

OCCUPIED BEHIND BARBED WIRE

6

DREAMING

Understandably, much of the strength which internees needed to survive the physical and mental stress of imprisonment was derived from the hope that one day they would return home.

This hope was bolstered by memories of home that were immensely precious to all the Islanders. These memories often found their way into their art and handicrafts. Paintings, drawings, needle-work pictures and greetings cards were all mediums into which images and memories of the homes they had left behind found their way.

It is also apparent that internees attempted to recreate the beauty of their own gardens at home within the confines of the Camps. Several paintings by internees show how large vegetable patches and flower gardens were planted and carefully tended to bring not only food to the table but make places of beauty and enjoyment. Organisations such as the British Seedsmen and the Royal Horticultural Society sent seeds over to the Intern Camps to help them achieve this.

These efforts went a long way to softening the stark lines of barbed wire with colour and natural beauty – helping the Islanders feel, at least for short periods, less like inmates.

MEMORIES OFTEN FOUND THEIR WAY INTO ART AND HANDICRAFTS

