

The censoring consisted mainly of tearing off the covers as they thought they might contain notes (money) as they had on occasions found. I remember one parcel I received was a very fine bible and when I said to the interpreter, a devout Catholic, "Has that to go to Rome too?" and he in front of the officer said "I am sorry - yes." However, later in the evening he brought my bible to me for which I thanked him.

He was not a fascist but I suppose he was doing his duty under penalty of ?. Now and again the Italians would bring in a lot of their guards to do a search and in this I am afraid they were not very interested; all one had to do was signal to a guard to take a seat, offer him a cigarette and a packet of tea, soap or some other item they could not get, and he would take no further interest in the search. One day as they left the camp they were stopped at the gate by the Commandant, who suspecting that these guards were being bribed had them searched and finding their loot on them asked whether they had been given the items which he confiscated. They were in for trouble whatever their answer, for if they said they had not been given the goods then they must have stolen them. Now and again the Italians would bring in a big search party looking for contraband, maps, clothing, tools etc. Now, in these searches they only did one barrack at each visit as they were very large buildings. On their next visit they would do another barrack so that all contraband material would then be transferred to the building that had just been searched knowing, from experience, that they would not search that one for some time.

The reader will probably get a bit bored with the stuff I am writing and my jumping about so much. I must say I get quite a laugh now and again when I think of some of the humorous events.

In the camp we had a number of well known people and to give a few names: de Villiers Graaff Adjutant; Col. Geddes Page, Senior British Officer as O.C.; Geoff Chubb who at the age of forty, I think, became a Springbok Fast Bowler; Bob Catteral another Springbok Cricketer; Charlie Upham the New Zealand double V.C.; and a couple of titled British Officers. Talking of Bob Catteral, I well remember his talk on Springbok Cricket tours when he mentioned that Sir Abe Bailey had offered £50 to any S. African making a century in a Test Match. "Well," said Bob, "As I walked out at the lunch break with Larwood the English fast bowler I said to him, "Here, I have 98 and I suppose after lunch you will bowl me out and I will lose the £50." "Well Bob," he said, "You would not mind if you only got £45." After lunch he threw me up a full toss and so got his £5."

Another character was Chesney, a big fat ex-sailor who wore ear rings. Among the books we had was one on famous murder trails with photos of the culprits. One of our chaps after reading this book said, "Comparing photos, I am sure that Chesney is so and so," mentioning the name, who was as a lad of 18, tried for the murder of his mother for her money, but was acquitted. However, shortly after that this chap had tried to escape, was transferred to another camp. You may remember that some years after the war a man, Chesney, murdered his wife and mother-in-law in London and was traced to Holland where he committed suicide. His trade in private life was 'Smuggler' and probably traded in drugs.

In these rather large grounds we had, apart from a small soccer field, also basketball, tenniquoits, baseball.

Many tunnels were dug but the Italians, who are born jailers found them by using heavy logs of wood and stamping over likely spots. One tunnel I helped to dig did very well indeed. It was hard work lying on your tummy scooping out dirt with a Klim tin. The tunnel was low and stuffy but we ventilated it with home made bellows, the air being carried into the tunnel through our Klim tin pipe line.

If one suffered /