**Notes about the list of camps.**

Pages 1. How the list developed 2. 1945 International Red Cross 3. 2003 English Heritage 4. 1947 Wilton Park

My interest in the camps arose when I found some pow letter-sheets. This was pre-Internet, and finding further information was very difficult. The best source I had was the book ‘*Thresholds of Peace’* by M B Sullivan, 1979 - an excellent account of life in the camps.

Using a card index search I found very little at the Public Records Office, (now The National Archives). I did find some International Red Cross reports written in French. I copied as many as I could - there were more, but I have not seen these in the digital index.

In 1996, the Forces Postal History Society published a **1945 International Red Cross** list of camps, and I was sent a second list from a colleague in Germany. I published a collated list of camps with further details on my old philatelic website, (kg6gb.org).

In 2003, English Heritage published a list of **‘Prisoner of War Camps (1939 – 1948**)’ – a project report by Roger J C Thomas. This was a tremendous aid to listing, sorting and locating the camps.

As National Archive indexes were digitised, another contemporary camp list from **1947 Wilton Park** became available offering a good deal of data which was extremely useful for locating camps, as well as providing additional detail.

Individual camp reports issued by COGA have provided essential information about the camps. Sadly, a lot of reports have gone missing over the years. Of particular note is the work of Martin J Richards ([www.systonimages.co.uk](http://www.systonimages.co.uk)) who has photographed and published many of these reports and saved people a great deal of time and money in going to The National Archives.

Further information is included from a great many sources - local history societies and webpages; museums; old newspapers; old maps; individual memories… anywhere I can get it from.

**Many thanks to all those who have taken the time to send me these details.**

**Please note** – I have grouped information about the camps using the lowest known number when camps were located at the same place. For example, Camp 20 and Camp 300 – both numbers were allocated to Woolton Hall – so, I have put all details under Camp 20.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| For information about a relative or individual who was a pow during World War 2, you need to contact the International Red Cross:<https://www.icrc.org/>However, they are often overwhelmed with requests and have to limit the number and type of archive searches they carry out. |  |

**1945 International Red Cross List**

Issued in the FPHS Newsletter no.229, Autumn 1996, (back numbers available to members). It was: *“From the late Alan Brown - In response to John Daynes’ hope for a list of camps in the UK for Italian POWs below is a list received from the Comité International de la Croix Rouge in Geneva, sent to an enquirer in 1984. No date for the original list is given.”*

The list does not just contain Italian camps. Looking at the closing dates for some camps gives an approximate date for the list of 1945.

The International Red Cross did not create this list themselves, but most likely received it from the Prisoner of War Information Bureau (PWIB) in London, or via the Foreign Office.

The list is headed: “*2e GUERRE MONDIALE – CAMPS DE PRISONIERS DE GUERRE ITALIENS EN GRANDE-BRETAGNE.*”

Each camp is classified as being a Base Camp, Labour Camp, Reception Unit or Hospital. The number of the camp and address is given, e.g.

B.C.1. Grizedale Hall Camp, Hawkshead, Ambleside, Westm’ld

Some of the camps are listed with an address ‘non communiqué’.

The FPHS can be contacted at - <http://www.forcespostalhistorysociety.org.uk/>

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Other Contemporary Camp Lists Issued by the FPHS** | Date | Ref. |
| List of camps to be formed as Italian Labour Battalions under their area commands | 5 / 5 / 1944 | FPHS 313. |
| List of hostels for co-operator Italian POW with their main camps | 5 / 5 / 1944 | FPHS 315. |
| Listing of an urgent memorandum  | 16 / 11 / 1944 | FPHS 313. |
| List of Camps and Hostels within Regulated Area / within 30 miles radius of regulated area | Undated c.early1944 | FPHS 315. |
| Listing on urgent memorandum | 1 / 8 / 1945 | FPHS 313. |
| Appendix B | 15 / 9 / 1945 | FPHS 315. |

**Prisoner of War Camps (1939 – 1948) - Project report by Roger J.C. Thomas - English Heritage, 2003**

Entries listed as:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **NGR** | **OS Sheet No.** | **Camp No.** | **Name & Location** | **County** | **Cond’n** | **Type 1945** | **Comments** |

**NGR – National Grid Reference / OS Sheet No.** Many camps had the comment ‘precise location not known’. A lot of these have now been found and the NGRs added or amended. NGRs were not given for Northern Ireland, Scotland or Wales.

**Camp No.** **/ Name / Location / County** – there was a lot of confusion over camp numbers as there were duplicated names and numbers, and different locations with the same number. This issue has now largely been resolved. The old county names of the time were used.

**Condition –** A 5-point scale was used:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Complete | Majority of original structures (i.e. water tower, offices, officers mess, canteen, guard room, barrack huts, ablutions/showers/drying room, cell block, camp reception station, cookhouse, dining rooms, recreation rooms, and living huts) and layout remain intact. Internal fittings may or may not be present. |
| 2 | Near Complete | Majority of features remain extant, i.e. 50-80% survival |
| 3 | Partial Remains | Less than 50% of components remain (ranging from structures to paths / roads). |
| 4 | Removed | All structures removed from site, footprint may survive. |
| 5 | Unresolved | Evidence is either not visible, or inconclusive, when based on the resources consulted (i.e. maps and / or aerial photographs). |

**Type 1945** – Note this is **only** in 1945, some camps changed their ‘type’ over the years of use. Many camps do not have an entry, those that do were listed as: Base Camp / German Working Camp / Reception Camp / Special Camp – these were not defined in the report

**Comments** – Camps in Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales have no comments.

The full report is available free - <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/prisoner-of-war-camps/prisoner-of-war-camps/>

**1947 ‘Wilton Park’ Camp Listing**

The National Archives reference FO 1120/182

A list supplied to Wilton Park special re-education centre (Camp 20 / 300) that offered courses of academic discussion to selected prisoners of war. It was used as a ‘working document’ with some entries crossed out, probably as camps were closed during 1947.

It is dated 20th Feb 47. A rubber stamp records that it was received on 8 Mar 1947, presumably by Wilton Park on that date.

The list is in 3-and-a-bit sections:

* **Pages 1 to 27** ‘Location list of prisoners of war camps in the United Kingdom as at 20th Feb, 47. 184 camps listed. Example:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. | Address | Cmd | Telegraphic Address | Telephone Number | Railway Station | Commandant | W.E. |
| 2(B.C.) | Toft Hall Camp,Knutsford, Cheshire | W. | Priscamp, Knutsford | Knutsford560 | Knutsford. | Lt.Col C.H.Windsor M.C. | v/202/4 |

**Number -** Camp numbers from 2, (Camp 1 Grizedale, had closed) to 412. The different types of camp listed were:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Types** | **Total** | **W.E.** | **Commandant Rank** |
| B.C. | Base Camp | 15 | V/202/4 | Lieutenant Colonel |
| G.W.C. | German Working Camp | 160 | V/1452/2V/1453/2 | Lieutenant Colonel or MajorLieutenant Colonel |
| Hospital | Prisoner of War Hospital | 6 | V111/356/3 or V/1395/2 or V/1416/1 | Major |
| P.C. | Prison Camp (? - not sure) | 1 | V/202/4 | Blank (Camp 403) |
| S.C. | Special Camp | 2 | V/202/4 or V/1507/2 | 1 Lieutenant.Colonel, 1 Major |

**Address** – some camp administrative offices were located away from the pow compounds, some have a Post Office address.

**(Cmd) Command Area** – UK Military Command Areas – N - North, E - East, S - South, West, Sc - Scotland, LD - London District.

**Telegraphic address / Telephone number** –

**Railway Station** –

**Commandant** – Many commandants were promoted as they were brought back into service. Many had awards; D.S.C., D.S.O., M.B.E., M.C., M.M., O.B.E., T.D., and there was 1 V.C. (Lieutenant Colonel R.F.J.Hayward,) at Camp 194. Large camps had the rank of Lieutenant Colonel, smaller camps and hospitals were commanded by Majors.

**W.E. War Establishment number** - The ‘V’ at the start is for Roman number V, the volume for Home Establishments. The following numbers show the table number and version. The listings state the number of personnel that each camp required. The listings changed fairly frequently.

* **Pages 28 – 30** ‘Group Pioneer Corps’

This section lists the Pioneer Corps working in pow camps, with their address, telephone number and which German Working Companies they were responsible for. The headings for this section were:

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. | Cmd. | Address | Telephone Number | Companies Administered |

* **Pages 31 – 42** ‘P.W. Working Companies’

Although this is a continuation of the camp list, they were described as ‘Working Companies’. Different War Establishment codes are used: V/1270/3, V1270/4 and V/1456/2.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| No. | Coy. | Cmd. | Address | Telephone No. | Group Administering | W.E. |

There are some duplicated names here, though all numbers remained unique:

612 and 653 – Old Windmills Camp – exactly the same details including telephone number.

662 and 664 – Stadium Camp – as above.

Were these separate camps – or camps in the process of changing status – or, in the second case with entries next to each other, a typing error?

* **Page 43** no title.

This page has just 5 entries in similar format to the first section.

- Hospital at Halston Hall – Administered by Camp 100.

- Talgarth Military Hospital – this was listed as Camp 234 in other lists.

- Labour Holding Unit – at Kings Cliffe Camp 702.

- Internment Camp at Beltane School. At the end of the war a number of Nazi civilians were held here, including Otto Dietrich, Hitler’s former press chief. From August to October 1945 German medical experts were interrogated here.

- The London District Cage, contact details.