

**THE BRITISH
INTERNEED IN
SWITZERLAND**

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The British interned in Switzerland by H. P. Picot

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H. P. PICOT

**THE BRITISH
INTERNEED IN
SWITZERLAND**

THE BRITISH INTERNED IN SWITZERLAND

BY

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OFFICIER DE LA LÉSION D'HONNEUR

LATE MILITARY ATTACHÉ H.M.'S LEGATION, BERNE, AND BRITISH OFFICER IN
CHARGE OF THE INTERNED IN SWITZERLAND

LONDON

EDWARD ARNOLD

1919

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TO
MY WIFE AND DAUGHTER

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PREFACE

IN giving the following pages to the public, I do so in the hope that a plain statement of the life and activities of British soldiers whilst interned in Switzerland may prove of interest to those at home who have shown in so many and diverse ways their concern for the welfare of their countrymen whilst Prisoners of War in Germany, and, later, during the period of their internment in Switzerland. I have specially dwelt upon the fruitful initiative taken by the Swiss Government in the negotiations which preceded the acceptance by the belligerent States of the principle of internment. I have also endeavoured to show—I fear very inadequately—with what whole-heartedness the Prisoners of War were welcomed in their midst by all classes of the population; and with what devotion the Medical Department of the Swiss Army, to whose officers the organization of the camps and the care of the sick were delegated, set about its task.

With regard to the status of Prisoners of War in Switzerland, it should be borne in mind

that the Interned were under the guardianship of the Swiss Government, who undertook all responsibility for their care, discipline, and medical treatment. A special officer, or diplomat, (as in the case of France and Germany), nominated by each of the belligerent States, was attached to his Embassy or Legation with a view to his collaboration with the Swiss political and military authorities in respect of all matters affecting the welfare of his interned countrymen, the more delicate international questions arising out of the internment being dealt with by the Chiefs of the Diplomatic Missions accredited to Switzerland.

I have said elsewhere, and perhaps I may be permitted a repetition, that the sense of a possible all-world-brotherhood had one of its happiest demonstrations in the attitude of the Swiss people towards the unfortunate sufferers of the war.

In conclusion, I beg to express my indebtedness and thanks to Lady Grant Duff for many of the details connected with Chapters IV. and V., as also to my wife and daughter for those of Chapter XIV. on the social life of Berne from 1914 to 1918.

H. PICOT.

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