**Camp 19** **- Happendon Camp, Douglas, South Lanarkshire (aka Happenden / Douglas + Douglas Castle)**

Included in the 1945 ICRC list – Base Camp. 19. Happenden Camp, Douglas, Lanarkshire.

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| **1947 Camp list** | | | | | | | |
| 19(B.C.) | Happenden Camp, Douglas, Lanarkshire. | Sc. | Priswar,Douglas, Lanark. | Douglas Lanark, 251 | Happenden (L.M.S.) via Carstairs Junction. | Lt.Col.H.B.M.Groves, M.C. | v/202/4 |

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| **Prisoner of War Camps (1939 – 1948) - Project report by Roger J.C. Thomas - English Heritage 2003** | | | | | | | |
| OS NGR | Sheet | No. | Name & Location | County | Cond’n | Type 1945 | Comments |
|  |  | 19 | Happenden Camp, Douglas | South Lanarkshire |  | Base Camp | Scotland |

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|  | Spelling; in the entries above, the camp is listed as Happend**e**n, rather than the correct Happend**o**n.  **Location:** NS 852 334. About 3 km NE of Douglas. Located on the Douglas Castle Estate.  The aerial photograph taken in 1946 shows three camp areas. Two of the areas are still shown on the 1957 OS map.  **POW Camp:**  There were 2, then 3 compounds for pows. Aerial photographs and archaeology show the buildings were mainly Nissen type. For some time, the compounds were surrounded by barbed-wire fencing and guard towers – the towers were later removed and the fencing either removed or reduced.  Italian then German pows.  **1942** - Listed with Italian pows.  **1943** – mixed co-operator and non-co-operator Italian pows. |  |
| <http://ncap.org.uk/frame/8-1-2-11-1-1> - 1946 |
| **February 1945** – 3 pows escaped from Cage 2. They were recaptured within 4 days.  **May 1945** - A large group of POWs from the Channel Islands arrived requiring medical treatment, many suffering from malnutrition. | |
| **Ordnance Survey 1957** Main Camp shown – Happendon Station at top of map |

**6 June 1945 –** ICRC Inspection – see next pages. (This was the 2nd Inspection – unsure when first occurred). *[My notes in italics]*

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| **ICRC Report of ‘Base Camp’ (No: 19 / Douglas)**  (Nr.3296 from 6.6.1945)  Address: German POW Base Camp, G.B.  Capacity: 4000  Commandant: Lt Colonel H B M Groves, M.C.  Strength on date of visit: a) Cage 1. 1681 (national socialists & S.S.)  Cage 2. 1054 (mixed)  Cage 3. 698 (working camp)  Infirmary 3 (medical officers).  Total 3436   |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | b) | Infirmary officers | Cage 1 | Cage 2 | Cage 3 | Total | | Army | 2 | 796 | 364 | 456 | 1619 | | Navy | 1 | 181 | 214 | 89 | 484 | | Air force | - | 600 | 295 | 131 | 1026 | | S.S. | - | 95 | - | - | 95 | | Police | - | 2 | - | - | 2 | | O.T. | - | 2 | - | - | 2 | | R.A.D. | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | | Civilians | - | 3 | 7 | 22 | 32 | | Dutch Legion | - | - | - | - | 1 | | Italian army | - | - | 174 | - | 174 | |  | 3 | 1681 | 1054 | 698 | 3436 |   *[OT = Organisation Todt / RAD = Reichsarbeitsdienst; Reich Labour Service]*   |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | c) |  |  |  |  |  | | Medical officers | 3 | - | - | - | 3 | | Officers (in transit) | - | - | 13 | - | 13 | | N.C.O.’s | - | 509 | 259 | 184 | 952 | | O.R. | - | 1169 | 601 | 492 | 2262 | | Civilians *[Note 1]* | - | 3 | 7 | 22 | 32 | | Italians (NCOs & OR) | - | - | 174 | - | 174 | |  | 3 | 1681 | 1054 | 698 | 3436 |   d) Protected Personnel Cage 1 27  (P.P.) Cage 2 18  Cage 3 2  Infirmary 36  83 |  | -2-   |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | Nationalities | Cage 1 | Cage 2 | Cage 3 | Infirmary | Total | | German | 1618 | 803 | 672 | 3 | 3096 | | Dutch | 11 | - | 5 | - | 16 | | Croatian | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | | Czechoslovakian | 23 | 2 | - | - | 25 | | Austrian | 27 | 64 | - | - | 91 | | Roumanian | 1 | - | - | - | 1 | | Italian | - | 174 | - | - | 174 | | Belgian | - | - | 13 | - | 13 | | Spanish | - | 3 | 4 | - | 7 | | Greek | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | | French | - | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | | Hungarian | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | | Portugese | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | | Lett | - | - | 1 | - | 1 | | Lithuanian | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | | Polish | - | 4 | 1 | - | 5 | |  | 1681 | 1054 | 698 | 3 | 3436 |   Camp leaders: Cage 1. B241671 Hauptfw. THÖNE Franz.  A947505 Oberwm. ÖHLERT Peter  Cage 2. B74362 Wm. MŰLLER Herbert  Assistant: B234413 Wm PRETZAS August  Cage 3. B74498 Oberfw. BOSLET Werner  (Note: Pberfw Boslet is at the same time ‘Vertrauensmann’  for the whole camp). *[Spokesperson / Camp leader].*  General Description: (See last report)   1. Since our last visit a new cage (No.3) has been built by the pows themselves. This cage is not quite finished, some buildings are still under construction, installations not yet completed.   b) Cage No.1 (National socialists) is a collection of huts, with a few not completed paths, no sports grounds etc., no flowerbeds or outside decorations. It is particularly well guarded.  Cage No.2 is more spacious. No decorative work (flowerbeds, etc.) has yet been commenced.  Cage No.3 consists of a number of new buildings, complete and still under construction. The pows of No.3 take their meals etc., in Cage No.2 |

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| -3-   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | HUTS | Cage 1 | Cage 2 | Cage 3 | Total | | Living | 26 | 26 | 17 | 69 | | Empty | 3 | 1 | - | 4 | | Theatre & chapel | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | | Reading | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | | British stores | 2 | - | - | 2 | | Stores (POW) | 2 | 3 | - | 5 | | Latrines | 4 | 4 | 2 | 10 | | Ablution | 3 | 4 | 3 | 10 | | Office | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | | Dining | 3 | 3 | 1 | 7 | | Kitchen | 2 | 2 | 1 | 5 | | Delousing | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | | Artists studio | - | 1 | - | 1 | | Artisans | - | 1 | 1 | 2 | | Under construction | - | 3 | - | 3 | | Canteen (under construction) | - | - | 1 | 1 | | Total | 48 | 52 | 28 | 128 |   Number of men per hut: Cage 1 Average 74  Cage 2 “ 80  Cage 3 “ 70 large huts  56 medium huts  28 small huts.  Stove heating in all huts, electric light in Cages No.1 and 2, installed in Cage No.3, but not ready for use.  The POW With very few exceptions all POW who were in camp on date of last visit have been transferred to other POW camps.  Cage No.1 is political (black). None of these men (including P.P.) are permitted to leave the cage for walks, recreation etc. All have been captured since D.Day. (No Channel Islanders).  Cage No.2 is ‘grey’. A few POW came into captivity before D.Day. Most (about 900) have come over from the Channel Islands, (Guernsey on 17th and 18th May 1945. The rest are crews of surrendered submarines (in camp after VE Day).  Cage No.3 (White) All in captivity since D.Day. The POW’s moved over from Cage No.2 to Cage No.3 on 17.5.45.  The officers in transit (Cage No.2) are from the Channel Islands.  Bedding: 1 sleeping bag and 1 blanket have been issued.  Convention: In possession of Camp Leaders Cage No.3 (for the whole camp).  Sanitary Installations: Ample latrines water-borne system. Hot and cold shower-baths. |  | -4-  It was reported that the water supply is cut off daily during certain hours. According to the Camp Authorities this is due to an alleged waste of water on the part of the POW.  Food: No complaints.  Bills of fare on date of visit:  Cage No.1 Breakfast: Bread, tea, margarine.  Dinner: Meat and vegetable stew.  Supper: Milk soup, bread, corned beef.  Cage No.2 Breakfast: Bread, tea, margarine.  Dinner: Bean soup with meat and potatoes.  Supper: Chopped liver, milk soup, bread.  Camp Infirmary: No changes ( see last report)  A number of new pictures painted by the camp artists adorn the walls. There is also a piano in the infirmary.  a) Medical officers: Senior: 20595 Marine Ass.arzt WIMMERS Carl.  459869 Ass.arzt SCHWARZ Dietrich.  B123075 Oberapotheker SCHENKEL Richard (from Jersey)  b) PP in Infirmary: Officers: 3  Other ranks 33  36  c) Medical supplies: Sufficient  d) General medical inspection: Once a month.  e) Dental work: Executed by Dental Mechanic under Brit. Supervision  526346 Uffz. BOSCH, Werner.  f) Average number of daily attendance at sick-parade: 70 to 80.  g) Infirmary: Total number of beds = 70 (in 4 wards)  Occupied on date of visit = 21  h) Cases in camp infirmary (including patients from Channel Islands)  = pleuritis 1  = gastritis 1 |

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| -5-   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | insufficienta cordis | 3 |  | |  | neurosis cordis | 1 |  | |  | angina | 2 |  | |  | tonsillarabscess | 1 |  | |  | parotitis | 1 |  | |  | conjunctivitis | 2 |  | |  | combustio (fuss) | 1 |  | |  | otitis media | 1 |  | |  | genitalekcem | 1 |  | |  | venenthrombose | 3 |  | |  | ulcus cruris | 2 |  | |  |  | 21 |  |   i) Serious cases: None  j) Contagious cases: None  k) Epidemics: None  l) Death 5.5.45 Heart attack - B234739 Stabsgefr. SCHREIER Karl.  *[Later reinterred at Cannock Chase German Military Cemetery]*  m) P.P. Walks: Are permitted.  n) Complaints: None.  General state of health of POW in words of German Med.Off. “sehr gut” very good.  General state of nutrition of POW “ “ “ “ “ “ “ausreichend” sufficient.  Note: Both remarks apply to all POW with the exception of the men from the Channel Islands. Most of these are now, through careful treatment and dieting on the road to complete recovery.  Clothing and uniforms: Issues have not been completed yet.  In possession of complete uniforms:  Cage No.1 = 50%  Cage No.2 = 90%  Cage No.3 = 40%  Labour: Only POWs in Cage No.3 (about 80% of Cage strength) receive payment for work, at the usual rates. There being no canteen, the men are paid in kind (cigarettes). *[Note 2]*  Canteen: None – One canteen in course of erection in Cage No.3.  Welfare Fund for all 3 cages = £60. This fund is constituted by donations etc. from  P.P., officers and paid artisans. |  | -6-  Religious activity:  a) Protestant Chaplain: B74080 Fw. HABERKAMP Martin.  Services on Sundays  Attendance: Cage No.1 = 200 (maximum)  Cages 2 & 3 = 400  Bible Classes: About 40 in Cage No.1  About 30 to 50 in Cages No.2 plus 3.  b) Roman Catholic Chaplain: 562774 Fw. HERMES Heinz.  Sunday services  Attendance: Cage No.1 = up to 400  Cages 2 & 3 = up to 500  Note: According to the RC Chaplain, the attendance at Services of a quota of 1/5th of the unit’s strength in Germany was considered to be good. Here, in the camp, the quota has risen to about one third. This is due to the fact that the men, thoroughly disillusioned, now return to the beliefs of their youth.  Sports: None at all, no football pitch and no balls available  Camp library: About 300 books.  Theatre groups: Cage No.1 = 30 men  Cage No.2 = 40 to 45 men.  Choirs: Male choir (books of folk songs) Cage No.1 = 70 members  Cages 2 & 3 = 26 members.  Protestant church choir = being organised.  RC church choir = being organised.  Camp orchestra: a) Same POW orchestra as mentioned in last report.  Instruments in use = Piano 1, Alto 1, Cello 1, Trumpets 2, Saxaphone 2,  Trombone 1, Violin 3, Viola 1, Jazz 1, Accordion 1. *[Jazz = drums]*  b) Piano 1, Violin 1.  Educational activity: Director of educational, cultural and recreative activities:  B74345 Obergefr. HONIG Johannes. |

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| -7-  Pupils:   |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | | Classes | Cage No.1 | Cages No.2 & 3 | | English | 245 | 183 | | Shorthand | 280 | 32 | | Drawing | - | 25 | | Artistic drawing | - | 25 | | Architecture | 60 | - | | Mathematics | 40 | - | | Arithmetic | 80 | - | | French | 30 | - | | Automobile driving | 20 | - | | Physic | 30 | - |   Note: work was commenced in Cages No.2 & 3 on 30.5.45.  Films: None  Radio: Broadcasts in Cages No.1 & 2.  Correspondence: Received from 1.1.45 till 31.5.45:  1133 letters and 181 parcels (latter since 1.12.44)  Greatest concern of all POWs news from home.  Complaints: None  Escapes: Cage No.1 None since 1.1.45  Cage No.2 3 men in February 1945. Recaptured in 4 days.  Cage No.3 None  Discipline: Good.  Requests: A few minor requests were discussed with the Camp Authorities. A still unsolved problem is the providing of necessities for the unpaid POW. The need of handkerchiefs, razor blades, tooth paste, etc., is still very great.  a) The Camp Leader’s desire – Books (German and particularly in languages other than German, for those POW in, for example, Cage 2. (Their stay in camp 19 may be of long duration). |  | -8-  Sports Articles of every description.  For theatre groups: Plays (classical and popular and other suitable MSS, grease-paint, material for making costumes and wigs, paint for scenery (water colours in powder form as used by house painters).  For choirs: Hymn books and church music. Books of folk songs.  For camp orchestra: Musical scores of every description, religious, classical, popular, operetta, etc. Musical score paper (Urgent!).  For educational activity: Textbooks of every kind, on any subjects, exercise books, paper, pencils, India rubbers, drawing paper, etc.  b) The Protestant Chaplain desires: Bibles, New Testaments, hymn books.  c) The RC Chaplain desires – Catholic New Testaments & Bibles, Prayer and hymn books. Works by Karl Adam, Huardini.  d) The Camp Leader of Cage No.1 desires: an accordion, a violin, a guitar.  e) The Medical Officers repeat the wishes mentioned in the last report.  Impression:  The POW in Cage No.1 are without funds. Everything possible should be done to help them, as there is at the moment no possible chance of employment (although they have volunteered to work).  Conditions in Cage No.2 are in a way better, as there is a chance of future employment. Cage No.3 will soon be turned into a Labour Camp and therefore has rosy prospects.  There are still toys and models made in Camp (see last report) and the artists’ studio, well cared for by the Camp Interpreter, is a centre of great activity. On the whole, the men in Cages No.2 and 3 seemed content, and looked well. The men in Cage No.1 plied me with all kinds of questions most of which however should rather have been addressed to the late Protecting Power, so that I could not be of any assistance. They looked well, but did not appear to be particularly cheerful.  = = = = = = = = = = = = |

1 – according to a 2008 survey, (see below)the civilians were German internees who had been held in America and were in transit back to Germany.

2 – work was mainly on local farms or quarries.

**November 1944 to August 1945** - A report for Camp 72 recorded that the camp leader at Camp 19 during this time was Ofw Werner Boslet. He was later recorded as politically A+.

**21 July 1945** – Pow soldier Friedrich Schwald, aged 36, committed suicide by hanging. He was later reinterred at the Cannock Chase German Military Cemetery. His wife was recorded as living in Jugoslavia.

**4/5 August 1945** – A visit from Mr James Grant from the PlD, (Political Intelligence Department overseeing re-education of German pows). Mr Grant had a particular interest in English teaching. He only recorded German pows.

The commandant was described as; “*a very thoughtful and energetic man, has re-education and the necessity of boosting morale more than ever before him…”*

The Camp Leader (Lagerfűhrer / Lagersprecher – not named – probably Ofw Werner Boslet) was described as; “*a fine fellow*”.

Cage I – ‘black’ camp, 1600 non-working prisoners, graded C / C+ (Nazis). *“The most desolate looking compound I have ever visited. The men are short of almost everything as they earn nothing. Interest in education is very great; the Lagerfűhrer told me there was nothing else for the men to do. They have a football, but no room to play and have a ‘crocodile’ walk each week. They are also tantalised by daily exit of workers from Cage III, whose gateway is a stone’s throw away from the gate of Cage I. They suffer acutely from a feeling of inferiority….”* 4 pows were teaching English in Cage I.

It was noted that a pow had hanged himself with his braces two weeks prior to this (see 21 July above).

Cage II – on 1 August, 1500 pows had been transferred here from camps in N Ireland. Not inspected during this visit.

Cage III – 758 working pows. They worked mainly on farms and local quarries. The report mentions a superb orchestra which played classical and jazz music with a very wide range of instruments. There was also a watchmaker and a painter in the cage. (Presumably the ‘painter’ painted murals to deserve special mention?). 2 pows were teaching English.

**12 September 1945 –** Pow soldier Friedrich Wortmann died aged 45 of a cerebral haemorrhage. He had been a tailor. His wife was recorded as living in Westphalia.

**11 November 1945** – Mr James Grant carried out a further visit. Strength 529.

Commandant; Lt.Col Groves

Interpreter Officer; Captain Macfarlane; described as excellent, but being demobilized and going as a lecturer in Cambridge.

Only Cage III remained open to serve as a main camp. There were frequent changes to the pows – only 200 pows remained from the strength that were here in July.

There were 2 pow teachers of English for 57 pupils. Lessons were carried out in “*an enormous*” dining hall which was unheated. Mr Grant suggested a hut be used instead.

**12 March 1946** – Unteroffizier Josef Feil, aged 47, died at the camp from cardiac failure. He was married, but no further details recoded on his death certificate. Later reinterred at Cannock Chase Germany Military Cemetery.

**25 June 1946** – Mr James Grant gave an English Inspector’s Report. Strength 568 (all in Cage III).

Commandant; Lt Col Groves Lagersprecher; Anton Rossel

Pows working on local farms. Many had been transferred to Thankerton (The Moor) Camp 62.

4 classes for English with 52 pupils. All education classes affected due to frequent movement of pows.

**Autumn / Winter 1946** – As the repatriation of German pows began, the nature of Camp 19 changed and it became a centre for returning pows from Scotland. One compound (III) was used as a main, base camp, where some pows worked at local farms and others assisted with the administration of repatriation. The other two compounds were used as short stay transit centres. Further reports focused on the base camp. There were frequent changes of pows even in the base camp, and that made it difficult to sustain re-education work and the development of other activities.

**19/25 March 1947** – A Reynolds, Training Assistant, visited to give a ‘Progress Report’ (on re-education). Strength 2 officers; 418 Other Ranks in the base camp; many others passing through the other compounds.

Commandant: Lt Col H B M Groves MC Camp leader: Uffz Siekmeier, Fritz (B)

Interpreters: Capt P Stamford Deputy leaders: O/Fw Dietz, Karl (B)

S/Sgt C Bedrich Fw Schoeltz, Walter (B)

Fw Schuster, Jakob (B)

German MO: St/Arzt Mueller (B)

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| Political categories: | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C |
|  | 1 | 20 | 2 | 67 | 282 | 46 | 2 |

The camp leader and the deputies were described as; “*not very inspiring personalities, but hard-working conscientious men, whose time is completely taken up by their duties in a base-camp where several thousand PsW pass through every month*.”

25% were youth (under-25), but this was not seen as a problem in this, or in further reports.

Captain Stamford was the main organiser of re-education activities, but he was due to be demobilized. The standard list of activities was given:

Wochenpost and Ausblick: Separate appendix

Newspapers: Almost all daily papers and a number of weeklies.

Library: 800 books in working compound, about 600 in each of the two transit compounds. A good selection.

Lectures: Regular and received with a keen interest.

Discussion groups: Due to start.

Films: Those sent by Gaumont-British were regarded as mediocre. YMCA also sent films.

Wireless: adequate in all parts of the camp.

Camp magazine: ‘*Lagerzeitung*’ (Camp Newspaper) had been issued monthly – due to re-start.

Press review: A daily news sheet was due to start.

English instruction: Separate appendix

Information room: Small, but well laid out; held exhibitions on titles such as; ‘Britain can Make It,’ ‘What are we to expect in Germany?’, ‘The German Law’.

Other activities (sport/games were rarely mentioned in these reports):

Religion - Protestant padre; Uffz Meixner, H (A) – new to the camp, “*a non-descript person.*” RC padre Uffz Dollendorf (A); “*very active and able man*.” Regular services were held in the camp. Local priests also visited.

Theatre and band – there had been an excellent theatre and band, but they had been abandoned due to repatriations.

**30 May 1947** – W R Lang conducted a Re-education Survey. Strength 53 officers; 1712 Other Ranks.

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| Permanent in camp | Permanent detached | German pows in transit | Ukrainian pows in transit |
| 150 | 40 | 652 | 923 |

The Ukrainians were ex-members of the Waffen-SS Division Galizien and had been held in pow camps in Italy. The Soviets insisted that they be handed over to them, stating that under the Yalta Agreement they were considered to be Soviet citizens. By 1947, the British feared that Italy would send them to the USSR and so 8,570 pows and protected personnel were transferred to camps in the UK. The pows at Happendon were in transit to other camps, not back to Ukraine. (See <http://www.dpcamps.org/scotland.html>)

The 190 permanent staff had been politically screened: A 3; B185; C 2.

Commandant: Lt Col W A Ramsay (sic) R.T.R. Camp leader: Uffz Siekmeier, Fritz (B) – “*a farmer, aged 29*”

Interpreters: Capt Kohl (on leave) Deputy leaders: None

S/Sgt C Bedrich (due to leave) German MO: St/Arzt Mueller (B)

S/Sgt Harding

Morale for the permanent staff was recorded as ‘*good,*’ though the many changes of pows was unsettling. They had good opportunities for sport and were generally welcomed by the local population.

The morale of pows in transit varied greatly. Negative aspects arose as they only received non-working rations and no pay, and sometimes there were delays to their repatriation for a variety of reasons, (weather, availability of shipping….).

The standard list of re-education activities was given - it was very similar to the previous report. The library had more books, including some from Switzerland; the discussion group had restarted; Travel Film Circuit had replaced Gaumont-British.

Religion – 70% protestant – but attendance only 8%; 30% catholic – attendance 10%. The nearest RC chapel was 10 miles from the camp and there was little contact with the local protestant minister. The two padres expressed disappointment over religious apathy and appeared; “*dispirited at seeing so many repatriated while they must remain*.”

Education – only English classes were being held. Some pows studied French and history privately.

Entertainment - The orchestra had re-formed and played in the camp and at a nearby hospital. Popular activities – football, athletics, table tennis, chess, skat.

Outside contacts were being encouraged in camps, though it was still limited at Happendon due to its isolation. 20 pows visited Glasgow University, another 20 visited Glasgow Cathedral. A representative of the International YMCA visited the camp. There were hopes that further contacts could be established alongside Camp 64.

**31 July / 1 August 1947** – Mr Lang returned for a second survey. Strength; Officers 48; OR 2400.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Permanent in camp | Permanent detached | German pows in transit | Unscreened Protected personnel |
| 175 | 30 | 2243 | 1 |

Screening figures for the permanent pows – A 6 / B 199.

Changes to senior personnel - The camp leader had been regraded to ‘A’. There were two deputies: Francke, “*capable but dull, engaged mostly in Camp routine*” – Dietz, “*is more intelligent and interested in re-education activities.”* The two interpreter S/Sgts had left.

The pows in transit were being held here for about 2 weeks, though some had been waiting longer. Morale and attitudes of the permanent pows was mixed. Although rated as good, especially with the relaxation of some rules, at the same time the militaristic manner of some British staff was disliked.

The standard list of re-education activities and other activities had changed very little. The discussion group had ended.

**24 August 1947** – A sports festival was held with visitors from Camps 62, 64 and 112 and some civilians.

**1-2 October 1947** – F C French visited to conduct a Re-education Survey. Strength 1 officer; 285 OR. (+ regular flow of pows through the Transit Camp).

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Main camp | Cow-Glen (Cowglen) Hospital | Balloch Mile (Ballochmyle) Hospital | HQ Lowland District |
| 245 | 29 | 5 | 7 |

Cowglen Hospital was a Military Hospital in Glasgow, there are memories of ‘temporary buildings’ along one side which housed pows who worked in the hospital.

Balochmyle Hospital was an ‘Emergency Medical Services’ hospital in East Ayrshire. It took Italian POW patients from July 1943, and German pow patients from August 1944. It is probable that the 5 pows mentioned here were working there, there were huts in the grounds for accommodation, however, they may have been patients. (History of “Balochmyle Hospital, Mauchline, Golden Jubilee 1940-1990”).

Simplified screening figures: A – 3 / B - 283

Commandant: Lt Col W A Ramsay (sic) R.T.R. Camp leader: Ofw Dietz Karl (B) – previously deputy leader.

Interpreters: Capt Kohl Deputy leaders: Uffz Schroeder, Walter (B) & Uffz Niehenleer, Bernard (B+)

German MO: St/Arzt Dr Mueller, Hans (B+)

The commandant was described as being; ‘*militaristic*’, but with an interest in re-education. The Interpreter Officer was enthusiastic for re-education.

The new camp leader took over on 15 August. He was a baker and a member of the SA from 1937-1938. “*He is a sincere and trustworthy man, well liked, by both British and German personnel.”*

The German M.O. was described as; “*rather a cynical type and is bitter at being held as POW, as he feels he could be of more use in Germany*.” He did not have any influence over the other pows.

Morale was good as repatriations increased. Relaxation of regulations had also raised morale.

Negative aspects included the militaristic atmosphere which although it was described by the visitor as “*fair but strict,*” it was regarded as unnecessary by many pows. The German pow staff in the base camp were not allowed out of the camp during the day, only after 5.00 p.m. – though there was not much to do in the local area. Transit pows were allowed out of camp from 2 p.m. News from Germany, especially the Russian zone, caused anxiety for many.

There continued to be little activity for re-education. The discussion group had again ended.

It was hoped that some general education classes for mathematics and the building trade would begin soon.

Religion – a strange reversal in numbers, now citing; “*Approximately 70% Catholics*”. Weekly services and Bible classes were held. Some pows attended the protestant church in Douglas.

The RC priest, Uffz Heinz Dollendorf was based in Camp 19, but also visited Camp 62. “*A sincere man to whom religion only is of interest.*”

The protestant padre, Uffz Hermann Meixner was due to be repatriated in the next fortnight.

Entertainments – The orchestra had been reduced to 5 players.

Football teams played on Saturdays against teams from the transit camp, the British staff and civilian teams from Douglas.

Outside contacts had been stopped owing to petrol cuts. The commandant was arranging for parties of pows to visit Glasgow by rail under escort.

**8/9 November 1947** – English Inspector’s Report by Mr R D Miller. Total strength 330.

There were 3 classes with 30 pupils studying English + about 30 more studying privately.

**14 November 1947** - Camp number included in an ‘Urgent Memorandum’ (FO 939/270) regarding inspection of food parcels.

**1/3 December 1947** – W R Lang visited to conduct a Re-educational Survey. Strength 1 officer; 339 OR.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Permanent in camp | Permanent detached (at Cowglen) | Transit personnel |
| 290 | 38 | 12 |

Simplified screening; A – 3; B - 337

The only change to senior staff was the removal of the deputy, Uffz Bernard Niehenleer.

Morale was considered to be fair. Negative aspects remained political events and waiting to be repatriated. Positive factors were the clearance of most barbed wire and good discipline.

The detachment at Cowglen Hospital was led by pow Hildebrand and were mainly protected personnel. The visitor criticised the use they were put to stating that their work could be carried out by any pow and that their special duties could be utilised elsewhere. Ward work was being carried out by a detachment from Camp 62.

The commandant had arranged an extra bus service so that pows could visit a small town occasionally.

There was a new Protestant Padre, Schuett – “*an improvement on his predecessor. He is a lay preacher, elderly, and takes his work very seriously.”*

The planned education classes did not start.

**18 / 22 March 1948** – W R Lang submitted a further report on Re-education. Strength 3 officers; 247 OR.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Permanent in camp | Permanent in hospital | Permanent detached |
| 177 | 3 | 70 |

Simplified screening; A – 1 / B - 249

The only change to senior personnel was the addition of a deputy: ‘Kurz’.

The camp was no longer a working camp, and staff were almost entirely dealing with pows in transit.

The pows ‘outlook’ was focussed on repatriation. There was a grudge by many that they had been held for three years after the end of the war. The Protected Personnel working in the hospital had not been transferred to more suitable jobs and continued to work on non-medical duties – they were concerned about the date for their release.

There was a brief round-up of pow attitudes. Negative attitudes arose mainly from poor conditions in Germany which they blamed on allied forces.

This was the last pow camp to close in Scotland

Known Camp Commandants:

1945 – Spring 1947: Lieutenant Colonel H.B.M.Groves, M.C. (Henry Basil Melvin Groves who served with the Royal Tank Regiment).

Spring 1947 – 1948: Lieutenant Colonel W A Rumsey from the Royal Tank Regiment – previously at Camp 62 The Moor

**After the camp:** A survey was carried out of the site; “*A Level 1 standing building appraisal was undertaken during February 2008 in order to assess the structural remains in respect to the proposed development at Poneil of an OCC mine and associated features such as topsoil storage and water treatment.*

*The POW camp dates to WW2 and consists of a complex of three camps; the main camp is to the W and is set in a large rectangular area. The later insertion of the M74 destroyed the other two camps and possibly compromised the easternmost corner of the central camp. The central camp currently comprises a series of brick and concrete bases which formed the base for the Nissen huts that were used to house Italian and German prisoners of war*.” (*Claire* ***Shaw -*** 'Happendon Camp, South Lanarkshire (Douglas parish), standing building recording', Discovery Excav Scot, New, vol. 9, 2008*. Cathedral Communications Limited, Wiltshire, England. Page(s): 168 – 2008.*

Reports - <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/library/browse/issue.xhtml?recordId=1101775&recordType=GreyLitSeries>

**Further information:** Historic Environment Scotland; [http://canmore.org.uk/site/105471](https://canmore.org.uk/site/105471)

National Archives: FO 939/105 19 Base Camp, Happendon Camp, Douglas, Lanark – dated 1945 : 1948 – used above.

The Imperial War Museum has copies of the camp magazine, dated February, May 1947 – Ref LBY E.J. 384. The German Federal Archives also have a copy, date unknown.

The English Heritage Report also listed the following:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Prisoner of War Camps (1939 – 1948) - Project report by Roger J.C. Thomas - English Heritage 2003** | | | | | | | |
| OS NGR | Sheet | No. | Name & Location | County | Cond’n | Type 1945 | Comments |
|  |  | 19 | Douglas Castle | South Lanarkshire |  |  | Scotland |

Douglas Castle was about 1.5 km away from Happendon Camp. The large mansion house on the site of the original castle was demolished in 1938. Canmore refers to a military camp at NS 8377 3111 on the edge of Douglas, but does not record a pow camp there. The site was not recorded in the National Archive reports as a satellite camp or pow hostel. This may be the same site as Happendon Camp 19 which was built on the Douglas Castle Estate.