

INTERNATIONAL VOLUNTARY SERVICE FOR PEACE

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Please reply to : -
D. L. Sainty
Relief Section 109
British Red Cross
B. A. O. R.
19th December 1945

Dear Derek,

Report 34

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The job :

is covered by the various enclosures. The pace of the frontier is not quite as hectic as it was until the beginning of this week - whether because of impending Christmas celebrations on both sides of the frontier or not we cannot tell, but we are not now expecting the complete break at Christmas that was once intended. The note in the Work Report about the ramp required at the new hospital can now be brought up to date, because having waited for the army to do it and waited in vain Dougie suggested we might be able to get it done ourselves, and Ramsay yesterday pinched four men (ex-prisoners) and practically completed the job in one day after an R.E. estimate of three and the Camp Commandant's estimate for a fortnight. I've mentioned this because though we are constantly doing practical work in transport this marks the beginning of our contribution to Friedland camp itself of that particular sort of cooperation in the manual work which one thinks of as particularly an IVSP characteristic. The very mention of this exaggerates its importance - it is not the first time of course that the Unit has been able to do this kind of work, and a certain amount of joinery and other work has been done at Bremke - but the opportunity is not always there and we are glad to take it when it comes.

Contacts :

We continue to make contacts, and the various team members have their own line of country. Alan, the artist, is ever on the lookout for beauty, and he finds it in various forms two or three times a day and then produces proposals for making its acquaintance. As this usually happens when the opportunity has passed and as Mary listens with an indulgent smile, however, perhaps this can be regarded as romancing.

More seriously, Ian and Ramsay have become firmly entrenched in three families in the village, one being a cripple whose hobby is mending watches, and his daughter, another comprising a joiner and his wife and children, and the third the village doctor, who was a Nazi, and his wife, who probably wasn't, his daughter and two sons, both at University. The last family is very keen on IVSP now, and denazification can be said to be proceeding. Win has contacted Erna Rosier, a Quaker photographer in Göttingen, Marian and Ian have had an evening with a Red Cross matron of one of the refugee places in Göttingen, I have had talks with the Superintendent of the Church in Göttingen and a layman who organises helpers for Friedland and who has recently after experience of two wars become a conchie, Marian and I have met a Professor's wife who runs the student 'Hilfswerke' and the student head of this, and we have all met socially as well as in the way of business various people among those who are working for the refugees in the camps. We are getting now quite a good cross-section of opinion and of character, and I shall try to let you have some impressions when I can gather them together.

Guides :

We had staying with us on Monday night Miss Ward and two members of a Guide Canteen SubSection who came down to see the job so that Miss Ward could decide whether or not to let the Canteen come on to it. I think she has so decided, and I shall expect we shall have them working alongside us in January, which I think will be a Good Thing.

Christmas :

Every one seems to have or be about to obtain a Christmas tree, and every house has its Advent wreath of spruce, with or without four candles to be lit one each Advent Sunday. We also have one, hung above the dining table and made for us by Margarete, who looks after us with amazing assiduity. I expect you'll receive this long after all the celebrations are over.

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All good wishes,
David