



Gottingen POW Camp, 1914-1918

German Censor's Reply to Diplomatic Letter

The following letter has been received by the Rev. W. H. Henderson, vicar of Longbridge Deverill (some years ago curate in charge at Corsham). Mr. Henderson wrote a diplomatic letter to his parishioner. Lce. Corpl. Trimby with the result, it is believed, that smoking was permitted to the English prisoners.

Gottingen,
March 14th, 1915

Dear Sir: You will be astonished to receive a letter from me. Being the censor of the letters of the English prisoners of war, I have read your letter to Lce. Corpl. Trimby, and I am much interested about your opinion of the war. I am glad that you found the Germans a very kind, well-doing people, but about the cause of the rising of the war I have another opinion. I think the English Government has begun this terrible fight, being ill about the enormous growing of the German trade. You are right, thinking that the German people did not want the war more than you did. In order to destroy Germany you have made the Triple Entente and prepared the war, but I hope we will vanquish all the enemies. Finally I tell you that the prisoners are well treated. They are allowed to smoke and to write two letters and four cards a month. I hope that my countrymen are also well treated in England. I finish my letter wishing to hear some more of you.

Wiltshire Times, April 1915

The Letter from the German Censor

Sir: You were good enough to publish a letter in last week's "Wiltshire Times," which I received from the censor of English prisoners of war at Gottingen. The gentleman who sent it to you made a mistake with regard to my parish. I am rector of Kingston Deverill. I was senior curate of Corsham for five years, and not curate-in-charge, although it is true I was in charge for three months during the Vicar's absence in Palestine. One of my parishioner's is interned at Gottingen, Germany, as a prisoner of war, and, knowing that my letter would be read by the censor, a great deal of what I said was intended for his benefit, although he would have no idea that it was so designed. The result was that he was interested in what I had said, and wrote the letter to me which you published.

Your sincerely
W. HENDERSON.
The Rectory, Kingston Deverill, Bath. April 20th 1915

Wiltshire Times, April 1915