

We saw up on the high ground the building which we were to occupy. This four storey schloss had been taken over from some convent recently and converted into a P.O.W. "HOSTEL". We were to find that it was well fenced in with barbed wire, the usual pigeon nests for the sentries and the lift had been dismantled and taken away.

As the previous occupants had not all gone we were told that as we would not be "Taking over until the next day" we would again sleep in the trucks.

Next day we were marched up to the Nunnery and shown to our rooms in this five not four storey building. I, with fifteen others, was shown into a room of senior officers on the fourth floor with three decker bunks and one table and a bench.

A number of British Officers including three Brigadiers had been transferred to join us at this camp a move which had been 'worked by General Victor Fortune the senior British Officer P.O.W. The idea was, I think, for these old lags who had been in the "bag" for a long time to get us organised in a German P.O.W. camp.

Well, we soon got going in organising the various committees and then being a new camp there were no Red Cross Parcels but the Camp Commandant soon contacted one of the other old camps and we soon had a small number to tide us over.

We had no books but my copy of 'Gone with the wind' was in great demand and was on loan for stretches of two hours to various chaps.

Later on we got organised and I was moved into a room for four on the ground floor. My room mates were: Col. Ellison McCartney of the Queen Victoria Rifles who had been captured in the defence of Calais and whom I had met on my last visit to England in 1939; Col. Watson, a New Zealander; and White.

General Fortune was, eventually, with a number of other Imperial Officers, also transferred to our camp. General Fortune was a fine old General of the 51st Scottish Division which was overrun in France before Dunkirk. We gradually received Parcels, Books, playing cards and various other forms of games including a Roulette Wheel. From the Red Cross we also received a full dentists outfit which proved a godsend as we had a Colonel of Artillery who in private life was a dentist at Margate, London. We had a small hospital run by two South African Doctors of whom Theron of Bloemfontein was one.

Apart from our "Hotel" there were a number of outbuildings which included the German Guards' quarters, their admin. Block, stables, a couple of sheds and a wooden building later used as a storeroom for our Red Cross parcels and private goods etc. These were outside our fenced in area. Inside we had very little ground. There was one piece slightly larger than a tennis court on which we played volleyball, tenniquoits, and basketball. Round this was barbed wire about two foot high and six feet from the boundary fence across which we were not allowed to cross. One day playing basketball in shorts only one chap stepped over the wire to collect the ball and the sentry shot him through the shoulder. This, apparently, severed a nerve and he never recovered the use of the left arm. However, in the black book kept by us, and of which the Germans knew, his name was recorded and after the war he was tried and sentenced to two years imprisonment.

At the back of our building the ground sloped up for some distance and on this there were a number of apple trees. From the front we looked down onto the little village of Hadimar. Between us and the village ran a small stream with a bridge and just above this was a small waterfall with water tumbling into the stream. The whole scene was very pretty.

One morning, however, we woke after a bitterly cold night and the water had stopped flowing, the whole lot had frozen, though under the ice the water must have still been flowing.