

The National Ex-Prisoner of War Association

Spring 2005 Newsletter

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ASSOCIATION NEWS by Les Allan, President & Honorary General Secretary.

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Contact details – 10 Lambert Avenue, Langley, Berkshire SL3 7EB.

We regret to announce the retirement of our President The Earl Haig of Bemersyde, due to personal reasons. We would like to thank Earl Haig for his good work on behalf of the association. The executive committee has taken note of one of his recommendations, that we elect a President who can attend the bi-monthly committee meetings. At the 13th March meeting our Honorary General Secretary Les Allan was unanimously elected to serve as President, subject to ratification at the annual reunion. Members will recall that Les founded the association nearly three decades ago and has worked tirelessly for the benefit of all members ever since.

HAYWARDS HEATH DO 2005. Our Stalwart member Fred Goddard and his missus Jean are organising a 'Do' to commemorate the 60th Anniversary of the end of the war. It will take place from 7.30pm onwards on 23rd April 2005 at the St Francis Social Club, The Princess Royal Hospital, Haywards Heath, West Sussex. There will be music by the duo 'Reprise', entertainment by a mystery guest and a raffle. Tickets are £10 and are sold in aid of our association. Reserve your tickets now from Fred at 1, Ash Grove, Haywards Heath, West Sussex RH16 4PZ. Telephone 01444-415295.

REUNION UPDATE. The annual reunion will take place at Warners Holiday Village, Hayling Island as usual, between Friday 7th and Monday 10th October 2005. Booking forms can be obtained from our Treasurer Mrs Freda Moores at 17 Wallace Close, Marlow, Bucks SL7 1TY. Tel 01628-473832. If any of our authors have copies of their books to sell, they are welcome to bring them along and we will provide an area to display their wares. We have also invited two guest speakers, whose names will be announced in the next newsletter when they have confirmed acceptance. Our Historian will also be bringing along copies of Red Cross reports on many of the German and Italian camps, as well as his Arbeits Kommando Index. We would like to see more Associate Members this year, so don't be shy, come along and join us. The cut-off date for tickets is 15th June, so book yours now.

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION. It is that time of year again when we ask members to renew their annual subscriptions. They were due on 1st January 2005. You will receive four quarterly newsletters during 2005 plus the annual Journal. The cost has remained the same over the years and we plan to keep it so for 2005. The annual subscription for full members who were prisoners of war is £5, with the exception of those living overseas who are asked to pay £10 to cover the extra cost of airmail postage. Associate membership is available to family members and members of the public who support the aims of the association, at £10 for the year. Please send your cheques, made out to NEXPOWA, together with your membership cards, to Les Allan at 99, Parlaunt Road, Langley, Berkshire SL3 8BE.

Anyone joining us during the year will receive the back issues they have missed. If anyone joined during 2004 and did not receive all of the back issues, please let us know which ones you are missing.

COMMITTEE CHANGES. Members are advised that Mr Ken Jackson and Mrs Judith Jackson are no longer members of the committee, or of this association. Should you receive any unsolicited

correspondence from either of these individuals you are invited to send it to our Honorary General Secretary Les Allan. Les is also currently handling any requests for Welfare Assistance. All correspondence or enquiries regarding the Annual Reunion or Quartermasters Stores should be sent to our Treasurer Mrs Freda Moores at 17 Wallace Close, Marlow, Bucks SL7 1TY. Tel 01628-473832.

NEW MEMBERS. Associates; Christine Parry whose father George Hawkins was a resident of Stalag 8B, arbeits kommando E72, the Hohenzollern coal mine. **Mrs Margaret Scrivens** whose father Mervyn Hutton was a resident in Stalag 18A/B/D in Austria. **Mrs Betty Harmsworth** in Canada whose late husband Fred was a resident in Stalag 4F. **Libby Tucker** whose father was a resident of Campo 70 after falling in the bag at Tobruk. **Mr Neil Beck**, whose father was in Stalag 4B. **Mr Ian Smith** whose father Charles served with the Black Watch and was resident in Stalag 20A.

OBITUARIES. We regret to report the passing away of Frederick Charles Potter on 4th November last. He was a former resident of Stalag 20A Thorn and Fort 15 as well as Stalag 383 at Hohenfels. Fred was a Sergeant in the 44th Battery, 101st Regiment LA, AA and was captured on 12th June 1940 at St Valery. His son Malcolm advises us that a CD disc is now available entitled the 'Beaches of St Valery' and it is dedicated to the 51st Highland Division. Philip Newbury passed away on 5th January, not long after his 90th Birthday. He was a former resident of Campo 70 and Stalag 4B and contributed a number of items to the newsletter, including the photo of 'Derby Day' at Campo 70 reproduced in the last newsletter. Major Ian Shaw of Sevenoaks, Kent passed away on 14th September 2004. Mr Ron Beck of Lewes, Sussex passed away recently and his son Neil has joined us as an associate member. We will remember them.

DONATIONS. We would like to thank Mrs Audrey Higham, her son Mark and his daughter Nina for the donation of £100 in memory of the late Mrs Marian Rickman. We have already received a cheque on behalf of Mr and Mrs A Dyke, Mr and Mrs J Dyke, Mrs Bessie Aspinall, Mrs Gwen Scofield and Mr and Mrs P Rickman. They were amongst others who kindly opted to send donations to the welfare fund rather than flowers at her funeral on 18th January. Marians late husband Arthur was taken prisoner at Tobruk and joined our association in later years. We would also like to thank the following members for their kind donations; Mr C Ackerman £10, Mr R Albert £10, Mr A Anderson £20, Mr H J Arnold £5, Mr R Arnold £15, Mr D Arthur £5, Mr D Avey £15, Mr J Banfield £20, Mr Jack Batt £5, Mrs June Benedict £50, Mr M Bentley £10, Mr L Bevan £5, Mr D H Bond £15, Mr F J Bonner £5, Mr Peter C Brown £35, Mr G Buchan £5, Mr H L Buchanan £5, Mr E Burke £5, Mrs V M Care £5, Mr E A Cattermole £25, Mr Roy Cawston £20, Mr J Charters £15, Mr A Cheyne £5, Mr Roy Child £5, Rob and Freda Clark £5, Mr Walter Clasper £5, Mr Trevor Collin £25, Mr G W Collins £5, Mr J F Crouch £5, Mr J E Cruttendon £10, Mr F Dillnutt £5, Mr R Dowding £10, Mr G J Duffree £10, Mr T East £5, Mr Len Easton The Guards Household Division Association £20, Mr Ray Eaton £10, Mrs M Elliot £10, Mr L Ellwood £10, Mr William Evans £5, Mr G H Francis £10, Mr D A Freeman £5, Mrs Ruth Gardner £10, Mr A Gilbert £10, Mr F Gill £10, Mr and Mrs Goddard £15, Mr T Graham £5, Mr J Green £5, Mrs Ann Greer £20, Mr J W Greeves £5, Mr Bill Harding £5, Mr J Harper £20, Miss A Hayes £10, Mr J Hazell £5, Mr C Hoare £10, Mr J Houston £5, Mr J McCall Hogarth £5, Mrs B Holden £10, Mr E Holt £5, Margaret Hume £20, Mr Barry Jackson £3, Mr Yves Jaulmes £15, Mr W J Jeal £100, Mr G Jerrett £5, Mr A Jesson £10, Mr J R Johnstone £10, Mr Bertam Jones £5, Mr Bob Jones £5, Mr M Jones £20, Mr F Kennington £5, Mr W E Ladmore £5, Mr M C Lawrence £5, Mr R Lee £5, Mr J Lees £5, Mr P A F Liddle £5, Mr A Lindsay £5, Mr L Mace donation from the Ditton Gardening Club £20, Mrs H A Machin £10, Mr W Manley £15, Mr G Marsden £5, Mr E Marshall £15, Mr Donald Matheson £5, Mr F McGauley £5, Mr H G McLean £5, Mr E McNulty £5, Mr J Mill £5, Mr E Milner £5, Mr E G Mitchell £20, Mr H W Moore £10, Mr M Morecroft £15, Mr C Morris £5, Mr D Mowatt £5, Mr H Nash £5, Mr D Nelson £10, Mr Norman

Norris £45, Mr M J M Orr £15, Mr E Parrish £20, Mr L Parsons £5, Mr E Payne £5, Mr W Pearce £5, Mr C N Poffley £5, Mr M A Potter £5, Mr C J Quartermaine £5, Mr James Reed £5, Mr George Robb £45, Mrs M Rooke £5, Mr H Rose £5, Mr E Sankey £20, Mr R J Saunders £5, Mr S H Seal £5, Mr Murdo Shand £5, Mr W Sheridan £5, Mr P R Shurmer £5, Mr J Sinnott £5, Mr Fred Sivewright £20, Mr E J Skipper £5, Mr J Smart £10, Mr A Smith £10, Mr G W Smith £5, Mr C Smithers £10, Mr A Solomon £5, Mr F H Stapleton £15, Mr Colin Stevens £10, Mrs M C Stoll ????, Mr R W A Suddaby £5, Mr H Tooze £10, Mr J V Trenchard £5, Mr L Tucker £10, Mr J Underwood £5, Mr C J Vaughan £5, Mr F J Volkes £5, Mr S Wade £20, Mr Francis Walker £5, Mr J L Wallis £15, Mr R Walsh £5, Mrs Jessie Wand £20, Mr S Ward £5, Mr H Warnke £5, Mr B J Warren £10, Barbara Webb £10, Mr Harold Welch £15, Mrs Wellard £15, Mr S Whyte £5, Mr L R Williams £5, Mr C G Witt £10, Mr W Wood £15, Mr J Wort £10, Mr D Worthing £5. All donations, whether large or small are all gratefully received.



Photo above was taken at Stalag 21A with Robert Shanks in the front row left hand end. Who are the others?

POEM. THE 51ST AT ST VALERIE. Author unknown, sent in by Ernie Mathews.

We were captured in France at St Valerie, Surrounded by aircraft and tanks
There was guns, mortars and machine guns, Spitting death in the midst of our ranks

There was Tommy, Jock and Paddy, Taffy the Welshman too
Fighting shoulder to shoulder, Determined to see the fight through

Our boys were doing their damnest, To stop the Jerry attack
We were fighting a rear guard action, To let the troops get back

The French on our flanks had weakened, And let the enemy through
With our back to the wall we were fighting, As Britishers alone can do

Our Allies the French got the wind up, And thought the battle was lost

So waved white flags in surrender, The men we'd been taught to trust

A white flag appeared on the steeple, It was held by a froggy you knew
Till one of our lads aimed his rifle, And the froggy fell headlong below

A disorganised mob with no-one to lead them, The town we held was in flames
We were shelled, bombed and machine gunned, Twas the enemys favourite game

We retreated into the valley, The valley of death it was named
Our comrades lay all around us, Some dead, some dying, some maimed

All through the night we stuck to our guns, We held on as long as we could
Hungry, tired and sleepy, Half dead but our hearts still good

Then came the dawn, quite a relief, We fought till the eleventh hour
The battle was lost we did our best, And the bugle sounded cease fire

The hearts of our lads were heavy, Many an eye shed a tear
As we smashed up machine guns and rifles, The weapons we held so dear

Our aircraft when needed were absent, Our Navy was far out at sea
With most of our guns out of action, What little support had we

My praise for the officers was not very high, My comrades will tell you the same
Only a few stayed there with the men, Yes only a few played the game

But when we get back home to Englands shores, And His Majesty reads out the names
It won't be the Sergeants, Corporals and Men, It's the officers who reap all the fame

Still we boys hold our heads up, We did not fight for fame
We fought for King and Country, Yes we'd do the same again.



HISTORIANS NEWS by Phil Chinnery.

We are still on the lookout for letters, photos, memoirs, or other material for our archives. Many thanks to **Mr Henry Bayne** for his memoir 'A Militiamans Odyssey', which covers his time with the Black Watch, his capture with the 51st Highland Division and his incarceration at Stalags 20A and 20B, as well as his years working on a farm at Altfelde in East Prussia. Thank You also to **Cyril Symons** for his sketches of his arbeits commando at Georgenthal (Jeretin) 15kms south of Liberec in Czechoslovakia. Many thanks to **Mr R A Haynes** for the spare copies of the POW Newspaper and the five issues of The Camp newspaper, as well as other propaganda items. The photo opposite shows the Stalag 383 pipe band. Do you recognise anyone?

COLLECTING COLDITZ AND ITS SECRETS. The cover of this new book is shown on the last page of this newsletter. The author, member Michael Booker tells me that the book will be launched at the Imperial War Museum on 12th April, in time for the anniversary of the liberation of the castle on 16th April 1945. The book consists of Michaels collection of forty years and relates to life within Colditz as experienced by both prisoners and guards. A review of the book will appear in the summer newsletter.

VOTING FROM THE STALAG. New member Ken Clarke was looking through a June 1924 copy of the Red Cross POW newspaper when he came across a photo of Lt Dorrien Belson, a local Henley man who was the first POW to exercise his right as a voter from a prison camp when he arranged for his mother to vote in his name in a by-election in Putney where they lived at that time. They both spent time in the awful Fort VIII at Posen where Ken recalls sleeping on the stone flagged floor on a bit of straw with no furniture at all. After he moved on it became an officers camp and beds and tables were provided.

POEM SENT IN BY PETER CONSTABLE

The Fate we shared as prisoners was always drab and grim
Existing on such scanty fare as black bread, spuds and klim.

Arbeit and bed and little else to fill times flapping sail

It made or lost its headway all depending on the mail.

Oh! Drab the days and slow to pass

Within that barbed wire fence

When all the joys of living were still in the future tense.

So heres to happy days to come when you and I are free

We'll look back on this interlude and call it history.

KOREA. I have come across two interesting publications lately, both rather scarce, but now residing in our archives. The first is a booklet entitled '*Sketches of a POW in Korea*' by J D Wilkinson. This gem was published in October 1945 and to quote the author from the foreword; "This collection of drawings and sketches, prepared under difficult conditions and with poor materials, represents some of our experiences as POWs. It covers the period from the time the 'Japan Party' left Changi Camp, Singapore, in 1942, up to the finish of the war in 1945. This book is dedicated to those men who died in Korea, and, in particular, to Corporal Reg Hayter, of Sydney." The men were shipped to Korea, known in those days as Chosen, aboard the ship the Fukkai Maru, a small Japanese tramp steamer. On arrival the party was divided in two, with one going to Keijo and the other to Jinsen, about 20 miles from Keijo. In September 1943 a new camp was opened at Konan and around 300 men were moved there from the other two camps. Amongst the sketches in this book are plans of all three camps and the ship that brought the men to that cold and inhospitable land.

The other is a larger booklet entitled '*Shall Brothers Be....*' This 80 page booklet was published in Peking in 1952 by The Chinese Peoples Committee for World Peace and is an account, written by American and British prisoners of war, of their treatment in POW camps in Korea during the 1950-53 war. It is a masterpiece of propaganda showing exactly what can be achieved by what we would refer to as 'brainwashing' if your subjects are starving, ill and brutalised, having watched many of their comrades murdered or starved to death alongside them. Readers may like to compare the reality as described in my book '*Korean Atrocity*' with this rosy account of life as guests of the Communist Chinese. One source that I quoted in my book was a US Central Intelligence Agency report dated 25th October 1951. It read "On 13th September, a staff member of the Central and South China Military Area headquarters, after inspecting a camp for American and British prisoners of war at 52 Fu Hsing Road, Canton, issued an order prohibiting prisoners from speaking to people outside the compound." The report listed, in Mandarin, the names of 12 men of the US Eighth Army, 4 from the Gloucester Regiment and 4 from the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders. None of them ever came home.

BOOK REVIEW COMMITTED TO ESCAPE – *A New Zealand Soldiers Story.* By Daniel Riddiford, MC. 'Escaping is the most exciting activity' wrote Daniel Riddiford, describing two years of his life from November 1941 when he was captured in North Africa at Sidi Rezegh, to Christmas 1943, when he finally rejoined the Allied Forces in Italy. In the interval he had been in six prison camps across three countries, changed his identity twice and made to attempted escape attempts. His third attempt, disguised as a Frenchman, from the Austrian camp of Spittal was successful. His subsequent adventures in the mountains of Northern Italy and at the hands of the Partisans in Yugoslavia make fascinating reading. For his part in helping to lead a large group of escaped POWs through Yugoslavia to freedom, he was awarded the Military Cross. In the remaining 17 months of the war, he rejoined the 6th Field Regiment in Italy and was wounded. He was seconded

as intelligence officer to the Special Boat Service, completed his parachute training and was involved in operations with the Partisans in Istria until hostilities ended. Back in New Zealand as a Territorial, he commanded 52 Battery, 5th Light RNZA and was for many years a director of the Dominion newspaper. He practised Law, farmed in the Wairarapa, married Yvonne Westmacott and had six children. In 1960 he entered Politics as the National Party member for Wellington Central, and from 1969 served in Keith Holyoakes Cabinet as Minister of Justice, Associate Minister of Labour and Immigration and as Attorney General. He retired from Parliament in 1972 for health reasons and died in 1974 aged 60. 218 pages. Published in softcover by Ruamahanga Press Ltd, PO Box 174, Martinborough, New Zealand. Email ruamahangapress@wise.net.nz Price \$29.95 plus \$4.50 postage. ISBN No 0-476-01065-9.

BOOK REVIEW **FIVE TIMES MISSING.** By Tommy Sample. The content of the book can best be described by the author himself; "*First Time Missing*. This is when I sent a card to my parents to say I was alive, from Benghazi, Libya. I had to wait a long time before getting into a proper camp: Camp 65, Bari, Italy, when I was able to send a letter and a card to tell my parents and fiancée that I was safe. *Second Time Missing*. I left Camp 65 and went by train to Rimini, still in Italy. Here I could again communicate with my parents and could receive Red Cross parcels. *Third Time Missing*. I went by train to a place outside Bolzan, Italy, to a small village with a fruit farm. Here there were no letter forms to send home and no parcels but we did not need them as there was plenty of food. We stayed here until the capitulation of Italy, when the Germans put us on cattle wagons to travel seven nights and six days to Moosburg in East Germany. Here we received a number and were photographed with this number round our neck. We got Red Cross parcels but still were not able to send mail home. After a while there we were once more loaded onto cattle wagons, this time for six nights and seven days, to Sagan in Poland. Here we could at last send letters home and end my third time missing. *Fourth Time Missing*. We were sent on another working party, place unknown, in a sugar beet factory, working very long hours. This was until 4th January 1944 when we travelled to Malsh-on-Oder in Germany to work in a paper factory. Here we could send home letters to tell our families we were safe and also received parcels. *Fifth Time Missing*. With the advance of the Russians we were suddenly evacuated from Malsh on 8th January 1945, taking our food parcels on a sledge through the snow. We went on the Death March, a thousand miles across Germany to Hannover where we worked on the railway until we managed to get out to Fallingbomel on 16th April 1945. Here we had parcels, but no mail and were finally released by the 7th Armoured Division. We flew home from Minden and a telegram was sent from a hospital to my family to say that I was safe." ISBN No 1-84394-084-1. Price £10.95 270 pages, published in softcover by Serendipity, Suite 530, 37 Store Street, Bloomsbury, London.

BOOK REVIEW. 'Special Force: SOE and the Italian Resistance 1943-45'. By Malcolm Tudor. This 93 page soft cover booklet describes the work of the Special Operations Executive in Italy between the armistice in 1943 and the end of the war in 1945. It comprises ten chapters entitled The Art of Guerilla Warfare; Beyond the wire; Maryland; The Italian Resistance; Secret Air Missions; The SAAF Liberators; The Ossola Rising; Cherokees in Piedmont; From the mountains to the Sea and The Grand Finale. Although interesting enough, one wonders if Malcolm has merely skimmed the surface of the subject. In addition the booklet suffers from the same editing and layout drawbacks as many self-published manuscripts, as the single word 'Squadron' on page 42 and the large gap at the top of page 69 bears testimony. Perhaps it would have been better to have offered the manuscript to a main line publisher who could have done the subject justice with an illustrated book of 100,000 words. ISBN No 0-9538964-2-0. Copies are available from Emilia Publishing, Woodlands, Bryn Gardens, Newtown, Powys SY16 DR. Price £9.99, post and packing free in the UK, £2 airmail overseas.

BOOK REVIEW. TAIL END CHARLIES – *The Last Battles of the Bomber War.* By John Nichol and Tony Rennell. Night after night they stifled their fears and flew through flak and packs of enemy fighters to drop the bombs that could demolish the Third Reich. The airmen of the RAFs Bomber Command were among the greatest heroes of the Second World War, defying Hitler in the darkest early days of the war and taking the battle to the German homeland when no one else would. At the tail end of the conflict, too, they continued to sacrifice their lives to shatter an enemy sworn never to surrender. Blasted out of the sky in an instant or baling out from burning aircraft to drop helplessly into hostile hands, they would die in their tens of thousands to ensure the enemies defeat. But, once the war was won, their own nation turned against them. The Allied airmen who devastated Cologne, Hamburg, Berlin and Dresden were treated as pariahs – and their commander, Sir Arthur Harris, labelled a war criminal. Following their ground-breaking revelations about the ordeal suffered by Allied prisoners of war in their bestselling book *The Last Escape*, the authors tell the astonishing and deeply moving story of the controversial last battles in the skies of Germany through the eyes of the forgotten heroes who fought them. Hard cover, ISBN No 0-670-91456-8, 470 pages with photographs. Published at £18.99 by Penguin Group, 80 Strand, London WC2R ORL. Email www.penguin.com

John is now researching a book about '**Escape and Evasion during World War II**' and is looking for stories, personal accounts or memoirs. He would like to hear from those who tried and failed as well as those who succeeded. Perhaps you managed to evade capture after a position was overrun? Perhaps you were passed down one of the famous – or not so famous – escape lines. Were you involved in one of the less known escape attempts from one of the camps once in captivity? If you can help John with his forthcoming book please write to him at Kings Lea, St Johns Lane, Great Amwell, Ware, Herts SG12 9SR.

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

Mrs Betty Harmsworth, 8732 Westsyde Road, Kamloops, British Columbia V2B 8S4, Canada would like to hear from anyone who remembers her late husband Fred who was a resident of Stalag 4F at Hartmansdorf and out on a working party at **Zwickau**.

Libby Tucker, 149 St Georges Avenue, Sheerness, Kent ME12 1DS would like to hear from anyone who was in **Campo 70** or who knew her father Roy Burgess, RAMC who was taken prisoner at Tobruk.

The London **Borough of Redbridge**, which covers Ilford, Wanstead and Woodford in North East London has developed a programme to mark the 60th Anniversary of VE and VJ Days. Events will take place on 7th, 8th and 11th May, 10th July and 14th and 15th August. If any members living in the area would like to attend, please contact The Worshipful the Mayor, Councillor Arthur Leggatt at the Mayors Parlour, Town Hall, 128-142 High Road, Ilford, Essex IG1 1DD Tel 020-8708-2110.

Mr Eric Payne, 21 West Road, Farnborough, Hants, GU14 8EZ Tel 01252-549051 would like to find his old mate G Williams, whose wartime address was 8 Spring Grove, Walk, Leeds 6. A paratrooper taken prisoner on Rhodes, he worked with Eric at Lager 22 (Stalag 4C) at Brux in Czechoslovakia

Mrs C J Harrison, The Cottage, Chapel Lane, Houghton, Huntingdon, PE28 2AY would like to hear from anyone with information concerning **Sub Lt Geoffrey Smith, RNVR** who was shot down off Norway in October 1944 and taken prisoner.

Christine Dean, 5 Garnett Street, Otley, West Yorks LS21 1AL is searching for any information about H B Arthur Langmaid 927841 RAF, a resident of Stalag 344 Lamsdorf. He was Navigator in a Blenheim shot down over Fuka on 1st/2nd August 1942. Captain was Sgt A E Ellis and WOP/G was her uncle Sgt Maurice German.

Mr Ian Smith, 29 Carters Avenue, Hamworthy, Poole, Dorset BH15 4JT would like to hear from anyone who may have known his father **Charles Smith** of 1st Battalion Black Watch, a former resident of Stalag 20A Thorn.



The above photo was taken at Stalag 20A Thorn between July 1940 and April 1942. Recognise anyone?

DECEMBER 1942. Readers might be interested in some of the items that appeared in the Vol 1 No 8 December 1942 issue of *The Prisoner of War*, the official journal of the prisoners of war department of the Red Cross and St John War Organisation, St James's Palace, London SW1.

Question "My husband has recently been moved from Stalag 20A to Oflag 3C and his POW number changed to 1349. Why should he be moved and is it usual for the POW number to be changed?" **Answer** – Prisoners are frequently moved from one camp to another, and there have been a good many cases in which the POW numbers have been changed, although the majority of prisoners keep the same number all the time. If a change is made it is usually after a transfer to another camp.

Question "What, besides chocolate, can I send in my sons next-of-kin parcel for him to eat?" **Answer** – Chewing gum is allowed and is usually most welcome, but this must be obtained by the sender, for it cannot be supplied by the packing centre. No other type of confectionery may be sent.

Question "Can I send my brother some pyjamas in his next parcel?" **Answer** – Yes, but if they are to be sent to a camp in Germany regulations require that they shall be of striped material.

Coupons for parcels. There still appears to be a certain amount of misunderstanding about the number of coupons issued to the next-of-kin for their quarterly parcels. Under the latest regulations of the Board of Trade, 20 coupons are issued for every quarterly parcel except for the first, when an issue of 40 is made.

Christmas Parcels. 150,000 special Christmas parcels were despatched before the end of July 1942 in order to ensure their safe receipt by Christmas. The special parcels were all clearly marked with the word 'Xmas' in large red letters on all four sides, so they could be easily identified in Geneva and hurried through for distribution. They contained chocolate biscuits, butter, Christmas cake, cheese, chocolate, jam, beef and macaroni, steak and tomato pudding, condensed milk, Christmas pudding, sugar, sweets, tea and soap. In addition, every prisoner received a double ration of either tobacco or cigarettes sent separately, that is either 4 ounces of tobacco instead of two or 100 cigarettes instead of the usual 50.

Camp Visit Reports – ITALY. *Camp 68* at Vetralla is a new camp which some 200 British prisoners are helping to build. It is situated about 1,150 feet above sea level and surrounded by grounds cultivated with fruit and oak trees. It was to be completed by the end of October. The men live in three barracks, furnished with two-tier beds and straw mattresses. Mail and parcels are arriving regularly. The camp shows promise of being technically and hygienically up to date when finished, with an adequately equipped infirmary. There seems to be a good supply of water. *Camp 59* Servigliano- Three officers and 1,856 other ranks are detained here. The general impression of the camp is good. The messroom for NCOs has not yet been built. The infirmary is now used exclusively for British prisoners of war. Stoves are installed in the infirmary, messrooms etc but not in the dormitories. This matter was immediately taken up with the appropriate authorities. Mail from England arrives quite well, as do Red Cross parcels. Clothing is said to be satisfactory. As in most camps in Italy at that time of the year, the most acute question is the water supply. New pumps and a second pipe line are under construction. There is plenty of space for outdoor games and sports.

Camp Visit Reports - AUSTRIA. *Stalag 18A* has improved greatly since the last visit. The new camp commander has proved helpful. Three new barracks are in use and almost 400 non-commissioned officers have been transferred to another camp, so that there is no more overcrowding. Additional tables and chairs have been added, washing facilities are good in the new barracks and a new sewer system is being constructed for the toilets. The chaplain is now allowed to visit the labour detachments. The prisoners of war are erecting a new hut themselves in which there will be a theatre and a comfortable reading room. *Stalag 18B* now contains the British prisoners of war from *Stalag 18D* (main camp) and some 380 NCOs from *Stalag 18A*. This camp, at Spittal, is soon to be transferred to a newly built camp at Leibnitz, south of Graz. Accommodation here is good, but at present overcrowded. New stocks of clothing are needed. A library, theatre and gymnasium are in use and Red Cross parcels are arriving regularly. British medical officers are in charge of the infirmary and camp hospital. *Stalag 18B (Annexe)*. This is the site of the old *Stalag 18D* and it is from here that the working camps are administered. This camp is also to be moved shortly. There are only 160 British prisoners of war in this camp. Their quarters are quite satisfactory. An entirely new German staff is in charge. They are said to co-operate with the British.

ITALIAN POW CAMPS. Further to our listing in the Summer 2003 newsletter. Theo Durieux in Belgium has kindly sent in a comprehensive list of the camps, as supplied to him by the Italian

Embassy. Translations of the headings would be appreciated, as would comments or additions. Red Cross map grid refs in *Italics* if known.

Additions to the list below, are Campo 35 at Padula, near Naples (ref *D8*); 41 at Montalbo (ref *C3*); 51 at Altamura; 65 at Gravina, near Taranto (ref *E8*); 68 at Vetralla, Province of Viterbo (ref *C5*); 77 at Pissignano, Province of Terni also noted as Campello; 98 at S.Guisepppe Jato, Province of Palermo; (Our records and the map below also show Campo 98 as Regusa in grid ref *C9* on Sicily); 129 at Montelupone between 11/42-6/43. See our Summer 2003 newsletter for the National Archives file references for many of the below.

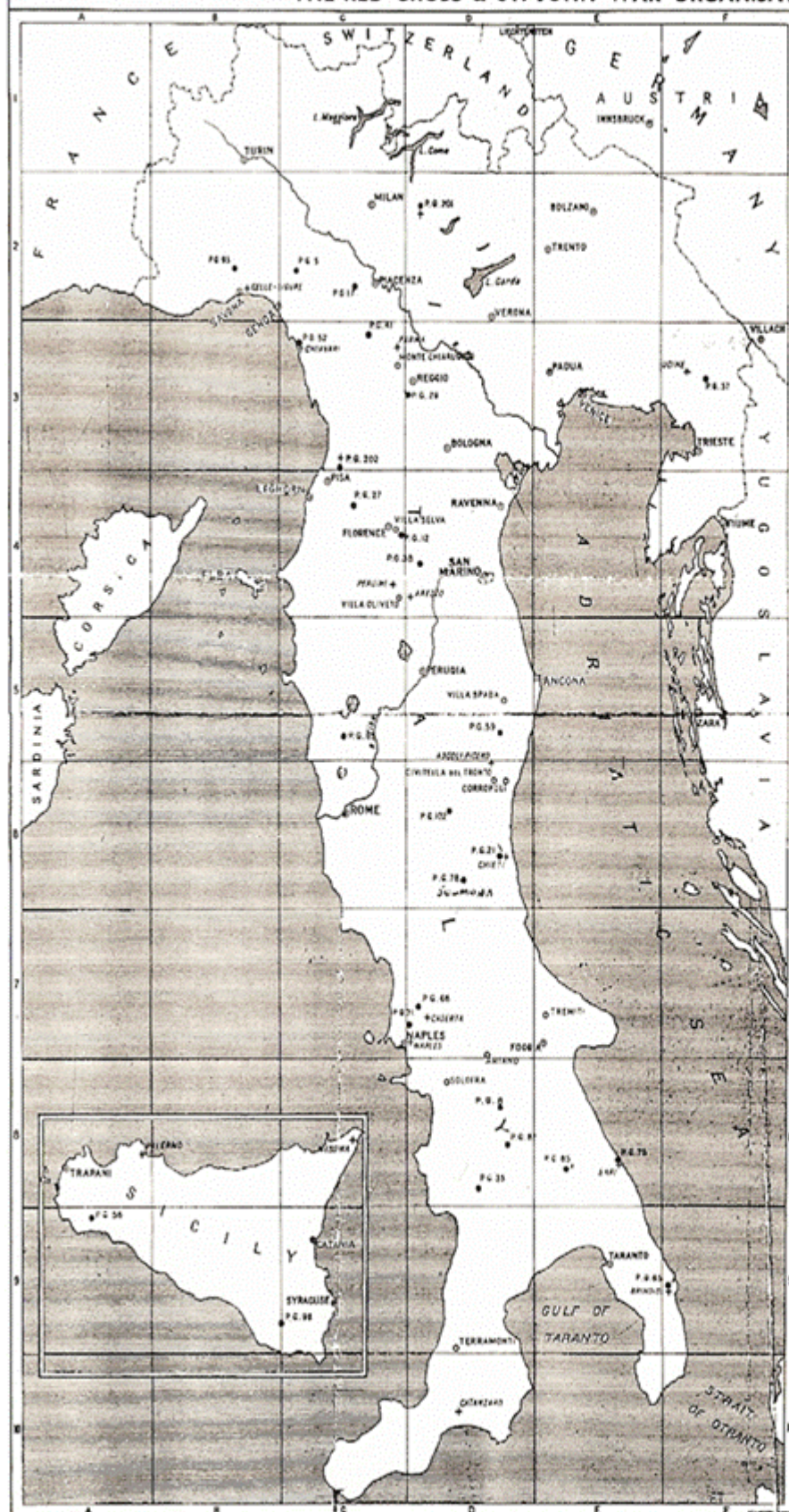
	CAMPI PER UFFICIALI	CAMPO	Grid NOTES/COMMENTS	Ref	P.M.
1	CHIETI	21	<i>D6</i>		3300
2	ACQUAPENDENTE	10	<i>C2</i> SERRAVALLE	7/43-9/43	3300
3	VESTONE (BRESCIA)	23			3200
4	BOGLIACO	32			3200
5	REZZANELLO (PIACENZA)	17	<i>C2</i>		3200
6	CORTEMAGGIORE (PIACENZA)	26			3200
7	VEANO	29	<i>D3</i> S.W. OF PIACENZA		3200
8	FONTONELLATO	49	NEAR PARMA		3200
9	FORTE DI GAVI (ALESSANDRIA)	5	SERRAVALLE	9/43-	3100
10	GARESSIO	43			3100
11	MODENA	47			3200
12	CASERMA FUNZ. 'DUE MODONNE'	19	BOLOGNA	9/43-	3200
13	CANDELI (FIRENZE)	12	<i>C4</i> Nr FLORENCE		3200
14	SAN ROMANO (PISA)	27	<i>C4</i>		3200
15	VILLA ASCENSIONE (POPPI)	38	<i>D4</i> NEAR AREZZO		3200
16	AVERSA (NAPOLI)	71	<i>D7</i>		3400
	CAMPI PER SOTTUFF. E TRUPPA				
17	AVEZZANO	91			3300
18	SERVIGLIANO (ASCOLI PICENO)	59	<i>D5</i>		3300
19	URBISAGLIA (MACERATA)	53	SFORZA COSTA		3300
20	MONUTRANO (NEAR FERMO)	70			3300
21	VILLA MARINA (NEAR ROME)	80			3300
22	PASSO CORESE (NEAR ROME)	54	FARA-IN-SABINA		3300
23	GRUPPIGNANO (NEAR UDINE)	57	<i>F3</i>		3200
24	GRUMELLO DEL PIANO (BERGOMO)	62			3200
25	PIAN DI COREGLIA	52	<i>C3</i> CHIABARI		3100
26	COLLE COMPITE (LUCCA)	60	SERVIGLIANO	OCT 42	3200
27	LATERINA (NEAR AREZZO)	82			3200
28	CARPI (NEAR MODENA)	73			3200
29	CARDONCELLI (BENEVENTO)	87			3400
	CAMPI PER UFFICIALI SOTTUFFICIALI E TRUPPA				
30	CARINARO (NEAR AVERSA)	63			3400
	CAMPI CONTUMACIALI E DI SMISTAMENTO				
31	FIUME	83	<i>F4</i>		3200

32	TORRE TRESCA (BARI)	75	E8	3450
33	TUTURANO (BRINDISI)	85	F9	3450
34	CAPUA	66	D7	3400
35	SULMONA	78	D6	3300
	CAMPI DI LAVORO			
36	S.GAVINO (SARDEGNA)	110	SARDINIA	3450
37	L'AQUILA	102	D6	3300
38	FOGGIA	132		3450
39	MONTORIO AL VOMANO (TERAMO)	145		3300
40	CONTIERE ORLANDO E MORGANO	115	MARSCIANO, (PERUGIA)?	3300
41	CINECITTA (ROME)	122		3300
42	PRATICA DI MARE	108		3300
43	TORVISCOSA	107		3200
44	POL DI PASTRENGO (VERONA)	148	BUSSALENGA	3200
45	PRATO ISARCO	118		3200
46	AVIO (TRENTO)	113		3200
47	CHIESANUEVA	120	Fattoria Bianchetto, Cetona	3200
48	MONIGO	103		3200
49	MORTARA	146	Work Camp	3100
50	BUSSETO (PIACENZA)	55		3200
51	LOCANA CANAVESE (AOSTA)	127		3100
52	NOVARA	133	MONTELUPONE 6/43-	3100
53	VERCELLI	106		3100
54	TORINO	112	Work Camp	3100
55	O.A.R.E. (BOLOGNA)	136		3200
	OSPEDALI (HOSPITALS)			
56	ALTAMURA	204		3450
57	BERGAMO	201	D2	3200
58	MILANO	207		3200
59	LUCCA	202	C3	3200
60	CASTEL S.PIETRO	203		3200
	CAMPI PER I.C.			
61	ARBE (FIUME)		F4	
62	COLFIORITO (FOLIGNO)			
63	PISSIGNANO (FOLIGNO)			
64	GONARS (PALMANOVA)			
65	VISCO			
66	CHIESANUOVA (PADOVA)			
67	MONIGO (TREVISO)			
68	RENICCI			
69	CAIRO MONTENOTTE	95	B2	
	CAMPI DI LAVORO PER I.C.			
70	PIETRAFITTA (PERUGIA)			
71	RUSCIO (SPOLETO)			
	CAMPI IN APPRONTAMENTO			
72	CASTEL RATMONDO (MACERATA)	93		3300
73	LABICO			
74	PALAZZOLO DEL LO STELLA	88		3200
75	VASCIAGO			

76	GATTINARA			



BRITISH
PRISONER OF WAR CAMPS
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21	Chieti		D 6
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28	San Romano		C 4
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38	Poppi		D 4
41	Montalto		C 3
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57	Grupignano		F 3
58	Castelloniano		A 9
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65	Gravina		E 8
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75	Bari		E 8
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85	Totomano		F 9
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95	Calno-Monemonte		B 1
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Chivari	C 3
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Note: The publication reminded that when communicating or sending parcels to Prisoners of War, the geographical location must not be added. The Camp number and P.M. number only should be used.



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MICHAEL BOOKER


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