

During the evening members of the Regiment put on various turns and there was also a show put on by Maskell of Maskell and Cook the world famous magicians.

Macartney was some years later taken prisoner while the Regiment he was commanding, the Queen Victoria Rifles, was taken in the defence of Calais.

I was to meet him again in a P.O.W. Camp in Germany at Hadimar where we pulled up. Macartney was the big noise in the Drapers Company, one of the many London Livery Companies and after the war, when I visited England in 1949, invited me to the Grocers Annual dinner - but of this more later, also the week-ends we spent with him at his country home. Another privilege we were granted by the Union Castle Company was a trip to the Continent in one of their Intermediate Steamers calling at Rotterdam, Antwerp and Hamburg to load and discharge cargo.

We decided to take advantage of this and sailed in the Dunottar Castle from Tilbury. Here we again met Mackenzie who was now a Third Officer.

We were to have a very pleasant trip as there were a number of people doing the round trip which lasted about a fortnight. We had a very nice cabin. As usual there is a Thos. Cook's representative on board who arranges trips at the various ports and of which most passengers take advantage. Among the passengers was an elderly couple Mr and Mrs Fraser, an ex-Basutoland wealthy Trader of about 84 who, in spite of his age, was very active and full of fun. To while away the time after dinner he liked a game of bridge. He told us that the previous evening they had a couple to play with them but they were not his cup of tea and so asked if we would like to make a four. Lorna is not a keen Bridge player but we decided to join them especially as he said nine-thirty to ten was his bed-time. We thus spent some very pleasant evenings with this old couple who were very charming. They both played a very good game of bridge and they played together. Lorna is not a very good player and we were usually down by the end of the evening, playing at 3d a hundred. However, we lost nothing as the old chap, who insisted on doing the scoring as we were not too good at that, after the game we sat talking for a while and he would say "So sorry while talking I have torn up the score sheet". When it came to having a drink during the evening - he liked one before retiring - he always insisted in paying as it was someone's birthday he was celebrating. Yes, they both played a very good game against our meagre efforts.

Each day we did a bus trip and so saw a lot of the country and had the Thos. Cooks man to show us round. They seemed to be keen on showing us round any handy cathedral and here some of the tourists took the opportunity of leaving the guide for a while and visiting a nearby pub. In Holland we saw the bulb fields, a wonderful show where, however, they do not worry about the flowers - perhaps selling a few - but it is the bulbs that they are after for sale overseas.

On several occasions we had free bus trips as the Frasers were always telling us that they had each bought tickets and so had to give one lot away.

In Hamburg Lorna and I did a lot of exploring in the City and I remember eventually going into a restaurant for a feed and although we had a menu we were not able to make out the various dishes but eventually spotted at the bottom the only dish we could understand or rather guessed and ordered ham and eggs.

One evening we went to a beer hall and here it was most entertaining to watch the waitresses racing round to the various groups - all singing lustily - no rowdiness - serving tankards of beer, carrying four on the fingers in each hand. It was a most entertaining evening especially the singing - community.

One thing we did notice that although after the first world war Germany was supposed to have a limited army they were busy training.

Hamburg as you know is probably one of the biggest inland ports in the world, reached from the Baltic by the river Elbe. Strangely enough in passing down the river we saw the Guildford Castle, the ship in which we had spent our honeymoon - lying on the side of the river, a total wreck.