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Please reply to : -
D. L. Sainty
Relief Section 109
British Red Cross
B. A. O. R.
9th December 1945

Dear Derek,

Report 33

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Friedland :

Another spell of bad weather during the last two days has emphasised the deficiencies in transport to and services at the camp, and the hospital situation is becoming acute. The new camp is now open, in part, but as work is still going on in it the system is not working quite smoothly yet. Montgomery visited the place on Wednesday (Winifred had the good fortune to be able to see him in the middle distance) and settled the baggage difficulty by ordering more goods wagons for the special trains.

Developments :

We are finding plenty of work on the transportation side and in trying to provide some service for the less fortunately placed, in the way of first aid and hot drinks and baby food. Miss Roberts asked when I was at Vlotho on Monday whether we could do with the assistance of a Canteen Section, and I jumped at it - we had previously considered the possibility but did not till then know the prospects. We shall probably in a short time have a Guides Canteen with us, and they should be invaluable. Miss Roberts has also offered an Information Section, with a loudspeaker van and two people - SCF - and we shall be discussing that this evening: they too would probably be very useful, particularly since we know them to be good lads. Major Oldham has asked us to administer the hospital block in the camp to relieve him of it, and that will involve working closely with the German Red Cross doctors and staff.

Co-operation with German Societies :

The Roman Catholic "Caritas" and Protestant "Innere Mission" are providing voluntary workers at Friedland, and we hope to discuss things with them at once. The students of the University may also be given some help.

The Team :

is in good form, though the common cold is on tour again, and we are up against harder conditions at the moment than we have so far had to contend with. This job is a seven days-a-week one and the lack of a regular weekend off - we run to about one day off each sometime during the week, just now, with 72-hours leave coming in now and again - will make for a little more strain. However, all goes well.

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Weather :

Now cold; the roads are snow-covered and the atmosphere bracing. Transport is more difficult, not to say dangerous - I regret to say that I hit a tree yesterday with a truck and had to spend half an hour removing brackets before I could proceed on my way; and we spent a considerable time this morning trying to start two vehicles.

All good wishes,
David