

Captain¹ Dix DSO, Naval Attaché in Copenhagen

– a man of many talents, not least “hygge”

before and after the armistice - the end of the Danish Scheme – let’s celebrate

04.02.19



Captain Charles Cabry Dix wasn’t “just” good at his job as an officer in the British Royal Navy, he proved to be the right man in the right job at the right time as Naval Attaché in Copenhagen between 1917 and 1919. Charles Cabry Dix eventually settled in Tasmania where in the late 1940s, after a **very** eventful life, he wrote his memoirs. They weren’t published, but the Imperial War Museum has a copy of them.

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If not a born diplomat, his social skills and natural charm - he was attentive, curious and could talk to anyone - were a great advantage when he was establishing his network in a city he knew little about. Whilst there had been a lack of certain food stuffs and rationing during the war in Denmark, the best restaurants in Copenhagen were open and fine dining was possible throughout. Indeed Captain Dix frequented these establishments and actively and regularly wine and dined his “contacts”; it was all part of the job. And it paid off!

¹ Dix’s substantive rank was Commander, the posting in Denmark gave him the temporary rank of Captain.

Captain Dix, Naval Attaché 1917-1919

Charles Cabry Dix was born in August 1881 in Newcastle, losing his 24-year-old mother in childbirth. His father was a 27-year-old solicitor. After boarding school Dix embarked on his successful career in the Royal Navy in 1896. Charles married Margaret Beattie in 1908, he was 27 she was 38. They had a son Charles Beattie Dix born in 1912. In August 1915 Dix was wounded twice whilst acting as a beach-landing officer at Gallipoli. This resulted not only in a limp and a “desk job” in the Operations Department of the Admiralty in 1916 but his being awarded the DSO “Distinguished Service Order”. When he was sought out by the Director of Naval Intelligence for an appointment as a Naval Attaché he was given the choice of two destinations. He chose Copenhagen over Athens and left Aberdeen in August 1917 for Scandinavia.

On the ship to Bergen, Norway he chatted to Sir William Dunn, who knew Copenhagen well, and they made a date to meet on the following Saturday at Nimbs. In the meantime Dix had a couple of days in Christiania at the Legation where he was *“most hospitably received by the Minister and Lady Findlay, who told me that they, Consett and myself had been bidden to dine en famille with their Majesties², who had expressly said that I was not to dress. This was very thoughtful, and just as well”* for Dix had not anticipated such an invite, and his evening clothes were at the bottom of his heavy luggage. But he was flattered and honoured by their Majesties’ attention and he renewed his acquaintance with one of Queen Maud’s ladies in waiting, *“a most sympathetic and delightful friend and an invaluable ally to have, literally, at court”*.



Nimbs at Tivoli

Copenhagen

On arriving at Copenhagen Dix checked into the Hotel d’ Angleterre *“the chief hotel in the place, not 400 yards from the Legation”* and kept his date with Sir William Nunn at Nimbs *“Nimbs was the smartest restaurant in Copenhagen with a good chef and a knowledgeable maître”*. *“Dinner, if it can be so called, consisted of relays of the most delicious caviar and hot, thin toast, accompanied by “Widow”, tres sec. 1906,*

² King Haakon and Queen Maud.

served leisurely and ad libitum, and the second course was coffee and Meukow 1842, than which few better brandies have ever been put on the table.” Sir William “knew a thing or two” about everybody who was anybody in Copenhagen and Dix spent “a most enjoyable and instructive evening as his guest”.

Dix also remarks on his introduction to the British minister and his wife “*Our Legation had for its chief a man in many ways typical of what a British Minister is supposed to be. Sir Ralph Paget was an aristocrat, good-looking, always immaculately dressed, and outwardly imperturbable, and, in spite of a permanent lameness, an impressive personality. Where he differed from the ordinary man’s idea of a British diplomat lay in the fact that he was nobody’s fool. He was, in fact, the most trusted and successful diplomat in the country. His wife also was a grand person. She was recently come back to civilization after accompanying, with the members of her medical and nursing mission, the gallant remnants of the Serb forces in their historic and terrible retreat across their inhospitable mountains to the Adriatic, though how her not very robust physique enabled her to bear the strain remains a mystery to me. She and her husband honored me greatly by their friendship, and I shall always remember them with pleasure and gratitude*”.



Sir Ralph and Lady Louise Paget

And as to legation staff “*The atmosphere was entirely new to me – never before had I met with such concentrated politeness, which was very nice, but I must protest that it was heavily overdone. Another thing which struck me as being absurd was the excessive tenderness expended on all the cheres colleagues, some of whom, notably the French and Italians, seemed to be both insincere and jealous. And one day the First Secretary said that he thought it a great pity that Allied and Enemy diplomats should not be allowed to carry on as usual, because they would be sure to meet in other posts after the war, I exploded and used language never before heard in the Chancery*”.

More socializing

Prince Axel, King Christian's 29-year-old nephew and an officer in the Danish Navy, befriended Dix on his arrival in Copenhagen. He introduced him to his friends and on one of their memorable evenings out together they went to Tivoli where they had a jolly time trying out the "side shows" in the gardens. Dix quickly organized his own weekly evening out with "the guys" which was attended by a varying mix of his contacts from the legations in Copenhagen and Danes who were good to know, including Prince Axel. They ate a meal in the restaurant at the Hotel d'Angleterre, not talking "shop", just socializing. Not everyone from the legations thought it a good idea for it wasn't just the Allies who used this venue – it was popular with the Germans, Austrians, Bulgarians and Turkish too, and the danger lay in what they could eavesdrop when the party had had a glass of wine or two.

Prince Axel



Hotel d'Angleterre



Spring 1918

Captain Dix lived in the Hotel d'Angleterre until April 1918 when he moved in to share accommodation with Commercial Adviser/Attaché to the British Legation Allan Graham in Trondheimsgade, about a mile from the legation.

In his memoirs Dix wrote about these months *"The end of March and the first half of April 1918 were difficult for representatives of the Allies in Denmark and never before nor since have I had to invent so glibly to make defeat appear to be a victory. However, from March 23rd I took so strongly the line that it was the*

last throw of the despairing gambler, and that we would bleed him to death – that it was, in fact, the turning point of the war – that I got most people to believe it, and perhaps I did some good in steadying opinion. I would not make this claim but that, long since, I have been told not by one but by several Danes that during that ghastly fortnight I was used as a sort of barometer, and people would tell each other “It’s all right. I saw the British Attaché, who is as cheerful as possible” and offered to bet the Huns would be in full retreat before the British Army within six months. He says they are killing hundreds of thousands of them”. After all it is part of one’s job to propagandise neutrals in war time and sometimes it is easy and pleasant.

For instance, our Military set-back gave me an idea, and I arranged for Prince Axel and two other young Danish Naval Officers to visit the Grand Fleet for two or three weeks to show them where the source of our strength really lay. That really was effective: soon after their return no one in Denmark had any doubt whatever about who was going to win the war!”

Prince Axel, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GKwK1F9cY6k>

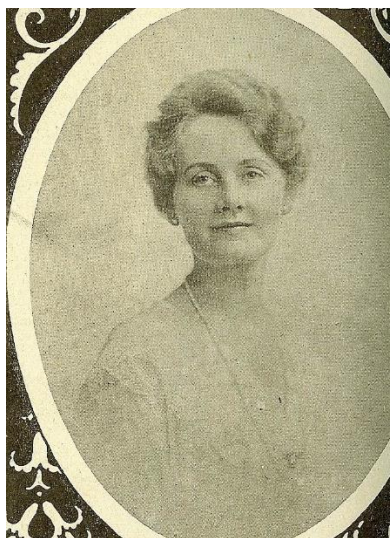
Shortly afterwards he moved into a flat in Bredgade, close to the British Legation, sharing with the new Naval Attaché of the American Legation, Captain John Allyn Gade. John A. Gade wrote his memoirs which were published as “All My Born Days” in 1942.



Soirée at the Italian Legation

Mrs. Dix didn’t join her husband in Copenhagen. Others at the Legation had their wives with them. It must have been a strange “unreal” world for them with a normal everyday life in quiet civilized Copenhagen away from war torn England but still worrying about family and friends fighting. One occasion where the wives volunteered to “do their bit” was in April 1918 when the Italian Legation at their domicile at “Thott’s

palace” on Kongens Nytorv held an event in aid of the Italian Red Cross. The soirée was a great success; Countess di Carrobio was able to send 62,250 lire to the Italian Red Cross. The event was reported in the Danish newspapers and the magazine *Illustreret Tidende* brought out a 3-page spread with photos of this unusual “happening”. During the first half of the evening a number of the ladies connected to the Allied legations entertained.



Mrs. Minna Wade



Mrs. Bingham



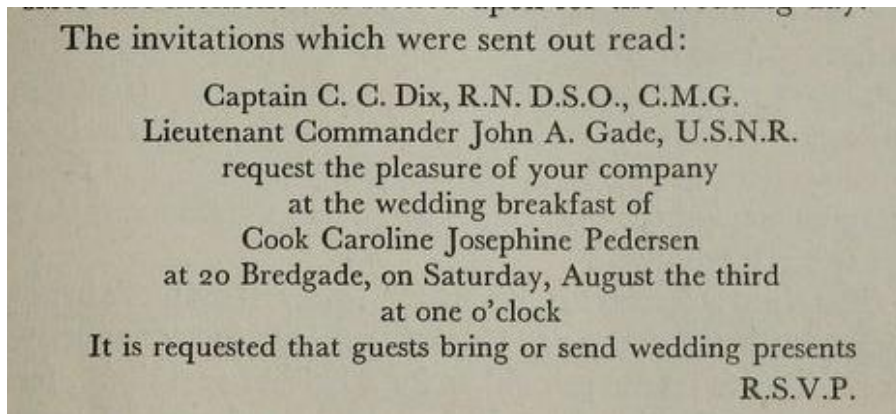
Mrs Mariota Gurney and Gade

The very elegant Minna Wade, married to British Legation’s Military Attaché Colonel Harry Wade, sang “with a wonderful soprano several charming and cheerful songs”. The act ending the first half was Mrs Bingham, married to American Legation Secretary Rutherford Bingham, performing a sensational Egyptian dance. The second half started with 7 tableaux. Notably Mrs Gurney (Mariota Susan nee Carnegie) married to First secretary at British Legation Hugh Gurney. Together with Gade (possibly John Gade from the American Legation), they posed as “Dante and Beatrice” while the text was read in Italian from behind stage. The packed audience included Princess Margrethe, Prince Aage with his Italian wife, foreign minister Scavenius, “everyone” from the allied legations and all from top society Copenhagen.

“just as much female society as I could put up with”

John Gade describes in his memoirs cohabiting with Dix, the two flat sharers were both “grass widowers”. They were befriended by Fanny³, daughter of Admiral Evers and married to Baron Christian von Lotzbeck, who helped them get settled in buying “linen, pots and pans” and selecting servants for them. They ran into trouble with their cook who fell pregnant to an apprentice barber! According to Gade “Dix was not idle. He discovered the apprentice and informed him that we from our side were inclined to act more handsomely, if he would do his share in the emergency. Dix offered a carriage to and from the church, a wedding dress for the bride, a wedding breakfast, the élite of Danish society, and plenty of gifts with which to start housekeeping.”

³ Fanny’s daughter by her second husband, Elisabeth Danneskiold-Samsøe, married Frants, brother to Anders Lassen VC.



60-odd from Danish high society including a Royal Highness attended the glittering champagne wedding reception; one wonders how the happy couple explained it all to their working-class family and friends. Presumably they subsequently had a hyggelig get-together with them, on their own terms.

Dix doesn't mention this episode in his memoirs but writes openly of his own challenges with the female sex. He was an attractive, charming, interesting man, a war hero, who received a lot of attention from the ladies.

"During the short and infrequent leaves I had grown accustomed to just as much female society as I could put up with, but here there seemed to be no escape from the almost endless titivation of the senses, the inevitable outcome of which would have been to arrange for the presentation of a pair of horns to one of the many seemingly complacent husbands. Since this might lead anywhere and could be nothing but discreditable, and the urge being clamant, I looked around for a suitable mistress, and at the same time for a sleuth-proof alibi. By arranging to help Hudson interrogate a certain class of deserter at 9.30 p.m. I provided myself with the perfect excuse for not attending any party which I wished to avoid or which fell on an inconvenient date, and, acting on a chance remark let drop by a Danish Naval Officer, I got to know an attractive widow to whom life had been more than unkind. She shunned society and was looking for just such an irregular attachment as I suggested." Funnily enough Dix was both copying his father's behaviour, who had had a mistress, and he was implementing elements from his own work, his undercover spy network. "So well had we covered our tracks that no one in our Legation had any idea of her existence, though one of the wives did say one day. "Captain Dix is so difficult to pin down for an evening that I almost believe he has a mystery woman hidden away somewhere!" Such an improper suggestion was laughed out of court!⁵"

Armistice – the parties

"One of the first things to be done after the Armistice was to celebrate our victory and it was left to me to organize a dinner which was attended by all the Allied Attachés, Passport Control Officers and their Assistants. It was held in a private room at Wivel's, and was a great success. The dinner was good and the wine waiter interpreted generously my order that there was to be no stint, so the proposers of the various toasts waxed eloquent, sometimes in several languages, and the sitting lasted until long past midnight." This is the celebration as Dix describes it.

⁴ If the wedding was on Saturday 3rd August it was held in 1918. (Dix wasn't C.M.G. until 1919)

⁵ Page 389

Gade wrote of what must have been another party they held soon after. *"The armistice was signed and the fighting over. So all the friendly attachés decided the time had come to have a grand celebration in the shape of a dinner in honor of the Danish friends who had helped us so much in our work. A committee was formed to arrange the details. When we talked the matter over with the Colonel of the King's Guards, he strongly advised our going to some good inn of a near-by village, where hilarity could be unrestrained, rather than a Copenhagen-hotel. He proved right in foreseeing a boisterous occasion, after the long strain and anxiety we had been through, and he acted more than handsomely in offering us for the occasion a dozen or so of his regimental band. As some of the party were coming by car and the others by train, it was decided that all should meet at the little country station and the, preceded by the band, march to the inn. About forty of us, headed by the band and followed by the neighbourhood's urchins, started off on the cobble-stones of the village-street, bordered by one-storied stuccoed broad-gabled houses with long red-tiled roofs. It was really a pretty sight, for there must have been at least twenty-five different army and navy uniforms, some of the former being crack European regiments."* Unfortunately he doesn't say where the party was held. *"The only untoward event was the immediate departure from the inn of a young couple who had come there to spend their wedding night. The flags of the various nations decorated the walls, while in the center, behind the toastmaster's chair was a huge wreath with Danish streamers inscribed with gold letter "To the Allies from their Danish Admirers."* Gade goes into detail of the evenings fun and games starting with *"...the Guard's band struck up with the Danish national air "Kong Christian Stod ved Hoien Mast". We all stood at attention. Inside the low-ceilinged room the din of the horns and trumpets was something fearful. Each nation was toasted in turn, and as its national anthem was played, it mattered little what was the speaker's reply, for no one could hear a word of it. The Japanese anthem was evidently not in the band's repertoire, but the bandmaster, not to be stumped, played a tune from "Madame Butterfly", fortissimo, to the astounded little Colonel's remarks".* The menu was hors-d'oeuvres, fish-pudding with shrimp sauce, pheasants in cream sauce with cranberries and small browned potatoes and as desert a two-foot-high pyramid kranskekage (Danish celebration cake made out of ground almonds). The villagers, knowing something unusual was going on assembled outside the inn and they were all invited in to dancing and refreshments in the first-floor tap-room. It was something of an evening!

**De danske Skibe, der skal føre
engelske Krigstanger hjem.
Forberedelserne er nu i fuld Gang.**

6

Armistice – the Danish Scheme

In Dix's memoirs his mention of the "scheme" fills 6 pages. Starting with his having given *"a modicum of thought -a small modicum"* – to *"How should we get 150,000 prisoners home from Germany?"*

And ending with *"I think that this limited scheme of mine to evacuate the prisoners' of war camps in the vicinity of the Baltic ports, which could otherwise have been difficult to clear, served its purpose. We moved almost exactly 50,000 men out of Germany some 40,000 of whom were British, of whom 30,000 sojourned in Denmark for a week or so and about 10,000 proceeded direct to the British ports from Germany. There was a little overlapping but it was all practically finished by January 15th 1919 or in well under two months. I*

⁶ Danish newspaper with detailed article about the "scheme" 19th November 1918

am certain that the week's stay at a rest camp where they got cleaned, well fed, and re-uniformed, under discipline and British officers, had a marked effect on the morale of the men. Also, the Danes reveled in the opportunity of showing where their hearts lay, and without the help so readily given by everyone who came into contact with the work it would not have been either so successful or so pleasant for those responsible.

The scheme naturally attracted much more attention in Denmark than in England, and as originator and organizer, I received more credit than I deserved in such as my share in it possessed lay in originating the idea and in the fact that I assumed the whole responsibility for starting the wheels turning before asking for any permission to do so. It was very much my own baby, and I was almost sorry when the end came and the authorities at home sent a hospital ship and a transport to clean up all the odds and ends in the Baltic."

the British Legation decided on a party

With the conclusion of the "Danish Scheme" for the British POWs in sight it was thought that a party would be the perfect way to celebrate a job well done and thank the Danish people who had been involved. On 3rd January Lord Kilmarnock sent a telegram to Lord Newton at the Prisoner of War Department at the War Office. He sent the request *"that an official dinner be given to all Danish military and civilians who have assisted in repatriation. Estimated number 100. This function cannot possibly be carried out suitably under £4 a head. It is very important that some such recognition should be shown in view of extreme goodwill and hospitality extended to British troops. Therefore requests grant of £400 for this purpose. Chargé d'Affaires concurs. Urgent reply requested."* on to the Army Council to answer as they *"considered suitable"*.

It turns out they didn't consider a party suitable *"The cost is excessive and our recognition can take another form"* and *"This proposal seems quite unnecessary: we have not entertained hordes of Swiss and Dutch officials in this way. The services of the Danes can be recognized if necessary by medals and letters"*.

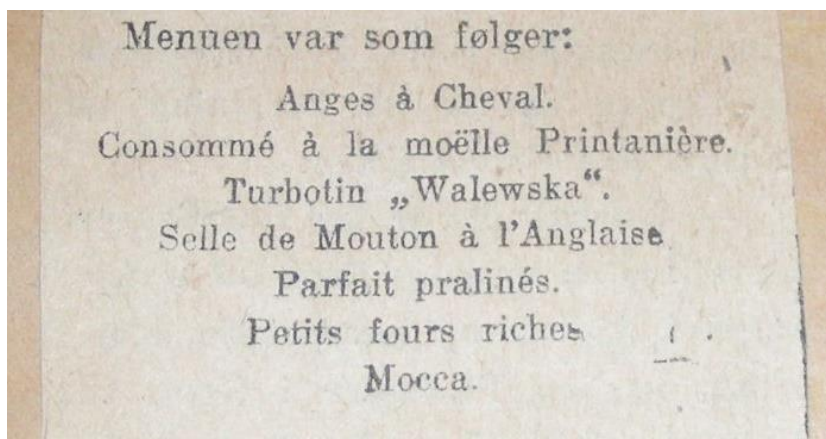
Funding a dinner costing £400 was refused – letters of thanks would suffice. But a party it would be. And after the grand Christmas party for the repatriation staff hosted by Vagn Jacobsen at Gamle Carlsberg, at which some of the Legation staff were present, including Lord Kilmarnock, they were not going to be shown up by being petty with their appreciation.



Impressive Christmas party held for the repatriation staff by Vagn Jacobsen

The party was held on Friday 17th January. Earlier on in the day the last of the funerals of British former pows who had died in Copenhagen on their way home from Germany were held. 25-year-old George Kelland 1 bn East Surrey Regiment, and 23-year-old John Sayce and 32-year-old William Scott both 12 bn King's (Liverpool Regiment) were buried at Vestre kirkegård. Pastor Storm led the ceremony which was attended by Lord Kilmarnock, Lt. Col. Hazard, Captain Andrews, 30-odd English soldiers (the last 75 who were waiting for transport home were billeted on the barracks ship "Fynen") and Danish soldiers from 3rd and 4th Machine Gun Corps.

A dinner for 70 was held at 7 o' clock at the Hotel d'Angleterre, hosted by Lord Kilmarnock, acting as Charge d'Affairs at the British legation. Guests included Prince Aage and his wife, Prince Axel, the Danish foreign minister Scavenius with wife and a mix of Danish and British notables who had had a role in making the Danish Scheme the success it was.



Speeches were held when they reached desert. According to English newspapers, Lord Kilmarnock *"proposed the toast of "The King of Denmark and King George" and in an eloquent speech, extolled the hospitality of Denmark and the kindness shown by the Danish people during the repatriation of the British prisoners."* Foreign Minister Scavenius answered by saluting *"England's glorious and victorious army and navy"*. Prince Aage then made a short witty speech for the ladies which was well received.

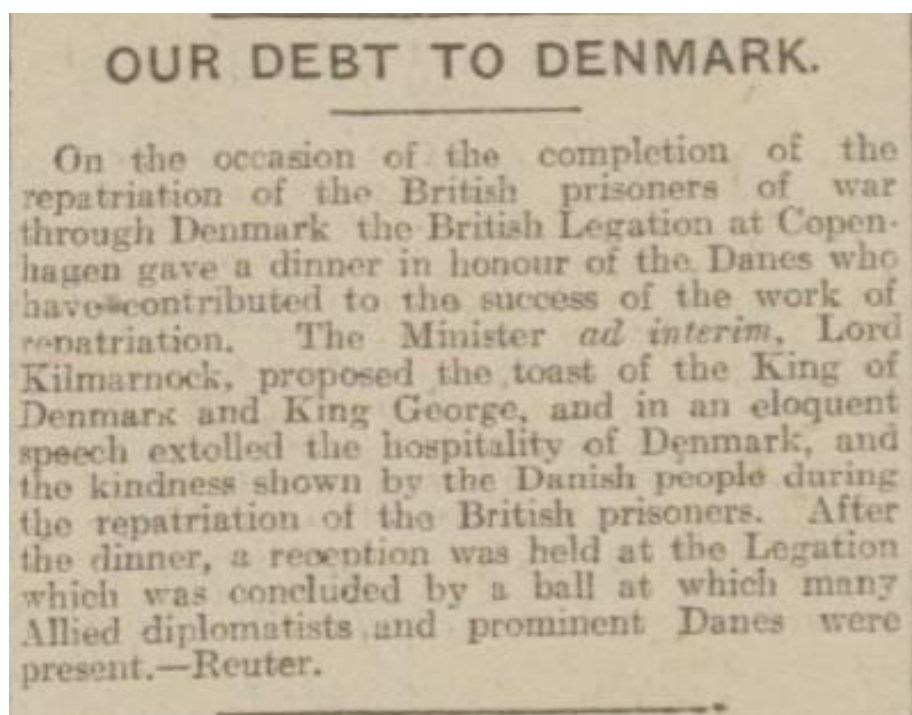
Just before 10 o' clock carriages and cars drove the guests the short distance to the British Legation at Bredgade. There was a large crowd of onlookers gathered outside to see not only all these grand people in their finery arrive, but the other 150 guests who were also invited to the ball. It was noted that beautifully dressed women, gentlemen in white tie and tails and Danish officers and foreign diplomats in dress uniforms mixed with British officers in their plain everyday kit. These must have been some of the remaining repatriation staff. On the first floor, at the entrance from the stairs, Lord Kilmarnock and his secretaries greeted and showed the guests into the ballroom, wonderfully decorated and a sea of light.

Danish newspapers wrote *"As well as a number of land and sea officers, among whom one noticed tall Captain Dix⁷, who had with great skill led the prisoner of war transports for the British, was seen members of different legations, amongst others the Chinese minister. Just after 10 o'clock the ball was opened by Prince Axel, who danced with Mrs. Wade, and Prince Aage, who danced with Mrs. Jarl, while Lord Kilmarnock danced with Princess Aage."* The newspapers noticed that among the guests were diplomats from the Russian, French, Belgian, Serbian and Japanese legations too. Amongst the multitude of Danish

⁷ One wonders whether Miss Florence Shimwell, who was acting as Captain Dix's secretary during the Danish Scheme weeks was a guest.

'names' mentioned in newspaper reports it can be noted that some had been active in work to help the prisoners of war long before the repatriation scheme, most notably by helping with The Copenhagen Bread Bureau: Admiral Richelieu, Master butcher Anders Jensen, lord-in-waiting Clan, Count Frijs, Mrs. Adda Neergaard, daughter of H.N. Andersen, Benny Dessau, Captain Ahlefeldt-Laurvigsen, Captain Davidsen (who had been the Danish War Ministries representative for the POW transports), publisher Povl Branner, Managing director Jarl, Admiral Jøhnke, Baron Palle Rosenkrantz, solo ballet dancer Mrs. Elna Jørgen-Jensen, Mrs. Clod-Hansen, Prof. Mygind (Mrs. Mygind was in England), Dr. Madsen, Colonel Allerup, Managing Director for Carlsberg Vagn Jacobsen and Captain Troels Smith. The dancing went on for some hours. Cold drinks were served in the adjoining rooms and at midnight the doors were opened to a side room where an elegant champagne supper was served. As the Danish newspapers pointed out this was the first time since the war broke out that there had been a large party at the British Legation, and it was seen by the Danes as a very welcome sign of things getting back to normal. It must have been a glorious evening for Captain Dix.

On 11th February 1919 Captain Dix was awarded a CMG, a Companion of the Order of Saint Michael and Saint George, in recognition of valuable services rendered during the war.



The Primula left the next day

Perhaps one or two of the guests at the party had to be up and packed ready to leave the next morning. Embarkation started at 12.30 on the Primula in Frihavn on 18th January. Movement order 17 details the British passengers, a mix of repatriation staff and men from the Fynen, while the remaining 200 passengers were French. The Primula arrived in Leith on 21nd. They were the last group who were given an "official reception" in the dock shed with a good meal and a welcoming address given by Provost Lindsay.⁸

⁸ The Primula sailed one last time leaving Copenhagen on 29th January, the passengers being a handful repatriation staff and nearly 300 Chinese. See "Frank and Dagny" article.

Telegrams with thanks

Later in January there were communications between Copenhagen and London about the possibility of His Majesty the King "sending a message of thanks to Denmark for hospitality towards British POWs". They were sensitive to the royal family's own grief on the death of 13-year-old Prince John on 18th January, "If, owing to recent bereavement it is considered improper to submit this suggestion to His Majesty, I think that a similar message for His Majesty's Government would be much appreciated. Repatriation staff leave on Wednesday which should afford suitable occasion". Telegrams were sent. The Foreign Office sent a telegram to Lord Kilmaarnock on 28th January "You should inform Danish Government that His Majesty's Government are most grateful for the kindness and hospitality shown by all classes in Denmark to British prisoners of war during their stay in that country and for the efforts of the Danish Red Cross Society to ameliorate the lot of the invalids in the camps in North Germany and on board ship." King George sent his

telegram to King Christian on the 29th and King Christian replied on the 30th January. The Danish newspapers mentioned the kings' telegrams on the 31st they were mentioned in the British on the 7th February.

**Kong Georg takker
Kong Christian.**

—§—
**En Telegrambeføling mellem
de to Konger.**

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Kongen har Torsdag modtaget følgende Telegram fra Kongen af England:

„Da jeg erfarer, at Repatriation Committee for britiske Krigsfanger i Dag forlader Danmark, beder jeg dig om at maatte benytte Lejligheden til at udtale overfor dig og det danske Folk den Taknemmelighed, jeg fejler for alt, hvad der er bleven gjort for mine Landsmænd, som er bleven saa godt behandlet i Danmark. Det jeg forstirer dig om, hvor meget vi i England værdsætter det Arbejde, der er udført af alle dem, der har medvirket til Fremme for denne Sag, er jeg overbevist om, at jeg gør mig til Talsmand for de Følelser, mit Folk nærer, naar jeg bringer dig vor oprigtige Tak.

George R. I.”

Kongen har derpaa affendt følgende Svartelegram:

„Paa mine Landsmænds Begne udtaler jeg vor hjertelige Tak for dit venlige Telegram. Jeg kan forstirre dig for, at vi kun har følt os glade ved at have haft de britiske hjemvendende Soldater som vore Gæster.

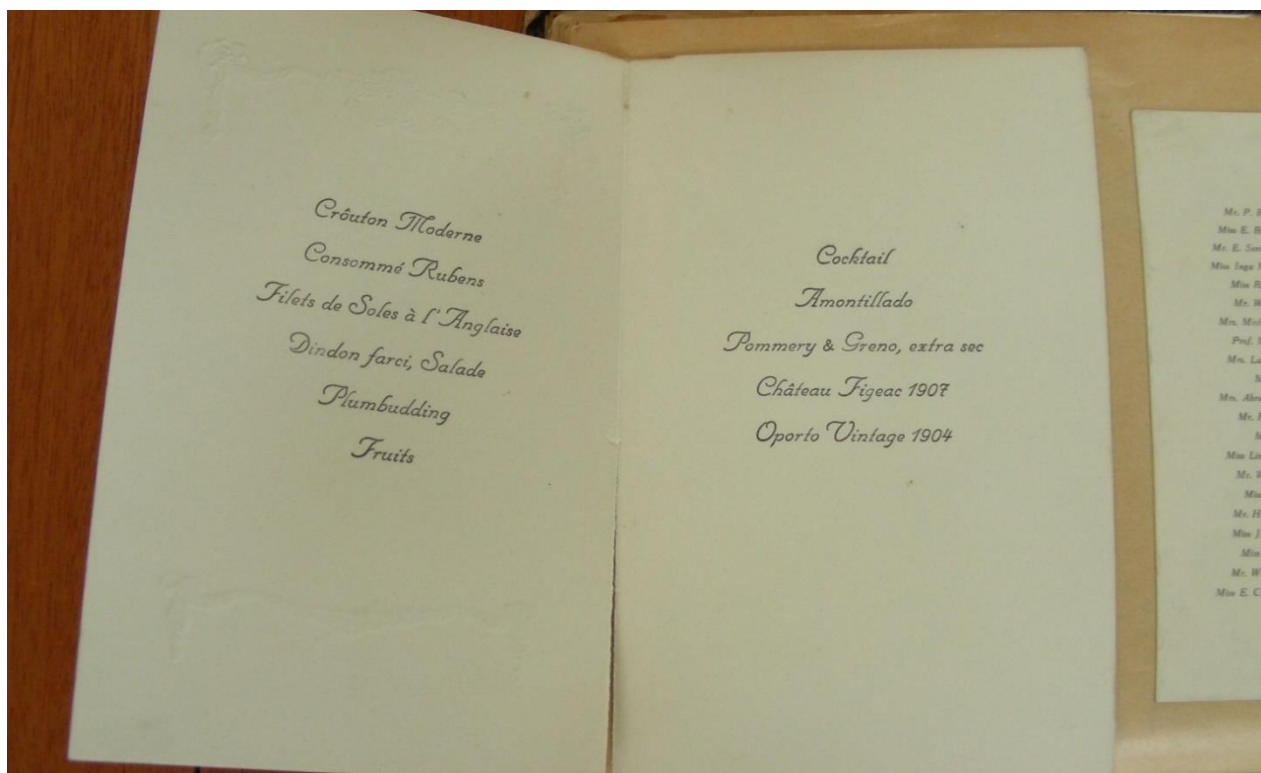
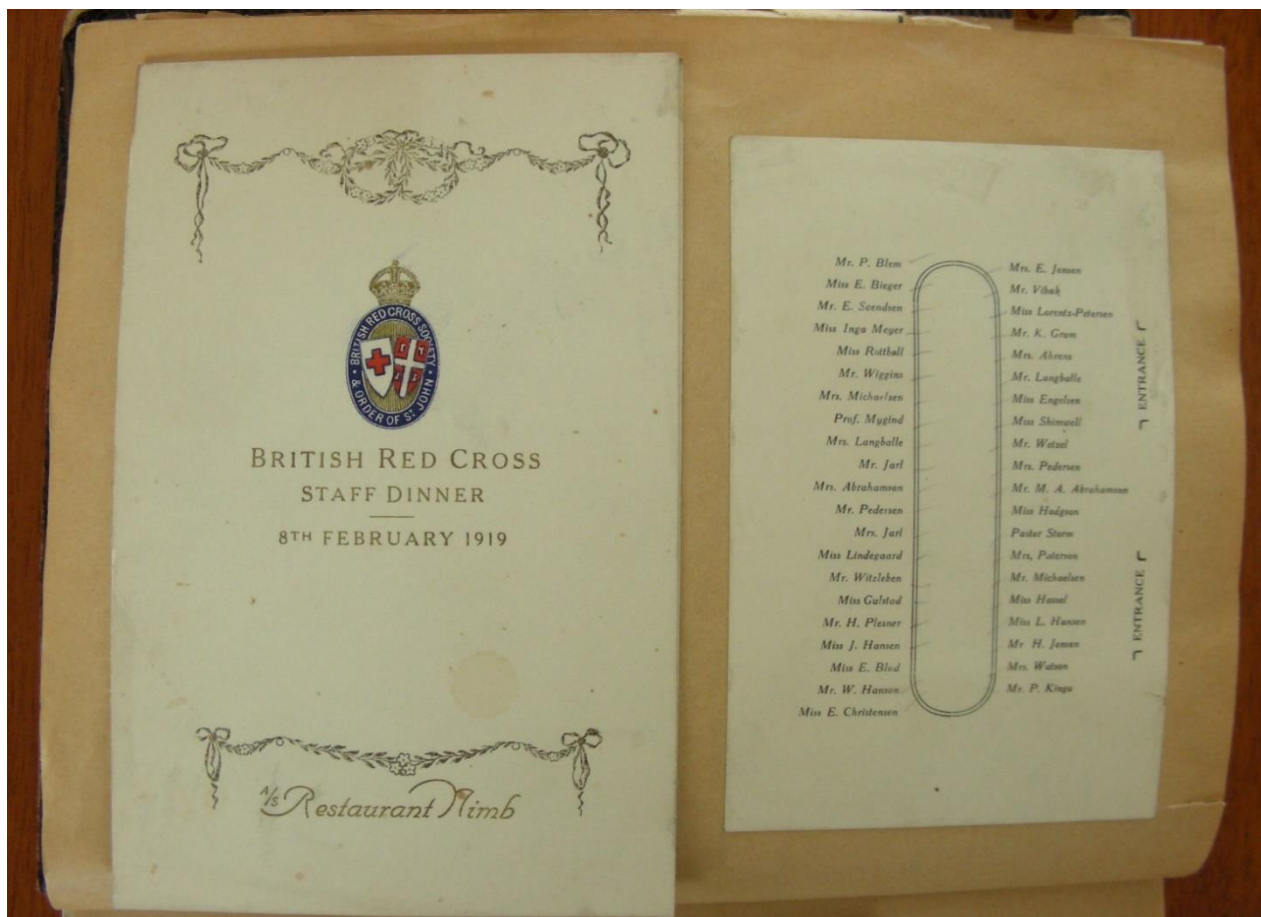
Christian R.”

THE KING'S THANKS TO DENMARK

—♦—

The Prisoners of War Department issues, for publication, a telegram from the King to the King of Denmark:—"As I understand the Repatriation Committee of the British prisoners of war are to-day leaving Denmark, let me please take this opportunity of expressing to you and to the Danish people the gratitude I feel for all you have done for my fellow countrymen who have been so well cared for while in Denmark. In assuring you of how greatly we in England appreciate the efforts of all who have helped in this work I am convinced that I am voicing the feelings of my people in offering you our sincere thanks."

The King of Denmark replied as follows:—"Expressing my fellow countrymen's heartfelt thanks for your kind telegram, I can assure you that we have only felt happy to have your returning soldiers as our guests."



The British Red Cross in Copenhagen - The Bread Bureau

With the need for bread for pows long over and repatriation in its last phase it was time to close the British Red Cross Society, Copenhagen Bureau. Martin Abrahamson hosted a dinner held at Nimb's on 8th February. Fortunately he kept the menu and seating plan, so we have the names of all 41 who attended. According to a brief piece in a newspaper the evening was a great success, with a lot of speeches given by among others Martin Abrahamson, Pastor Storm, Director Jarl and Consul Pedersen. Miss Shimwell mentioned earlier as Captain Dix's secretary during the "Danish Scheme", was at the party. Florence had worked for the British Red Cross Copenhagen Bureau as a stenographer from the start in October 1916. She must have returned to the UK soon after the party – her involvement with BRC ended on 22nd February.

Several of the participants at this grand dinner which marked the end of what must have been a demanding period of work went on to marry fellow participants. Danish Agnes Gulstad, Martin Abrahamson's secretary (who went with him to Berlin in November 1918), married Oscar Emil Wetzel. Swiss-born Wetzel from Zurich, in peacetime working in the cotton business, was 5 years younger than Agnes. They married in Denmark in October 1922. Miss May Hodgson had been in charge of Records and Registration Division and was praised for being both industrious and especially careful, ensuring that the department ran very efficiently. May had been born in India in 1894, daughter of a tea and coffee planter. She married Carl Julius von Witzleben (who also went by the name Charles Julius Woodward) an American born in Detroit who in peacetime was a "manager in a mercantile agency" in June 1920.

The Copenhagen Bureau held on auction on 28th March where all their office and parcel packing furniture and equipment etc. were sold. Not that this was the complete end of British Red Cross in Copenhagen. Martin Abrahamson was involved for some time to come, resulting in among other things the "Valdemar Sejr ambulance" being sent to Estonia later in 1919.



British honours were given to a number of those who had been involved in the Copenhagen Bureau and the repatriation scheme, notably Martin Abrahamson who was awarded a KBE in 1920.

On Captain Dix's recommendation, Miss Florence Shimwell, of whom he said he had *"borrowed from the British Red Cross to act as my private secretary during the whole period. Without her skilled assistance at filing the really considerable and very varied mass of correspondence with which I had to deal, I would have had to employ at least two other assistants. This lady invariably volunteered to give up holidays and rest days when there was any pressure of work, and worked for long and irregular hours with unfailing cheerfulness"*, was granted a British War Medal in 1921. In fact Captain Dix gave *"the names of nine ladies whom he considers worthy of recognition on account of their service during the repatriation of British prisoners of war"*. About Danish Miss Louise Lindegaard also at the party on the 8th February Dix wrote *"Professor Mygind's secretary, a most tireless and efficient worker who not only dealt with an enormous amount of correspondence, accounts etc., but who also did good work on board the various ships as liaison officer between the professor and his numerous female staff of matrons and nurses."* Mrs Annie Mygind who had been active in the Bread Bureau wasn't at the party she was still visiting family in England. Dix wrote *"this lady is the English wife of Professor Mygind who was the medical advisor to the scheme. She worked hard and devotedly both as an honorary matron of the ships and in her own home and was much appreciated by the men, who have testified to her kindness in many letters"*. The remaining 6 were Danes who had been matrons on the ships.



Professor and Mrs. Mygind

Captain Dix stayed in Denmark

For Captain Charles Cabry Dix, his days as Naval Attaché in Copenhagen were numbered. One amusing episode he writes of in his memoirs occurs during the "cleaning up of all the odds and ends in the Baltic". He was told he would be conferring a favour on the Accountancy Branch if he would take over 50 cases of whisky at 50/- a case! It was pre-war whisky of the first quality and otherwise quite unobtainable. He couldn't produce his cheque book quickly enough! Shortly after whisky was fetching £7 a bottle but Charles didn't sell them on for easy money as he knew others did, but used them as acceptable presents to his many friends and helpers.

Another area in his life that needed taking care of before he moved on was his relationship with his Danish mistress. *"She was a loyal and delightful companion for a year, when, the war being over and scenting a change in my feelings, she asked me to send her to some of her people in America. This, difficult as it was, I was able to do, and we parted with mutual regret and none but happy memories.*



It wasn't so easy a parting from his wife. Mrs Dix who, because of his career in the Navy, hadn't spent much time with her husband during their marriage, and must have been aware of his extramarital escapades, still had hopes that they could carry on in one way or another. Not only for her own sake but for their son's too. But Charles had made up his mind and their marriage ended with a divorce in 1920.

Ebba Permin, 2nd Mrs. Dix



Charles Cabry Dix

It would appear that Charles liked Denmark so much that he chose to stay. He had built a vast network of Danish friends and associates who had seen him in action 1917-19, both professionally and socially. He fitted in! In the 1921 census Dix is registered as director in "Det Forenede Oliekompagni". He was living with his new wife, his 5-year-old stepdaughter and 2 maids in a flat in Kristianiagade 14, Copenhagen. Charles and divorcee Ebba Permin were married by Pastor Storm on 19th September 1921 at the Citadel Church. The family moved to a house in Helsingør and their son Allan Michael Dix⁹ was born on 29th June 1922. However Charles didn't settle happily to work as a business man¹⁰ and family life in a small provincial town in Denmark, he was obviously not suited to a quiet life. Charles and Ebba were divorced the following year and he left Denmark for good.



Mrs. Ebba Dix with Allan Michael Dix

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<https://www.google.dk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwi63fCW4pXgAhUHPVAKHUZqAe0QFjAAegQICRAB&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.danishww2pilots.dk%2Fprofiles.php%3Fperson%3D346&usg=AOvVaw18aCAFi8xWrx-3t47RDzSi>

¹⁰ There was a financial meltdown in 1922 with the "Landmandbanken crisis" which also affected his job.

Right Man, Right Job, Right Time

Without the enterprise and determination of Captain Charles Cabry Dix RN and the actions he was able to initiate in Denmark and Germany during the end of 1918 and the start of 1919, there would have been no "Danish Scheme" and thousands of British and Allied servicemen and civilians would have spent much longer after the cessation of hostilities waiting in often dangerous and extremely unhealthy conditions to be brought out of some of the most inaccessible and inhospitable parts of Germany at a time when famine and revolution were sweeping the country and its railway system was barely functioning.

DEATH OF FORMER NAVAL OFFICER

COMMANDER CHARLES DIX, who died at St. Helens, last Saturday, was well known to ex-servicemen in Tasmania for his support for their organisations.

COMMANDER DIX came to Tasmania about 10 years ago, after a long and varied career on the sea and although he lived in retirement, his name was widely known through his writing and contributions to the R.S.L. magazine, "On Service."

Commander Dix was born at Newcastle-on-Tyne in 1881 and went to sea as a midshipman in 1897 on H.M.S. *Barfleur*. He saw his first action during the Boxer Rebellion and after an exploit in pulling down the flag on the captured Taku Fort, he gained quick promotion and was often picked for difficult tasks.

In 1890 he joined Admiral Lewis Bayly's staff as Flag Lieutenant-Commander.

In World War I. Commander Dix, as Naval Officer in charge of the landing party at Anzac, actually located the cove for the landing. When he realised that a guide was misleading the convoy, he took charge and led them, not to the original destination, but, as it turned out later, to the only tenable spot in the area. He remained there as beach-master for 16 weeks and was wounded several times. He was awarded the D.S.O. for his part in the landings.

After a long convalescence he

worked with the Admiralty Intelligence Division and was sent to Denmark as British Naval Attache. While there he was awarded the C.M.G. for his service and also the Crown of Denmark by the King of Denmark.

In 1919 he retired from the Navy for personnel reasons and in 1926 he was appointed harbour master at Barbados. The next year he became Marine Superintendent at Jamaica and in 1931 he moved to Singapore, where he became Marine Attendant in 1936. He resigned in 1941.

In his early life he was a keen sportsman, taking part in rugby, boxing and rowing. He was also interested in hunting and fishing.

FAVOURITE THROUGH

PHILIPS

LUTWYCHE

86 GEORGE ST.

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