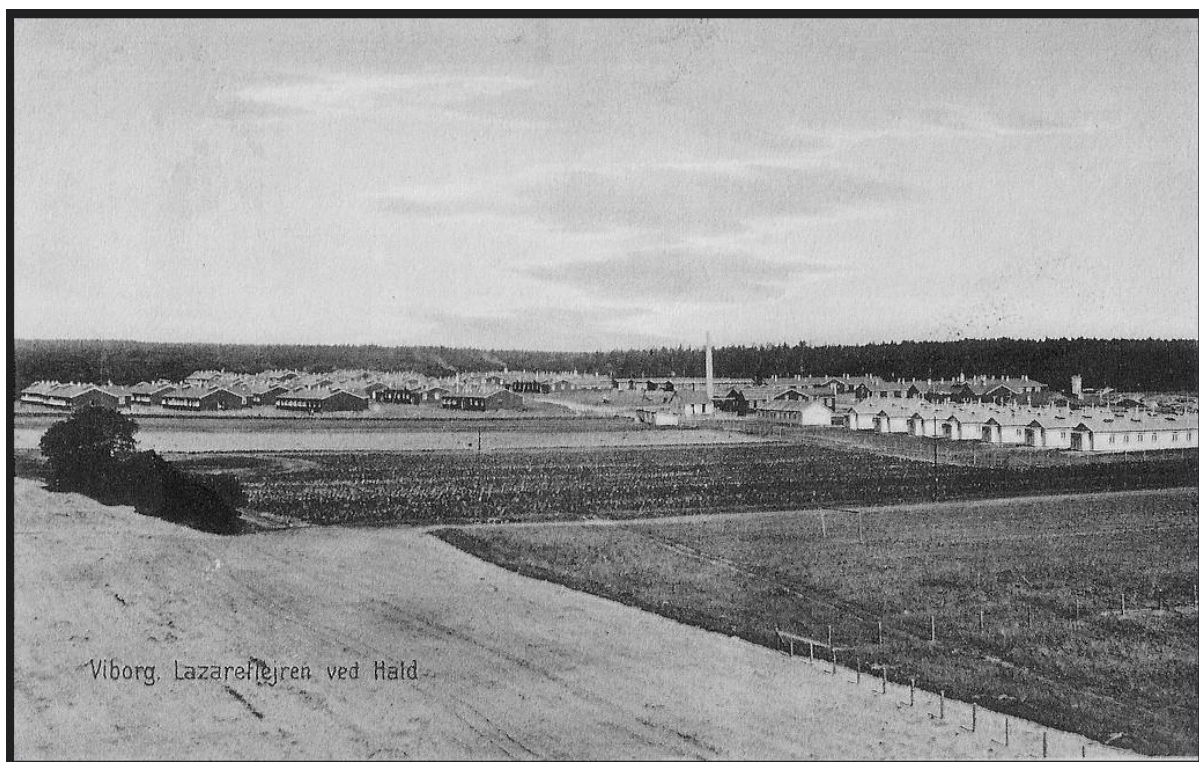
Billeted at Hald from 10th to 15th December

Fortunately documents survive from Hald camp, including the slips written daily with details of those billeted at the camp. With the arrival of the group from Dänholm on 10 December, the camp was more than filled to capacity, the overflow of 76 having to be billeted in the isolation hut. Several of the officers from Dänholm volunteered for repatriation duty at the camp. Major Lloyd and Lt. Ryder already mentioned were in place and they were now assisted by Captains Coleman, Machine Gun Corps (MGC), Balfour, 49th Canadian infantry, Martinson, Essex Regiment and Lieutenant’s Maude, West Yorkshire Regiment, Nathan, Royal Warwickshire Regiment and Phillips, ?. There were volunteers also from amongst the Other Ranks (OR). Major Lloyd’s “day’s orders” for the camp for 10th December set the framework for how the camp was to function over the next days and weeks. On that particular day Lt. Maude was Orderly Officer assisted by Sergeant. W. Higgenbottom who was from the “other” group. They were working on the theory that they would be at the camp for approximately a fortnight.

While the officers and orderlies had led a “privileged life” during internment at Dänholm they were now sharing a camp with ORs and civilians who had had a very different experience of being prisoners. For the later it was a welcome improvement to have beds with clean white sheets, plenty of food and health care readily on hand. They were also free to walk outside the camp although it was winter, cold and with snow on the way. Some it appears found their way to Viborg where they exchanged money, stocked up on cigarettes and went to the pub to celebrate. One newspaper reported that a group of Americans and Indians had visited the Landmandshotellet where they had been singing and tapdancing, with one of the Indians even entertaining the locals with magical tricks. Meanwhile Colonel Giersing had invited the “welcoming committee” from Århus to the camp where there was “hygge” in the officer’s mess including background music provided by one of the English officers playing the piano. Consul Thirsk had started a collection of footballs, boxing gloves and skates for the men.

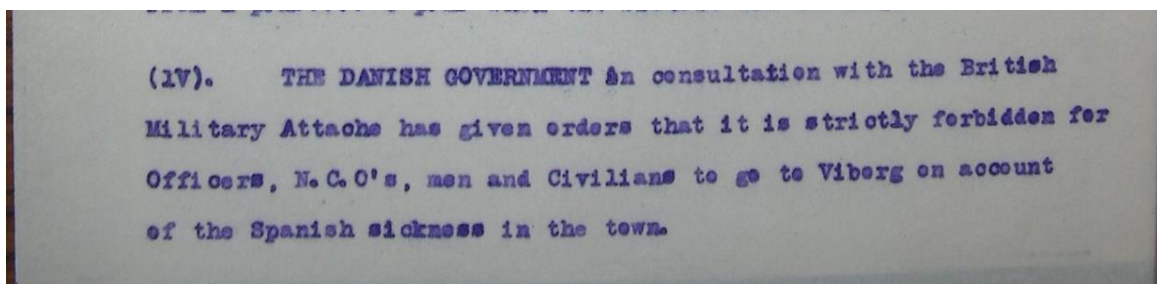
11th December

The typed list with the names of the 204 British and American officers in Dänholm had 3 handwritten names added. These may have been “unauthorized” who had tagged along, one of them being Lt. Bowring.⁶ Lt. Bowring had been a witness in the shooting episode in Dänholm on 5th December where one officer had been shot dead whilst another was wounded. As soon as it was known he had arrived at Hald the British Legation made arrangements for him to travel to Copenhagen, and he left Hald accompanied by an interpreter the next day to give evidence there. Bowring was also interviewed at the American Legation on 13th about the fatal shooting of Lt. Conheeny, who was an American citizen. Lt. Bowring must have embarked on the “Ajax” almost immediately, joining officers from Dänholm who had left the camp on 30th November and had been staying at Sandholm near Copenhagen. They arrived at Leith on 16th December.



⁶ See “While the kettle boils 2” and Appendix A.

Pte. P. Tongue, 23rd Northumberland Fusiliers, who had been a POW at the camp at Friedrichsfeld, sent a postcard with a photo of the camp at Hald to his wife. Picture postcards of the camp and its facilities had been produced for its first inmates the German and Austro-Hungarians. They were probably still for sale in the canteen. 34-year-old Percy wrote "*Dear Flo, This is the camp where we are recuperating, very nice too, I don't know how long we will be here, could do with a few pounds, should we be allowed to visit Viborg, which is a few miles from here.*" It is probable that Percy did not get to visit the town as a tourist as a decision had been made and promulgated in the "days orders" that Viborg was out of bounds for the men to visit. The reason given was that it was dangerous, as many inhabitants were sick with the Spanish Flu. They may also have wanted to stop the problem of the men going to Viborg and getting drunk. The local newspaper had reported cases of men drinking well into the night and being unable to find their way back to camp, and having to spend the rest of the night in police detention.



12th to 14th December

The names of absconders were noted on the next day's slip with the head count. They were 3 American civilians A. Gomes, W. Fitzgerald and A. Ferry noted on the 12th. So far lists with the names of 74 of the 86 American civilians have turned up, they were mostly seamen from a number of vessels including Captain Alfred Oliver and some of his crew from SS Campana and a good number of crew from the SS Esmeraldas. 32 of the Americans came from the camp at Brandenburg while 42 came from Güstrow. William Fitzgerald and Rossry(?) Ferry were both on the Esmeraldas. One would imagine that the American Military attaché's assistant tried to have a serious talk with the American civilians about their behaviour.

British. Officers. O. Ranks		American Officers. O. Ranks		Isaac.	Portuguese.	Dutch	Swede.	TOTAL
203.	741 [*]	2.	82 ¹²	230	7	1	1	1267 ¹²

† A. GOMES } Returned to camp.
A. FERRY }

J. MILLER } Absent from camp.
L. GRAHAM }
Y. HENRY }
W. FITZGERALD }

Hald.

49520 P.A. 13. 12. 18.
7064 DALBY G.
8185 SHERWOOD D.D. K.R.R.
7088 JONES H. K.O.Y.L.I.
MOWER E. E.Y.R.K.S.
R.S.F.

British military prisoners
absent from camp.

Major

The next day Gomes and Ferry returned to camp, Fitzgerald was still absent. Another 3 Americans were registered as missing; J. Miller, L. Graham and V. Henry. A group of 4 “British military prisoners” were also absent from camp; Ptes George Dalby, Kings Royal Rifle Corps (KRRC), David Sherwood, Kings Own Yorkshire Light Infantry (KOYLI), H. Jones, East Yorkshire Regiment and Ernest Mower Royal Scots Fusiliers. Not much information has turned up about the first 3 of these men. Ernest W.H. Mower had joined the army as an 18-year-old in 1902 on a short-term contract. He married and the couple had three children and back in civilian life, living in Surbiton Hill Surrey he had worked as a boot repairer. As a reservist Ernest was called back to his depot on 5 August 1914 leaving his wife and children aged 8, 4 and 4 months. He was taken prisoner on 31 October 1914 and was interned at Güstrow. After being held prisoner for more than four years he obviously wanted to enjoy an evening of freedom with some chums. These British OR were all back in camp on 14th.

Even though they had orders not to visit Viborg, it was still going on and there were descriptions in the newspapers of dark skinned seamen walking around with a trail of children following them, soldiers chatting up the pretty girls and at least one soldier trying to sell off a large bag of tea to one of the shopkeepers. While some of the ORs and civilians were off exploring what Viborg had to offer it appears that the once unruly “Dänholm officers” were obeying orders, staying close to camp and behaving themselves. In Viborg the 29th Battalion of the Danish Army were interested in doing their bit to give their British colleges a pleasant time while they were in Denmark. They collected musical instruments, sporting equipment and books in English and handed the items on to Hald. Their military band gave a concert at the camp for an hour on the Tuesday afternoon.

Two of the officers, American Lt. Wilfred Casgrain U.S. Air Service and Captain T.H. Cockburn-Mercer, Royal Inniskillen Fusiliers together with the American Military attaché’s assistant left Hald and travelled to Copenhagen on 13th December. Casgrain’s repatriation date was 24th December. Why Australian born Captain Cockburn-Mercer went to Copenhagen is unknown. He might initially have been called over to be interviewed about the shooting episode, and then stayed on to assist with repatriation duty, his repatriation date being 11th January 1919. One of the orderlies from Dänholm Pte. W.T. Bate, Duke of Cornwall’s Light Infantry left the camp too. He was taken to hospital in Viborg on 13th suffering with gallstones.

A number of journalists visited Hald over the next few days and long articles were printed in the local newspapers about the “foreign guests”. In his memoirs Pte Joe Garvey describes how the journalist he spoke to in Odense turned up at the camp and took both him and Cpl Wiltshire out for a drive in his car and showed them some aspects of everyday life in Denmark, this included modern day farming and Danish hygge in a bar with music and a drink. Unfortunately this outing doesn’t seem to have been written up in an article for his newspaper. Another journalist spoke to a couple of Tommies, a Canadian corporal and 2Lt. A.T. Jackson⁷ South Staffordshire Regiment. 24-year-old Arthur Jackson had volunteered at the beginning of the war and not having been home at Christmas since was really looking forward to being back in time for the 25th. Some journalists noted how “relaxed” the British military were in comparison with the stiff German army members they had come across when they were housed in the camp. What in fact turned out to be the biggest “story” for the newspapers related to the “Indians”.

⁷ His was one of the three handwritten names on the name list.

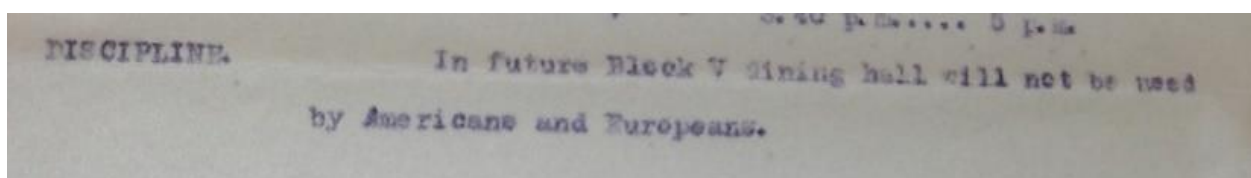


The Indians

The 230 civilian Indians were both “very” foreign and many of them were in a pitiful state. On arrival at Hald everyone was expected to have a bath or shower. According to the newspapers this was their first hurdle, the Indians finding the weather too cold and the water not hot enough. This sounds like artistic license by the reporter for the bathing facilities were more than adequate and the British soldiers were impressed by their standard *“enjoying a nice bath”* even *“playing around like school boys while they washed under the warm showers”*. From the 11th daily orders contained a bathing schedule, to ensure all groups, including the nurses, could use the bathing facilities. The medical officer was also able to order a Turkish bath be taken were he felt it necessary. What in reality was more of a problem for the Indians was their food.



It doesn't look as if the cooks had been prepared for the eventuality that they would have to prepare meals for Hindus and Muslims. The first evening meal was roast pork and rice porridge⁸. One episode reported in the newspaper describes how some Muslims annoyed at being served pig meat had started shouting "*fish, fish*". The cook rustled up some fiskeboller - fish balls, a Danish type of fish cakes. Some of the Indians not knowing this dish got agitated and threw their fish balls at a Danish soldier and a nurse! None of the meat was halal slaughtered, and some even went so far as to refuse to eat potatoes that had been cooked together with potatoes for non-Muslims. They were told they would, there and then, have to do with the rice porridge, while in future all cooking for the Indians was to be done in a separate kitchen. The newspapers also mentioned the men's aversion, strange for the Danes, to ryebread/black bread and thence the serving of the more luxurious white bread for them.



Abraham an extremely tall man from Ceylon had been prisoner for 4 years. He showed the journalist his "treasure" - his album with postcards and photos of friends collected while a POW. He spoke better German than English and couldn't write. His friend Ali Hosein Cohar from Calcutta, a seaman taken prisoner by the "Moewe" spoke English and did his writing for him. Ali pointed out a photo in his friend's album of a young German woman who had given him potatoes and bread when he had been starving. She had saved his life and he would never forget her. The photograph of the two friends is the only one used in any of the articles in the Danish newspapers about the "foreign guests" billeted at Hald.

Among the Indians were also a couple of brothers, Hindus, one of whom was terminally ill with tuberculosis. They had insisted that they be repatriated together and accepted the doctors' verdict that the illness would take its course and he wouldn't make it all the way home to India. The journalist described how the sick brother huddled next to the heater while the well brother affectionately stroked his cheek. He had in desperation, the day before, charged into the

⁸ Rice porridge is a traditional Danish dish. Serg. A.E. Mead, in the next group staying at Hald describes eating rice and milk porridge with jam served as first course with each day's main meal. Served with sweet beer also traditional.

kitchen and waving a 100 mark note demanded they get him a chicken he could sacrifice. They didn't have any chickens so one of the cooks went over to a farm and brought one back for him. Delighted he cut off the chicken's head and the brothers prayed while its' blood seeped out. Both brothers cheered up in that they had been able to follow their religion and custom and then they ate the chicken meat.

14th December

The British Repatriation Office in Copenhagen cabled the name list of the officers at Hald to the War Office in London and the same evening The Scotsman printed a list containing the names of the Scottish officers at Hald. Cables were sent to Australia too where next of kin were informed, this reached the Australian newspapers on 16th that they *"were comfortably housed in the province of Jutland, Denmark"*.



The British Repatriation Office in Copenhagen also cabled Hald requesting volunteers to assist with repatriation duty and within hours 18 "Dänholm officers" left by train for Copenhagen.

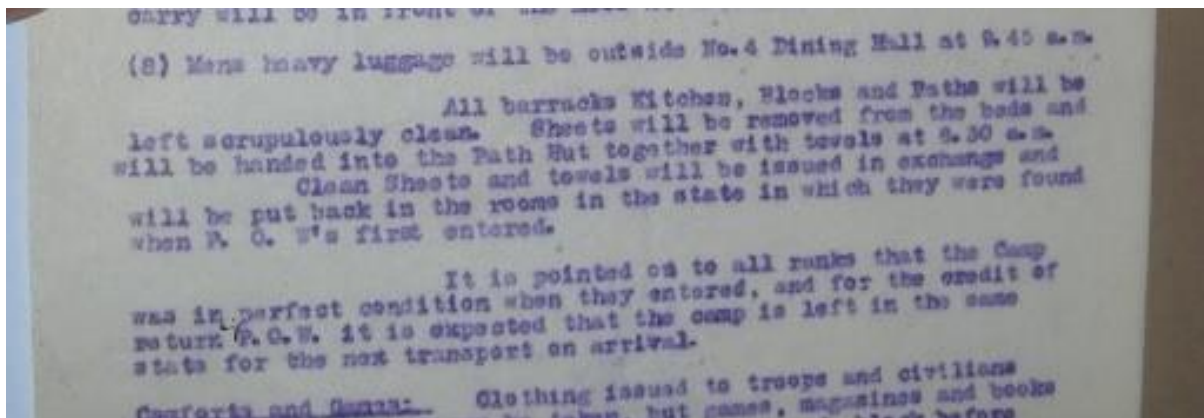
Capt. W.H.N./C.H. Butterworth?, Captain W. Whitehead - Canadian Cavalry, 2/Lt. N.E. Gasson - 1st East Yorkshire Regiment, Major Edgar N. Marris - Machine Gun Corps, 2/Lt. Henry E. Roberts - 1st and 2nd bat. East Lancashire Regiment, Lieut. Harold Baker - Lancashire Fusiliers, 2/Lt. Bert Carre - Gordon Highlanders, 2/Lt. William Boyd - Northumberland Fusiliers, Lieut. Donald B. Campbell - Wiltshire Regiment, 2/Lt. Arch. Chas. Harris - Sherwood Foresters, 2/Lt. Reg. Fr. Francis - Suffolk Regiment, 2/Lt. William T. Howarth - Machine Gun Corps, 2/Lt. John Lawrence - Royal Berkshire Regiment, Captain Ruskin Watts - RAF (Canadian), Captain Kenneth Gaston Turner - RFC (Australian), Lieut. William J. Gray - RAF, 2/Lt. Raymond Mansell - North Staffordshire Regiment, 2/Lt. John Higgins - Lincolnshire Regiment.

These officers were to spend between two weeks and two months helping with various aspects of the repatriation process before they themselves made their way back home to the UK.

For those who stayed at Hald the surprising good news came that they were to leave the camp for home already the next day. Not having expected this so soon there was some panic as some officers had sent their uniforms to Viborg to be repaired and cleaned, to be smartened up ready for arriving home. An entertainment was arranged for them that Saturday evening. Between 8 and 11 in Barrack IV Colonel Giersing's wife sang English and Danish songs and English officers and OR entertained with music, songs and monologs. English tea was served during the break and the concert ended with "King Christian" and "God save the King" and large rounds of applause.

15th Dec. Hald - 18th Dec. Leith

The Movement Order for 15th December gives precise details of Major Lloyd's plan for their departure from Hald camp. They were to leave the camp spick and span, as they had found it, and with clean sheets on the beds, ready for the next group to be billeted here. The order also includes the details of 11 OR who had volunteered to stay behind and help with repatriation duty. The camp's own documents registered that 1 American officer and 83 American civilians, and 178 British officers and 970 British OR civilians British left the camp. 6 officers and 13 OR stayed behind as volunteers.



As planned the columns of men set off at 12.15 to walk to Bækkelund station. Transport was available for those unable to manage this distance, one of them being the sick Indian, and heavy luggage could also be taken on a wagon. Over the last couple of days the Danes had been busy installing electric lamps along the road from the camp to the station to make it easier for moving groups at all hours. This wasn't necessary for them at midday and they were on time and settled on the train ready to leave the station at 13.45. People were standing at every railway crossing to wave to them and a large crowd was waiting for them at Viborg station. A short notice in the local newspaper the day before had informed that the Military Band who had planned to play that Sunday afternoon in front of the bank had been cancelled. The band would instead be at the station giving their concert between 2 and 3 in honour of the former pows. Their train would be at the station 13.58 to 14.12. It was another very intense few minutes, they stayed in the carriages but sang along to the music, people handed books in English, fruit and cigarettes in to them and in return uniform buttons and packets of tea were given as tokens of thanks.

On arrival at Århus station the train was split, the carriages containing the men who were to embark on the two ships already docked at the harbour went on to the station whilst the remaining carriages stayed at the station. Everything was ready for their arrival at the south quay at 5 o'clock. Thousands of people, half of Århus it was said, had turned up to watch despite the fact that it was already dark, and it

was cold and raining. The “English Club” in Århus had arranged for a military band to play and they entertained the crowds and at 5.30 the train finally arrived to “Tipperary” and massive cheering.

The two ships waiting for them were the “AP Bernsdorff” and “JC la Cour”, the two ships to arrive later were “Ficaria” and “Primula”. All were from the DFDS shipping company. Their cabin capacity was given as “AP Bernsdorff” 600 passengers (119 1st.class, 481 3rd.class). “JC la Cour” took 400 (40/360). “Primula took 330 (38/292). “Ficaria” took 320 (24/296). Doctors and nurses on board occupied some of this cabin space.

“JC la Cour” and “AP Bernsdorff”

The “JC la Cour” and “AP Bernsdorff” had already been used to transport soldiers from Danzig to Leith. There were a number of ships sailing this route so newspaper reports about them is limited. However a Danish nurse Marie Steengaard who had recently joined the staff on “JC la Cour” while it took on provisions at Copenhagen was interviewed for an article a couple of weeks later. She described the ship arriving at Leith on Monday 9th December, it then sailed on to Århus, arriving on Sunday 15th.

“The next day we sailed to Aarhus where we took on 330 soldiers and 10 officers, who had arrived some days before from Germany and had been placed at the camp at Hald. The soldiers were divided up between the officers and each was given a life-belt and the officers given each their number for a life-boat, just in case of the ship sinking then the rescue-work would be done orderly. Each day at 12 noon there was a parade on the deck, the soldiers in front of their officer so they could take instruction.

On the journey over we passed 12 mines, one of which came very close to us.

We anchored just outside of Leith on the Tuesday afternoon and had a very entertaining evening, and the next day at 12 noon sailed into the harbour, where during that day 5 Danish steamers arrived, among them the hospital-ship “Mitau” that carried 1325 prisoners of war.”

The ships left Århus at 8 o’ clock. According to one British newspaper the “JC la Cour” took on 9 officers, 238 OR and 92 civilians and the “AP Bernsdorff” took on 128 officers, 200 OR and 100 civilians. It seems most likely that Lt. Roberts was on this ship. From his memoirs:

“After a few days the transport arrangements were ready and we embarked at Aarhus for home. The ship was Danish. Shortly after we cleared harbour we ran into fog. The ship went dead slow. We hit a sandbank, but got off all right. We were going through a mine-field. We all pretended to be very calm. I spent my time touching wood every other second. The tension became intolerable and we organized a concert.

I remember singing “I’m on the staff”, and the Danish part of the audience, in which there were some Red Cross nurses, seemed to get more fun out of it than the British, who were sitting, tense, with their minds already on other things.

The fog lasted three days, during which time we were either going dead slow or stopped. When it lifted we had a floating mine alongside. We missed it by a few feet. After that the journey was uneventful and we sailed into Leith after a five-day voyage.

As we came into the docks everybody was on deck to get a first glimpse of home. The day was raw and bleak but there it was – we were home again. We were eager to see what changes had taken place and we crowded the rails to get a better view. Our attention was caught by the movements of the dock labourers; there was something strange about them and as the distance closed we saw that these

labourers were women. The ship sent out a great cheer as they turned and waved to us for not only were they women but every one of them was wearing trousers.

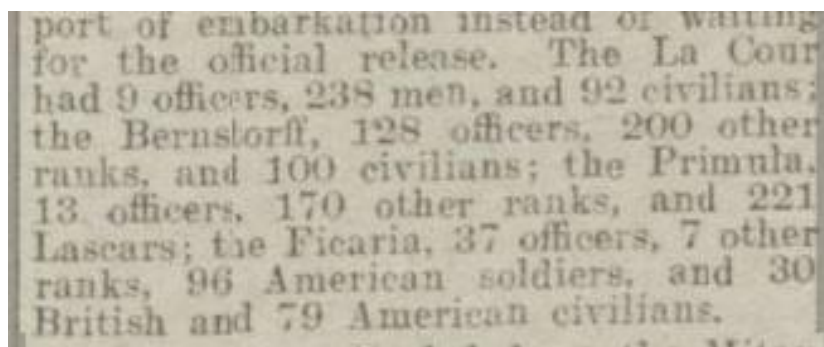
We were all impatience to get ashore. Nothing went fast enough. Our things had to be unloaded and slight formalities gone through before the gangways were put down. It was not long, but we could not bear it.

We were led into a beflagged warehouse where, to our consternation, we were met by a civic reception. I am afraid we did not like the long-winded gentleman on the dais with a glass of water at his hand, or the supporting bank tee'd up ladies and gentlemen sitting, smiling patronizingly behind him. The reception was followed by a tea-fight. It was all so well intentioned and so blind. They could not realise that the best service they could give us was to speed us on our way. Well, we entrained in time and found that we were not being dispersed straight to our homes, but had first to report to a camp in Yorkshire. There, the authorities were doing their best to make things as little irksome as possible."

"Primula" and "Ficaria"

As soon as the first group were embarked on their ships the last train carriages which had waited at Århus station arrived. It had started raining hard and while waiting to board Ficaria and Primula the Indians, freezing cold, sheltered in a warehouse while British weathered it and fraternized and cut off the last of their buttons to give to the young ladies.

The "Ficaria" and the "Primula" had come from Copenhagen where they had been docked at Free Harbour. According to the previously mentioned British newspaper the "Primula" took 13 officers, 170 OR and 221 Lascars. The "Ficaria" took 37 officers, 7 OR, 96 American soldiers and 79 American civilians. This adds up to 188 more passengers than were to be repatriated from Hald. The numbers of officers and Lascars/Indians are correct. Where did the "96 American soldiers" or whoever they were come from? In theory they could have been on the ship from Copenhagen but they don't pop up in any of the other lists, movement order etc. so they are a bit of a mystery.



port of embarkation instead of waiting for the official release. The La Cour had 9 officers, 238 men, and 92 civilians; the Bernstorff, 128 officers, 200 other ranks, and 100 civilians; the Primula, 13 officers, 170 other ranks, and 221 Lascars; the Ficaria, 37 officers, 7 other ranks, 96 American soldiers, and 30 British and 79 American civilians.

The "Primula" and the "Ficaria" left Århus about 10.30, the crowd that remained waved them goodbye. Lt. Chance doesn't mention which ship he was on but it seems likely to have been one of these two.

"After a stay of about ten days, we went by train to the port of Aarhus, and embarked on a very smelly small steamer. The North Sea was rough. We were crammed tight in what cabins were available and most of us suffered from mal-de-mer - made worse by a diet of very greasy Irish stew! After a stormy crossing, we arrived at Leith, the port of Edinburgh, where we were greeted by local dockers who enquired, "Where have you been spending the War?" R.F.C. officers were sent to Scarborough where we

were interviewed and after telling our various stories covering experiences of becoming prisoners-of-war, we were allowed to go off on leave”.

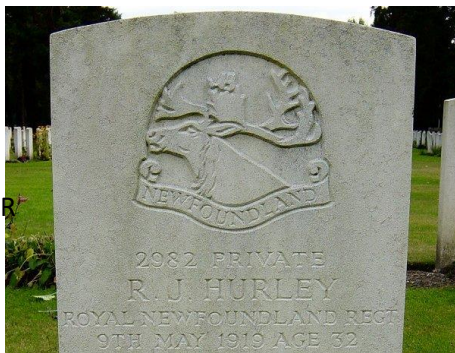
Pte. Jim Garvey also sounds as if he was on one of these smaller ships. *“The waters around were heavily mined and we were told when we got on deck to report anything unusual which could be a floating mine. While we had some narrow escapes, we reached the harbour at Leith in the early morning safely enough. Our worst trouble was sea sickness, for it was an egg and butter boat and just being human freight left it too lightly loaded. So instead of ploughing through the water it was bobbing up and down like a shuttlecock and everyone, including the ship’s captain and crew went down with violent sickness.*

Arriving at Leith we were given a Civic Welcome, and we sat down to a lovely breakfast”.

So not all were as frustrated as Lt. Roberts about their welcome in Leith. They arrived on Wednesday 18th and at least some were already at home by Thursday evening.

Pte. Robert J. Hurley, Royal Newfoundland Reg. still had a long journey ahead of him home to St. John’s Newfoundland. Working as a coachman before he joined the army in 1916, he gave his age at the time as 24. Robert was in his own words *“blown up by a shell”* and taken prisoner in April 1917. He suffered paralysis although he was not operated on. He walked with a stick, had problems with an eye and had a speech defect. Robert was transferred from Altdamm to Dänholm in June 1918 to be an orderly. He was on the *“Ficaria”* and it must have been a horrendous journey for him not only due to the rough crossing.

Robert was sent straight to London where he was admitted to hospital to have his *“paralysed arm and leg”* treated. Updates sent to his mother told her he was progressing well, and she had no cause to worry. Until a telegram was sent to their local church where the Reverend was asked to break the bad news to her of her son’s death. Robert had passed away on 9th May 1919. He had died of a cerebral tumour and meningitis, he was 32. Pte Robert J. Hurley was buried a couple of days later with full military honours. In a condolence letter to his mother from his Lt. Col. he comforts with *“the last rites and duties paid to him at the end were such as were due a hero”.*

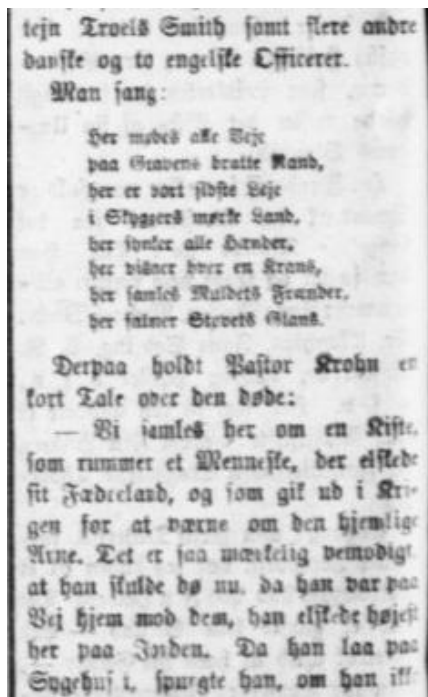


Robert’s mother was sent a photo of his grave with the initial wooden cross used. She then chose *“He laid down his life for his friends”* for his personal inscription on his CWGC headstone.

Pte. William Bate

Not all the men they had left behind in Jutland were there by choice either.

Pte. Bate had been taken to hospital on the 13th December suffering with gallstones. The young man died on 15th December, the same day as his comrades left Denmark for home. He was the first of the British former prisoners who died in Denmark, and he was the only one of the British who died during their stay at Hald. 27-year-old William had been a clay miner in Cornwall, as was his father. He had been taken prisoner in March 1918 and had been one of the orderlies at Dänholm. Pte. William Bates funeral was held on 18th. The chapel at the cemetery in Viborg was decorated with Union Jacks and his coffin was covered with a flag and a beautiful wreath tied with red and white ribbons given by Hald camp. Just before the service began at 2.30pm 15 British and Canadian officers and OR arrived, followed by Lieut. Colonel Gerlach together with other Danish officers from the town barracks and another two British officers. The ceremony started with a psalm by Grundtvig.

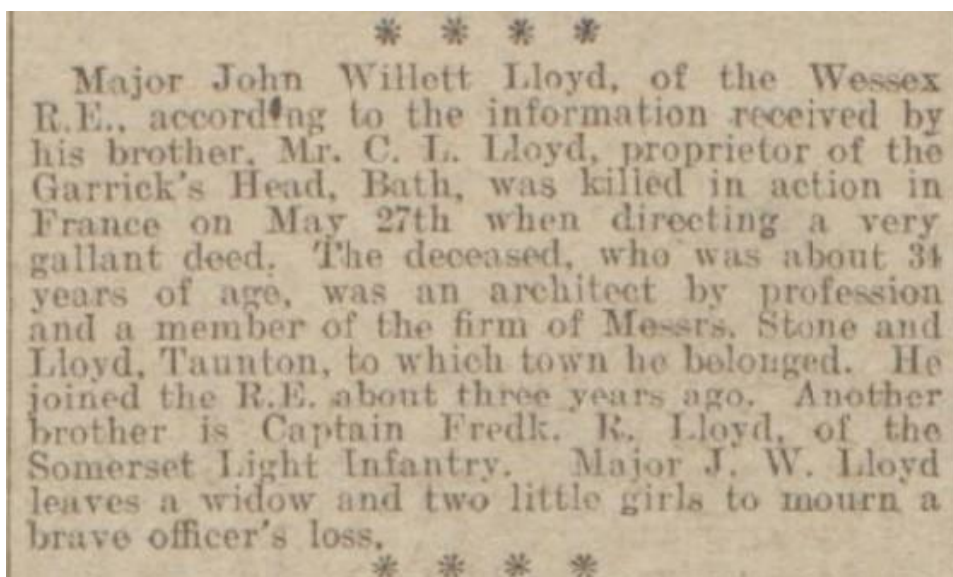


"Her mødes alle veje, På gravens bratte rand, Her er vort sidste leje, I skyggers mørke land, Her synker alle hænder, Her visner hver en krans, Her samles muldets frænder, Her falmer støvets glans!"

The vicar then spoke movingly of how sad it was that Pte. Bate should have survived the war to die when he finally on his way to England and peace. At the hospital William had asked if there was any chance he would be home for Christmas, and when the doctor answered yes, he had smiled. Then they sang "Som dug på slagne enge" and then the British OR carried the coffin out. Outside a half a company of Danish soldiers and their military band were waiting and they led the procession to the graveside. A British soldier played "The last post", Pastor Krohn completed the ceremony and the Danish soldiers fired an honorary salute.

Who stayed behind

There were "deserters" British and American, who were still Absent Without Leave (AWOL). Two Americans had apparently gone to Copenhagen where they had turned up at the American legation. One British and one American who had absconded together on 13th had, it turned out, been out on an adventure, even getting down to Fredericia only to end back up in Århus. With no more money they contacted their consuls there who organized their return to Hald in the morning of 16th. One unnamed "British" appears to have gone off on his own in Århus while they were waiting to embark ship on the 15th. He was "brought" back to Hald on 18th.



The volunteers who chose to stay on repatriation duty were a mixed bunch, not as one might imagine young bachelors who had only been prisoner for a short while. SBO 36-year-old John Willatt Lloyd was married and a surveyor in Taunton before the war. He had joined up in 1914 serving with the Royal Engineers. Major Lloyd, MC was reported as killed in action on 27th May 1918. Their local newspaper brought this news in mid-June, he was mourned by his wife Lorna and daughters Jean 4 and Sheila 3. They received the best of news a fortnight later, being informed that he was in fact a prisoner of war. One wonders what his wife said to this postponement of his repatriation. He was repatriated on 19th January 1919.

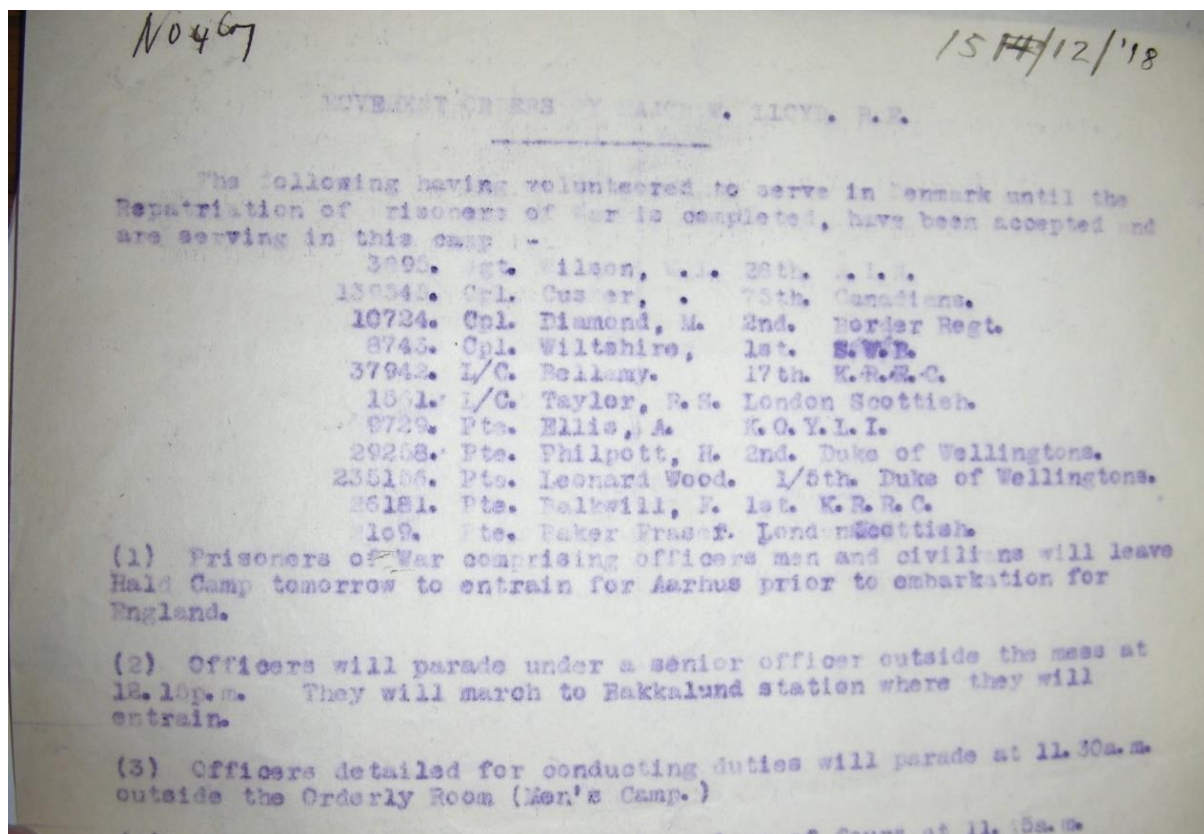
Of the other officers a couple had difficulties at home to deal with which they might have wanted to put off for a while. Lt. Maudes life ended in suicide in 1927 due to financial and martial problems and Lt. Nathan may have coped with being homosexual by a life experiencing one "adventure" after another for it to end in the Spanish civil war. Lt. Phillip – no information found on him whilst Lt. Coleman was a 22 year old bachelor born in Ireland, Lt. Martinson a 26 year old bachelor born in China and Captain Balfour was a bachelor born in Canada.

Harry Ezra Balfour

25-year-old Captain Harry Ezra Balfour, 49th Canadian Infantry had had a rigid religious upbringing and left home at 16 to go west. After making a living doing labouring jobs on the prairie he ended up teaching before he joined the army in 1915. Harry was wounded twice and taken prisoner on 8th October 1916. He spent his time behind barbed wire studying for a BA from Cambridge and he taught maths to a class while at Furstenberg camp. An amusing entry pops up in one of his pupil's diaries. On 23th April Roy Alexander noted seeing a show with 8 pierrots, 4 male and 4 female. He was not impressed by all the sequences in their act. The next day he noted "*Suddenly remembered with a gasp where I had seen our mathematics teacher (H.E. Balfour, a long, grave, Canadian B.A.) He was in last night's concert a black-garbed pierrotte with a scarlet garter encircling a silk stockinged leg! His garb did not give him poise, his staring eyes betrayed a lack of aplomb.*" It sounds as if they had been short of an "actress" and roped Harry in even though he wasn't an entertainer by nature. Harry



left Furstenberg and was in the group of officers who had been waiting in Aachen to be repatriated and had ended up being sent to Dänholm in August. He appears to be a man willing to take responsibility and despite having been wounded and been a long way from home for a long time was both physically and mentally willing to stay in Denmark on repatriation duty.



Of the 3 ORs who had been at Dänholm who volunteered to stay were 21-year-old Pte. Leonard Wood, 1/5th Duke of Wellingtons and 20-year-old Pte. Harry Philpott 2nd Duke of Wellington both single and taken pow in 1917. 33-year-old Cpl. James Rayner Wiltshire 1st South Wales Borderers was married and had been taken prisoner on 29th October 1914. Pte. Joe Garvey explains in his memoirs his friend's reason for staying on *"To my surprise, Jim Wiltshire, who had not been home for four and a half years, agreed to stay to the end. It was a sad reason, his wife's conduct for a long time had been causing scandal and she was now openly living with another man. He was going to divorce her (which he did), but he was not in a hurry to get to this unhappy set up so he stayed on to the end."*

Next group arrived at Hald

The second and last group of British former pows 1234 OR billeted at Hald arrived on 17th December. According to the newspapers they came from the camp at Springhirsch, 20 kilometres from Hamburg. They had sailed from Warnemunde on "Niels Ebbesen" "Cimbria" and "CPA Koch" and on arrival at Århus had been welcomed as the first group had been. They spent a quiet few days in the camp at Hald, the men were still not allowed to visit Viborg. The 9th Regiment of the Danish Army's military band held a concert for them for an hour in the afternoon on 20th. Most of the men had only been pows for a few months and they were in reasonable good health, only one, sergeant W.A. Hollinshead, ended up in hospital in Viborg. He was admitted with suspected appendicitis on the 20th.

A photo of 6 happy former pows taken at Hald has the date 23th December 1918 written on it. Unfortunately their identity is unknown, and perhaps the photo was taken a couple of days earlier, as there was snow on the 23rd.



Whilst the date for their departure was unknown, with the possibility they would be in Hald over Christmas, some thought was given to how this could be celebrated. There was talk of a concert in Viborg cathedral. A collection was organized, and money, cigarettes and small gifts could be handed in at the 29th Battalions office in Viborg. The donors' names and their donations were mentioned in the Viborg newspaper. However, the good news was that they were to leave Hald on 23rd December.

The first group of 650 OR left from Bækkelund station at 7.15 am, wished a good journey by Colonel Giersing, staff and nurses, arriving at Viborg around 8 'clock. Many people were waiting here to say goodbye. The soldiers were given cigarettes and fruit and a souvenir postcard with a photo of Viborg cathedral on one side and on the other was printed a Union Jack and best wishes for Christmas and the New Year. The newspaper reported how touched they had been for this kindness, especially for the postcard which would be treasured. Unfortunately they haven't got any of these postcards in the Viborg town archive and none have turned up "on line".

This first group were to have sailed off on the "Primula" and the "Ficaria" from Århus as soon as they were embarked. However it was decided to delay departure because of the very bad weather, with snow. The men were allowed to "see some of Århus" and fraternize with the Danes during the afternoon. The second group of 579 British and 1 American OR left Bækkelund station at 6.15 pm and, also via Viborg arrived at Århus in the mid evening. They embarked on the "Bernsdorff". All three ships left Århus at approximately 11pm. Sgt. Hollinshead must have been feeling better, for he was also on his way home. The ships arrived at Leith on 26th December.

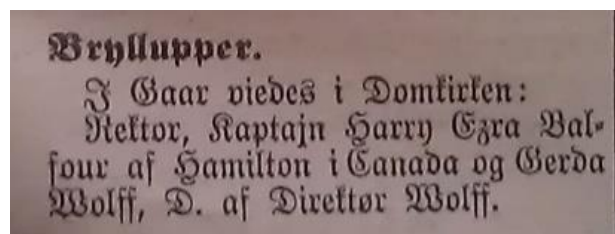
Left behind

It had been decided that these were to be the last of the British to be billeted at Hald during repatriation via Denmark. The next billeted here early in January were French and Belgian. The volunteers, including those from Dänholm who had volunteered to assist with repatriation duty were in for the duration. So the next day the 24th December, 4 officers and 17 OR⁹ left the camp at Hald and got the train to Copenhagen, where they joined the staff there. Danes celebrate Christmas on the evening of 24th, so not a good day to travel. In the documents it is noted that 2 officers and 2 OR stayed at Hald, one of the officers and one of the ORs being unwell.

There was one hiccup that became apparent a month later. Hotel owner Andersen and shopkeeper Ernst Lauridsen had accepted cheques of £10 and £20 from an "interned British". They must have had a problem cashing the cheques in a Viborg bank since they reported this problem back to the camp at Hald. The officers in Copenhagen were all able to cash cheques for £10 at the American Express and some Danish banks in the city were also willing to accept their cheques.

Captain Balfour

The officers and OR who stayed on at Hald are unnamed however most likely one of the officers was Captain Balfour. It must have been a whirlwind romance for Harry and 21-year-old Gerda, daughter of engineer Knud Valdemar Wolff, director for "de Jydske Kalkværker". The Wolff family lived in Viborg and Fru. Direktør Wolff/Wulff donated 10 kr to the collection towards making Christmas festive for the men had they still been at Hald. One can imagine the scenario that some of the leading Viborg families invited the two officers left at the camp to join them in their Christmas celebrations. And so Captain Harry Ezra Balfour and Gerda Wolff met. They must have immediately fallen for each other for Harry's time in Jutland was limited. The two officers and two OR left Hald on 6th January when they joined the others in Copenhagen. Harry was then part of the repatriation staff here until he left Denmark on 29th January on the "Primula" arriving at Leith on 31st. Harry went back to Denmark and married Gerda Wolff in Viborg cathedral on 6th April. The newlyweds then stayed at Cambridge while Harry completed his BA. The couple then settled in Canada.



Repatriation for the volunteers from Copenhagen

The other officers and OR volunteers who had been at Dänholm, Hald and then Copenhagen had various repatriation dates. Pte. Philpott was repatriated on 10th January while Lt. Harris, Sherwood Foresters who was the last to reach home has a repatriation date of 15th February. 26-year-old bachelor Archibald Charles Harris had been a chartered accountant before the war, and it would appear that he was one of the very last of the repatriation team in the office in Copenhagen tidying up the loose ends.

⁹ Regimental Sergeant Major G. Sullivan, Royal West Surreys- Queens Royal Regiment from the second group at Hald volunteered for repatriation duty too. He was otherwise affectionately known as "Choky Bill".

Pte. Bate's grave at Viborg Cemetery has a Commonwealth War Grave (CWG) headstone. There is no personal inscription. Although the only "British" who died while billeted at Hald he is not alone. He is buried with the Belgian, French¹⁰ and Russian former POWs also billeted here, who died on their way home. A monument given by "Friends from Jutland" was placed by their graves in November 1919. At the time it was described as being "homely" like a family gravestone.

After the last former pows had vacated Hald the camp was taken over by The Danish Red Cross in 1922 and used for different purposes e.g. as a convalescence home for polio patients in the 50's. The Hald barracks still exist and are used in various ways, e.g. as a nursery and for sheltered

accommodation. The village Hald Ege grew in the vicinity of the camp with houses, school, shops and a church. There is a strong community spirit and they have opened a small museum focused on Hald camp's history 1917-2017.



¹⁰ The French were taken back to France at a later date.

www.haldege.dk

www.haldhovedgaard.dk

Sources:

Fresh in my Memory Always; by Joseph Garvey

Liddle Collection in The University of Leeds

Percy William Tongue memorabilia – found on-line

Many Danish and British newspapers.

Rigsarkivet

Internettet i Danmark under første verdenskrig – by Burkhard Koop

Årbog udgivet af Historisk Samfund for Viborg Amt 61. årgang – Hald. Håb og helse af Jesper Hjerminde

Hald Ege 1917-2017; by Peter H. Iversen

<https://www.theauxiliaries.com/men-alphabetical/men-m/martinson/martinson.html>

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