

LUDWEILER / WARNDT, SAAR

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE CAMP FROM SAT. 3rd APRIL TO SAT 17th

On Saturday 3rd we had a grand party to which came about 8 of the woodsmen; who had worked with us earlier. The evening began with some terrible amateur dramatics by some local boys and girls, but we very soon revived on coffee, chocolate biscuits, cake and cigarettes, and sang songs with an accordion until nearly midnight.

During the weekend a lot of Germans left us, because they had to go back to school, either as students or teachers. On Sunday afternoon we had a House meeting, and discussed at some length whether these meetings should be private or not. We did not reach any definite conclusion, but on the whole we thought it better that they should be private, unless the outsider was some particular friend of the Camp.

The Work of this week was firstly clearing and burning brushwood, and then the collection and planting of beech saplings. On the whole the weather was bad with many April showers, but we only had to stop work on one day because of the rain. Ralph and Claude with some others to help worked in the Jugendherberge all the week; Knocking the plaster off the walls, a dirty job, and clearing drain pipes.

On Monday came Heinrich Carstens, the president of the German IZD to spend the night with us on his way back from Paris. In the evening he talked to us about the formation of the German part of the Service Civil since the war, and spoke about the difficult position in the Saarland, because Germans are not allowed to come here. On Tuesday a special meeting was held in the Swiss Relief barrack at Saarbrücken, where it was decided that the Swiss Secretariat should for the present look after the Saar.

On Tuesday a big party of people who had worked with the Swiss Relief at Saarbrücken came out to spend the day. We had a long dinner break and ate a vast meal of baby food, and then sang songs with them. There were about thirty of them, after the meal they came to see the work which we were doing.

About five of us went down on Wednesday evening to the Evangelische Youth Club which meets in Ludweiler. It was interesting for a stranger to see what happened, but as most of the time it was listening and singing we did not get much chance to talk to the boys as we should have liked to have done.

On Thursday I had to talk about India, and Rudi and Alfred were imprisoned by the police for 4 hours for having no papers. On Friday we began a discussion by each of us saying what had brought us to the camp, and it developed into an argument about peace and pacifism. We seemed to have widely different ideas about the object of our stay. Some of us had come quite haphazardly.

Saturday was a sunny warm day and after lunch we turned out the rooms and a lot of brushing and scrubbing of ourselves and the rooms. Four of us went to the slowest barber in Western Europe and were late for supper. In the evening we had the House Meeting. We discussed the program a little and decided to have breakfast at 6.30 or as soon after as possible. Claude and Denise left to go back to France late that night.

On Sunday there were several visitors, some went to church, some walking, some to watch a football match. The men were in charge of the cooking and burnt the macaroni for supper. In the evening some of us went to a dance at Ludweiler.

The next week was finer and we have had some beautiful days in the woods. The work has been mostly the collecting and the planting of beeches, but we have also put down some fires. Ralph has twisted his foot and without him work at the Jugendherberge has temporarily ceased since Tuesday.

Tuesday evening Rudi and Alfred talked to us about the Russian Zone and answered a lot of questions about the ways of life there. The next evening we had a farewell party for the Swiss Relief, who left Saarbrücken for good the day. Nine of them came in two cars and we had a wonderful meal, with songs, games and some acting afterwards. We decorated the room with flowers. On Friday night, Marcus, who had been in Saarbrücken for a night gave us a résumé and the news from outside and brought a lot of papers. Most of this time there have been between twelve and fifteen of us here. The foreigners included, Swiss, French, Belgian, Canadian and English. The proportion has been about half and half.

Names of those present -

Marcus Jucker, Ralph Winkler, Mathilde Burkhalter (Switzerland),
Claude Vienney, Denise Martin (France),
Jean Christiaens (Belgium),
Barbara Walker (Canada),
Bruce Hayllar (England),
Auguste Koschorke, Günther Kreis, Elisabeth Gräf, Helmut Wertz, Klaus Heintz, Kurt Berberich,
Inge Braun (Saar),
Rudolf Lemke, Alfred Beyer (Pommern). -

I think this is a very efficient camp, that we get through a lot of work and that very little time or money is wasted. But I think there is a conflict of ideas here. Whether the dominant idea is to be that of a small community, living and working together and trying to understand each other as much as possible, or whether the camp should have a rather wider scope with more contacts with the outside, with papers, with local people and so on. I think personally that we have neglected this side. But perhaps we should be a little clearer exactly what our common aim is

Ludweiler, April 17th, 1948

Bruce H a y l l a r