

I. V. S. P.  
SUMMER SCHEME  
RENDSBURG

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R E P O R T

VOLUNTEERS

The scheme ran for seven weeks, from August 5th. to September 23rd. During that time 40 volunteers served, the majority for two consecutive weeks. Of these 9 were refugees, 20 were students (Law,7: Philology,8: Economics,1: Natural Scinnce,1: Medicine,1: Theology,2), 4 Nurses, 2 Doctors, 2 Teachers, 1 Merchant, 1 Interpreter, 1 Journalist. 15 of the volunteers were women. The eldest volunteer was 66, the youngest 14, and the average age over the whole seven weeks was 26.

Three British Personal (IVSP members) served for most of the time, and two all the time.

THE JOB

The work was divided between Peat Work on behalf of refugees, old people and war cripples, chopping wood for hospitals, schools, etc., filling in defence treaches in the woods bordering the Kiel Canal, moving furniture into and cleaning a refugee camp to accommodate 250 refugees, and setting up and running a Kindergarten in the Moltke Schule Refugee Camp. The latter was mainly done by the girls ("sisters") for whom the outside work was too heavy.

The number of "man Hours" worked by all the volunteers during the seven weeks was:

Peat Work	1.194
Wood-chopping	745
Refugee Camp	138
Trench-filling	286
Kindergarten	44
making a total of	2.407 working hours.

The first two weeks consisted of very heavy labour on the Moor alongside the other peat-workers from the town. It consisted of working on the Machine, and laying out the Peat turves to dry. The weather, however, was later so bad that no further machine-work was done after the second week, and when it was possible to work on the Moor at all, the chief jobs were "ringing" the peat (building small heaps to enable it to dry more quickly), stacking it, and loading the dry peat on to wagons which took it to the main loading point for conveyance by lorries to the town. At first it was necessary to rise at 5.30 a.m. and later at 6 a.m. whenever there was peat work to be done, and the volunteers returned to camp at 5 p.m. There was no work on Saturday mornings.

Only when it was impossible to work in the peat owing to the weather, was the other work undertaken, as the wood-chopping could be done under cover.

FOOD

All the food was paid for by the Town, and it was supplemented to a small extent by supplies from the British Red Cross. The workers were granted a heavy workers ration (the highest obtainable) and the mid-day meal (soup) was brought out to the work place from the Town Communal Kitchen. It was often supplied in quite substantial quantities, but taken as a whole the rations were only just adequate, though far more than the normal German ration, and without the extra food from Red Cross sources, would have been inadequate.

ACCOMMODATION

The camp was situated on the second floor of a Refugee Camp in Rendsburg, formerly a school. It consisted of 2 large rooms (a Day Room and a Mans' Dormitory) and two small rooms (kitchen and Girls' Dormitory).

EQUIPMENT

Most of the equipment (tables, chairs, beds, mattresses, stoves, cupboards, cutlery and crockery), were supplied by the Town, but a small quantity came from British Red Cross Sources and from the Military Government in Rendsburg.

#### EXPENSES

The only expenses that IVSP was called upon to bear were the ordinary running expenses, apart from food, and the railway fares of students travelling to the scheme. The fact that Rendsburg is so far north, and that the majority of the students came from Göttingen and Cologne, made these expenses somewhat heavy. It was agreed that the volunteers should, if they were able, pay one third of their fare, and IVSP the remainder. In a few cases, volunteers who were in work and earning money, were willing to pay the whole of their fare. The total cost of the scheme to IVSP amounted to 960 Marks.

The Town, however, has very graciously consented to pay 500 Marks towards this, and a further 450 Marks was collected by the Bürgermeister from private citizens of Rendsburg interested in the scheme.

#### ORGANISATION

The scheme was organised as far as possible on a democratic basis according to IVSP principles. The minimum of compulsory duties were assigned, such as rotas for washing-up and housework on Saturday and Sunday mornings (the "sisters" remaining at home doing the housework during the working days.)

A leader and Head Sister had previously been appointed (both British). The function of the former was to represent the volunteers, to Assess their wishes and the "group-feeling" about questions of work and the use of leisure, and the function of the latter was to deal with all questions of food, to superintend in the kitchen and house, to assign duties to the sisters, and to look after as far as possible, in cooperation with the leader, the welfare and comfort of the volunteers.

A house-meeting (Wochenbesprechung) was held every Friday evening, at which plans for the week-end and any outstanding problems were discussed, and a representative elected to attend the IVSP Conference in the Winter. Seven representatives (1 women), one from each week, were elected for this purpose.

#### LEISURE

As most of the new volunteers arrived on Monday afternoon and evening, Monday evening was kept free, as also was Tuesday evening, to enable the old and new volunteers to get to know each other.

Wednesday was a Discussion Evening, and visitors from the town were invited to attend, which they did in increasing numbers during the last few weeks. Amongst visitors were the Bürgermeister, the Superintendent of Refugee Camps in the Kreis, the Kreis Youth Organiser, the Pastor of the Garrison Church, and a Director of Rendsburg Newspaper. Subjects discussed were "German Youth", "Work Camps, compulsory or voluntary?", "IVSP in Germany", "Democracy and its application to Germany" and "The Refugee Problem": The discussions were always led by one of the volunteers, and a rigid adherence to the subject under discussion was maintained. They were very fruitful and the increasing number of attendee's was an indication of their success.

Thursday evenings were divided between a visit to the cinema or attendance at the Bürgermeister's Discussion Group in the Newspaper Offices at Rendsburg.

Friday Evening was occupied with the weekly House Meeting and on two occasions with a visit to a musical concert. The theatre was also twice visited, once for a German, and once for an English play.

Saturday morning was occupied with work in the house (cleaning, wood-chopping, etc.) and preparing for the party given every Saturday to Refugees in the Camp. On two occasions the children of the Kindergarten were given soup in the Day Room.

#### PARTIES FOR REFUGEES

The parties for refugees took in a different section of the Refugee Camp population each Saturday. First the small children up to 6 yrs, then from 6-10, 10-14, 14-18, 18-40, and lastly the people over 40. The fifth took the form of games and a dance, and the last consisted of an entertainment given by the volunteers. At each party between 60 and 80 people were entertained.

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They were given a small amount of food and a liberal quantity of cocoa, the children receiving in addition pieces of chocolate, and older people either a cigarette or a sweet. The parties gave great pleasure to young and old alike and especially to the volunteers who waiting on the guests at the tables.

### EXCURSIONS

On Sundays the whole group went on an excursion, and on a number of occasions were granted a vehicle for this purpose. Swimming was a popular feature of most of these outings and on one occasion a joint excursion was held with some members of the IVSP relief team in Schleswig. Two visits were paid to the Rendsburg Museum, and to a camp for boys in the neighbourhood.

### KINDERGARTEN

The setting up of a Kindergarten in the Refugee Camp by the women volunteers was a real achievement. Suggested in the second week, it was realised after about a week's negotiations and during the last three weeks was attended every morning except Sundays for two hours by the average of 40 children, about 70 being on the Roll towards the end. We were able to persuade the school Rector to allow the return of the School Piano, which had been removed for safety, for the use of the Kindergarten, and the Bürgermeister promised that when the scheme ended he would try and arrange the appointment of an experienced Kindergarten mistress to carry on the work, with the assistance of two of our volunteers (refugees).

### JUGENDHEIM

What is perhaps the most pleasing result of the Scheme, is the fact that the accommodation and the equipment is to be immediately taken over by the town for use as a Jugendheim for Orphan boys. One of the volunteers, a refugee, who served throughout the seven weeks, is to be the leader of the home and as much of the IVSP organisation as is applicable will, we hope, be maintained. Work will be found for the boys in the town, and the voluntary democratic spirit of IVSP will, we hop, be inculcated.

### DIFFICULTIES

The scheme ran surprisingly smoothly, due chiefly to the willing and friendly co-operation of the Town authorities and the military Government, and not least the rapidity with which the volunteers caught the communal spirit essential for the running of the scheme.

In the first few weeks many of the volunteers were sceptical, holding the opinion that the peat work they were doing was not for the benefit of old people, refugees and war-disabled, but would go to the benefit of private people and town office workers, who would be tempted to use the volunteers as substitutes for their own week's peat service, which they were all obliged to do in order to obtain a ration of peat. In order to resolve these doubts the Bürgermeister was invited to talk to the volunteers and he was able to satisfy them that their fears were unfounded.

### FAREWELL PARTY

At the Farewell Party on Saturday evening, September 21st, the Scheme was honoured by the visit of the Town Commander, Colonel Cornell, the Bürgermeister and his wife and other friends of the group in the Town. A film of IVSP work amongst refugees in Friedland, on the border of the British and Russian Zones was shown, and German songs were sung. The Bürgermeister presented the Leader and the Head Sister with a beautifully printed and illustrated book of Rendsburg Kreis, a lasting souvenir to take back to England. At a smaller farewell party on Sunday evening the volunteers of the last week also presented the Leader and Head Sister with two fine photographs of Rendsburg suitable inscribed.

### COMMENTS

From the point of view of IVSP the scheme has been an outstanding success. It has revealed that manual work done together voluntarily and for a common unselfish purpose is the best, and perhaps the only, method of achieving real internationalism.

Jim Budge