**Camp 23** **(& 410) - Le Marchant Camp, Devizes, Wiltshire**

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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 |
| SU 00 61 | 173 | 23 | Le Marchant Camp, Devizes | Wiltshire | 5 | Base Camp | Barracks. See Camp no.410 |

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| **Location:** The NGR above is for a square centred on Devizes. The Barracks are marked ‘x’ on the map with a roughly central location marked at SU 020 630 – the main Le Marchant camp was located at ‘c’ (SU 025 629) – additional land around the site was also used.**Before the camp:** Army barracks / open land.**POW Camp:** **1943** – listed as a camp holding Italian pows. They worked mainly at local farms and were increasingly billeted at farm buildings and hostels in the area. **June / July 1944** - Italians were replaced by German / Axis pows. Security was increased, including the creation of a central, high security compound. The first Commandant for German pows was J T Upton. It began as a transit camp with up to 2,500 pows per day arriving by train from Southampton. The pows were marched from the station to be processed, medically examined deloused, showered and fed. The following days they would be given breakfast and rations and then sent on under escort to a permanent camp or for further interrogation. **November 1944** - the camp changed to a base camp with a capacity of 7500 pows. Accommodation was recorded as (WO166/14443):6,170 – in buildings / huts and 1,330 – in tentsFurther Nissen huts were built to remove the tents by January 1945.**18 November 1944** – 5 pows escaped. They made their way to RAF Yatesbury (21 November). They failed to start two aircraft and gave themselves up the following day. (See\* below). |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1961 |

**19 November 1944** – two escapes by two pairs of pows. One pair also made their way to RAF Yatesbury, but not finding suitable aircraft, they returned to the camp and were arrested on 21 November. The second pair did not get far and gave themselves up the following day. \*

**December 1944** - there was a plot by some POWs to escape; accounts of this are very mixed. One story relates to a much larger plan to commandeer vehicles and tanks from the nearby army depot, then to release prisoners from other camps and march on London. This was to coincide with a German counter offensive. Other stories were far more straightforward involving a handful of SS and an extreme degree of fanciful thinking. Whatever the true story, the plot was detected and the suspected leaders were interrogated at the London Cage. Lieutenant Colonel A P Scotland, head of the interrogation centre stated that in his view no escape attempt had ever been; "*more daring in concept, more fantastic, more ambitious, more hopelessly fanatical*". The 28 suspects were sent to Comrie Camp 21, where the story continued with tragic consequences. \*

**December 1944** - Polish Guard Company No.5 was formed and sent to the camp replacing many of the Pioneer Corps guards. This was partly to alleviate the man-power shortage of British troops who were needed to serve abroad and to provide services to assist the armed forces. Relations between the Polish guards and pows were often hostile.

Albert Gregory was a member of the British Army Medical Corps. He was one of the first to fly in by glider at Pegasus Bridge on D-day. Later, after being injured, he went to work at Le Marchant from late 1944. He provided various details about the camp at that time;

* there were British and Polish guards (No 5 PGC)
* there were look-out posts and machine gun towers
* the camp was separated into two parts, a main compound for ‘normal’ German soldiers, and a central compound with additional security for members of the SS.
* if British personnel had to go into the SS compound an armed guard was required.

He recalled an event which illustrates how vicious the relatively small group of ‘black’ (Category C) Nazis were. The body of a German soldier had been found hung from a toilet chain, they later found out he had been murdered, an event similar to what happened at Camp 21. When guards went to remove the body; *“…as we passed through to the toilet block, an SS officer spat at me, and it hit me on the shoulder; in a flash, one of the German doctors’ body guards stepped forward and hit him with one punch, he just went down and did not move. After cutting down the dead pow, we were coming back out, and I went forward to see to the pow who had been punched, but was pulled back by the German doctors and told to leave him. Three days later he was brought to the medical centre and we found out he had a broken jaw.*

*I later found out that the doctors’ bodyguard was the heavyweight boxing champion of Germany*.” He went on to state; “*I met some wonderful people at the camp, not all German soldiers were bad people, in fact they wanted to fight a war and be away from their families as much as the rest of us*.” (Further details of Albert Gregory; [www.pegasusarchive.org/normandy/albert\_gregory.htm](http://www.pegasusarchive.org/normandy/albert_gregory.htm)).

**December 1944** – another escape attempt. Obergefreiter Hans Koehn of the Luftwaffe was shot dead by Polish guards. (\* states this occurred on 23 December – however, the Cannock Chase German Military Cemetery, where he was later re-interred, records his death as 20 December 1944).

**27 February 1945** – a new Commandant; Lieutenant Colonel Ayers started. And on the same night as his arrival:

**27/28 February 1945** – 8 Luftwaffe pows attempted to escape – 1 pow, Gerhard Lehmann was shot dead and 4 injured (3 escapers / 1 incidental). (G Lehmann was later re-buried at Cannock Chase).

**March / April 1945** – at the request of the ICRC, and agreement with the War Office, a ‘Medical Academy’ for pows was set up at Le Marchant. The Academy catered for about 200 pow students. They were accommodated in Compound C, had lessons in Compound H, and were able to observe / practice in the camp hospital. Abilities ranged from beginner medical students to junior doctor level.

The Academy started well and ICRC inspectors stated that the students were delighted to resume their studies. They were supported by the Commandant and Interpreter Officer (Captain Craig). There was a shortage of teaching materials and requests for support were sent to the Royal Society of Medicine, ICRC in Geneva, British Army Medical Corps, and German medical authorities. An ICRC Report about the Academy was issued in April 1945, details above + a list of courses and instructors.

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| **July 1945** – just three months after its start, the Commandant submitted a report to the War Office that the Medical Academy was suffering major problems. He stated that it was disorganised and there was considerable political unrest caused mainly by a group of Nazi students and teachers. As the Academy was under the oversight of the ICRC, he requested through them that the nazi pows should be transferred and the appointment of an A category pow to oversee discipline.The Medical Academy was later transferred to Sudbury Camp 23.Herrmann Gensler and Herrmann Hildenstein were pows at Le Marchant. They created a journal with 56 pages of watercolour pictures and reflections of their stay between 1944 to 1946. It included a map of the camp, a story-poem with details and personal thoughts about camp life (by Hildenstein), and various painted scenes (by Gensler).The journal can be seen at the Wiltshire Museum in Devizes.“*From a Prisoner of War’s Journal - Daily Life at Camp 23 / A1 Devizes (England)”* >**September 1945** - Appendix to HQ Southern Command War Diary; Le Marchant – Base camp – capacity 7500.**12 March, 1946** – base camp 23 was closed and the site re-formed as 410 German PW Working Camp with a new Commandant. The British officers were also new. (The number ‘23’ was then used by Sudbury Camp).Oversight of re-education activities for pows was carried out by PID (Political Intelligence Department of the Foreign Office) / COGA (Control Office for Germany and Austria – UK). Visits and reports were made. The standard of the reports varied greatly. The visitors took little interest in activities other than re-education, they rarely mention sports, games, pastimes, crafts, etc of the pows.**10/12 April 1946 –** 1st visit by a member of PID (Major H de C Toogood) – requested by the commandant. Strength; 2 officers; 1774 O.R. = 1758 German, 18 Austrian.Commandant: Lt Col K J P Oliphant, M.C. Camp leader: Unterfeldmeister W(illi) Granzeur (est B) Interpreter: 2/Lt P Lootens Deputy C/L: O/Fhr Mohring (C) German M.O.: Unt Arzt Gelissen Most of the pows had been based here at Camp 23, others were transferred from Base Camp 257, (Pennygillam, Cornwall). Only 605 had been politically screened – of these 389 were classified as C (Nazis). |  |
| *© Wiltshire Museum, Devizes* |

The new commandant was supportive of re-education activities and had requested the I/O to develop these.

Summary description of the camp – 4 compounds and 1 camp infirmary. Capacity for over 3000 in huts; electric lighting; large dining hall for 400 – pows eating in 3/4 shifts. Huts provided for reading and writing, recreation and education. A large hut had been fitted with an altar for church services, another had a stage. Two football grounds.

Camp Leader: O/Fw Granzeuer, Willi (A) – 42 years old, a journalist. RC, lived in Austria 1928-38, then worked for Catholic ‘Vorarlberger Volksblatt’. Imprisoned for 1 year by the Nazis in 1938. Joined the Nazi Party in 1942 ‘under pressure’, and he claimed to have requested to leave the following year. *“…has personality, energetic efficient and well educated… A good type, rather morose but runs the camp well. Makes a good impression politically.”* He was not particularly interested in politics. In a later lecturer’s report, it was stated that he was unpopular with some of the pows as he had served in a labour force, rather than in armed service. (Details from 3 reports).

The Deputy and one compound leader were graded C and were found by the visitor to be politically unsuitable. Despite recommending their removal, and the commandant’s agreement, both were still in place for the next report later in April.

When the camp changed from 23 to 410, morale was stated as ‘low’. The men, “*appeared hang-dog and apathetic and there was a general air of depression and neglect.”* It was thought that this was mainly due to lack of interest by the camp staff. Matters were radically changed under the new commandant and British staff with, “*good and just treatment, fair discipline… occupation and recreational facilities*.” Morale had risen to good.

Most of the Pows transferred from Camp 257 had previously been held in camps in the USA. Many were still hard-core Nazis, and their morale was low as they had been mis-informed in the States that they were being returned to Germany. They were regarded as a potential problem.

620 pows were ‘youth’ (under-25) – but this was not seen as a problem.

The standard list of re-education activities was given, but activities had barely started. The list shows not just neglect by the previous commandant and staff, but also by PID. There was a shortage of materials and money:

Wochenpost / Ausblick – insufficient / none. 400 / 100 more copies required.

Newspapers – None from PID. 40 English daily papers purchased – more required. Only an occasional copy of a Swiss paper – more required.

Library – 400 books, including 100 damaged – totally inadequate. [130 more arrived from the YMCA as this inspection ended].

Lectures – none. These should have been arranged by PID.

Discussion groups – had started, but then collapsed when the leader was repatriated. Hoped to restart.

Films – none, and no equipment.

Wireless – none. 5 sets required. The commandant had written twice for a PID grant, but had not received a reply. I have not seen any other camp report where no set was available by 1946.

Camp magazine – started on 7 April 1946. Problems with the duplicator and only 150 copies produced.

Press review – produced, but also insufficient copies.

English instruction – there had been 200 pow pupils, but due to repatriation, down to 100 beginners with just 1 instructor. Some dictionaries and textbooks, but more needed.

Other activities – even these show neglect within the camp –

Religion – No RC padre. An English RC priest attended weekly, but did not speak German. No protestant padre, services held by a pow with a religious interest.

Education – the pows had started some classes for agriculture, Russian, physics, construction, bookkeeping and German. About 15/20 attended each class. The agriculture classes were to be stopped as the leader was graded C.

Theatre – none. Hoped to start.

Orchestra – none. Hoped to start with 15 musicians. There was a band leader and a piano. Lack of funds to buy instruments.

The visitor made several recommendations:

1. 2 pows trained at the special camp at Wilton Park to be transferred here.

2. RC and protestant padres to be appointed.

3. Lectures from PID to begin at once.

4. Grant for wireless sets.

5. Films from PID (and YMCA).

6. More books.

**27 April to 4 May 1946** – 4 members of PID carried out political screening at the camp and surveyed re-education activities.

Strength: 1745 pows, comprising: 488 pows from USA.

591 from Camp 23.

557 workers from various camps.

 44 permanent pow staff without PID gradings.

 32 “ “ “ with “ “

 26 Austrians

 7 – not listed above.

The overall assessment of the camp was politically; “Grey/Black” (B/C).

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| Screening: | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C | C+ | Unknown |
|  | 2 | 47 | 0 | 118 | 562 | 404 | 379 | 226 | 5 |

35% of C grade pows was a very high number. The pows from the USA were a serious problem; “*mainly tough types captured in North Africa… a depressing influence on the remaining P/W, who resent their presence…. Arrogant and extremely insolent.”* In one compound, the good progress made on political re-education was being adversely affected – as were relationships with some local farmers. The report stated that some of these men were ‘redeemable’ as their attitude had to a large part been affected by the mis-information to their destination, and their ignorance of political events. However, a large number were, “*dangerously near open rebellion*.” It was recommended that the unruly pows be distributed widely to other camps.

Some of the German camp staff were described:

Camp leader – see April report above.

Deputy leader: Fhnr Moering [or Mohring], Walter (B-) – 26 years old, a teacher. A member of the Hitler Youth (HY) 1933-41, and Nazi Party from 1937. *“He speaks good English and works quite well under his superior. A change, at present, is not desirable.”* Previously graded C.

German pow interpreter: Gefr. Viegelmann, Herbert, (A) – 34 years old, a merchant. “*This man is a typical American*” – a rather strange comment, considering; “*Born in Manila, Philippines, of German parentage, he left for Tokyo on business in 1941. He was then compelled to leave for Europe by the German ambassador… His English is better than his German and he also speaks fluent Spanish.”* Unfortunately, he suffered from a pronounced stammer which made his work as an interpreter difficult.

Leader of B Compound: Hauptwachm Schilling, Kurt (C) – 28 years old, a hairdresser. HY from 1933-34; “*this man makes a rather untrustworthy impression. A sullen type*.” It was recommended that he remain in place at that time, but then be replaced.

Deputy of B Compound: Obersteuermann Assmann, Siegfried (B-) – 27 years old, a farmer. HY from 1933-36, Navy from 1938; *“The usual ‘U-boat’ type, who is gradually progressing towards conversion to democracy.”*

Leader of C Compound: Owm Sildenat, Willi - in hospital, not seen.

Deputy of C Compound: Fw Kersten, Gerhard (B-) – 31 years old, a baker. In S.A. Motorsturm [National Socialist Motor Corps] from 1934-36 and soldier since 1938. *“The usual regular soldier type, efficient but no political sense.”*

Leader of D Compound: Oberwachm Landohr [or Langohr], Erich (A) – 30 years old, a baker. RC against Nazism, no party affiliations. “*A decent, straightforward type with not too strong a personality.*” The same person who had previously been graded as political C.

Leader of H Compound: Hauptfeldw Kettlehake, Fritz (B-) – 31 years old, a regular soldier. HY from 1933-34, soldier from 1935. “*The right man at the moment for this compound which houses the unruly elements from the US. A new selection, previous leaders not being able to handle the compound satisfactorily*.”

Deputy of H Compound: Hauptfw Schloter, Karl (B) – 33 years old, served with police 1932-36, then enrolled in forces. “*A good type who is allowing the effects of five years captivity to express itself in demonstrations of unusual excitability*.” (!?)

Protestant Padre: Marine Kriegspfarrer (chaplain) Schwemmer, Hermann (B+) – 34 years old. “*Quite a good type who complains of the difficulties of his task.”* Attendance at church was poor, as the padre stated most pows were RC. He requested that a RC Priest be sent to the camp.

Camp M.O.’s: Stabsarzt Dr Med. Rein, Gottfried (B) – 30 years old. In Studenten SA from 1933 to 1939. “*A young and intelligent type who seems an honest convert to democracy.”* One of the pows sent from the USA – recommended by US authorities.

Unterarzt Dr Gilles En, Gunther (B+) – 28 years old. HY from 1933-37, dismissed through lack of participation. *“A young and intelligent type, cheerful and keenly interested in his work. Was M.O. before Dr Rein took over*.”

Proposed leader of Discussion Group: Uffz Dr Runge, Harry (B+) – 32 years old, a business man. Owned a flax spinning and weaving firm in Riga – fled to Germany in 1941. *“An exceptionally intelligent man and is doing good work on the re-educational site of the camp life. Speaks English.”*

Re-education activities were being slowly developed by the Interpreter Officer (Lootens) and Dr Runge. There were high expectations for the camp, however, despite being an Interpreter, Lootens only had limited German. It was recommended that a S/Sgt Interpreter be sent to assist.

The standard list of re-education activities was not given. 5 wireless sets ordered using canteen profits had still not arrived. Only 1 lecturer had visited up to this point, however they became regular afterwards.

The camp still needed: books, lecturers, films, pamphlets, German newspapers, religious books, footballs and games.

**16-18 May 1946** – Comments by a visiting lecturer: *“There is in this camp a group of 700 Nazis freshly brought over from the United States. 226 of them have been classified C+ when screened a fortnight ago.”* The ringleaders of the Nazis in one compound arranged a boycott of his lecture about ‘democracy’.

**3 June 1946** – Patney hostel taken over from Eden Vale Camp 114. (A later report gave the date as 1 May).

**29 & 30 June 1946** – a visiting lecturer, Mr Beer, provided some details of the main camp and 3 hostels – Patney, Everleigh, and Druid’s Lodge.

The main camp had *“ideal facilities*” and the commandant showed justice and fairness. Activities included a camp magazine, debating circle, and many education courses.

Patney hostel held about 70 pows.

Everleigh hostel had been formed 2 weeks earlier and was only just being “*put into shape*”.

Druid’s Lodge had been formed a week earlier and was still being built up.

[The commandant later raised complaints about Mr Beer as he was apparently not very efficient and too demanding].

**30 July – 2 August 1946** – Dr R Koch reported on re-education and to screen some of the pows from the USA. Strength; 1 officer; 2374 OR.

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| Numbers: | Main camp | Druid’s Lodge | Everleigh | Patney | Billets |
|  | 1866 | 227 | 106 | 78 | 98 |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Screening: | A+ | A | B+ | B | B- | C | Unscreened |
|  | 5 | 116 | 300 | 813 | 459 | 400 | 282 |

Commandant: Lt Col K J P Oliphant, M.C. Camp leader: O/Fw Langehr, Erich (A) . Due for repatriation

Interpreter: 2/Lt P Lootens Deputy C/L: O/Fw Streich, Herbert (B)

 German M.O.: St Arzt Dr Rein (A) & U Arzt Gillissen (B+)

The commandant and interpreter were highly praised for their work in developing re-education.

5 compounds were in use. Compound D was used by the permanent pow staff of 247. G had mainly intakes (251) from Belgium where they had suffered extremely poor conditions. Compound H held 400 pows from the USA.

Morale was recorded as ‘Fair.’ Positive factors were excellent treatment by the British staff, educational activities, good conditions, pow staff, sports and good comradeship. The main negative factor, as in other camps, was the longing for repatriation.

25% were ‘youth’. Though not seen as a problem, 8 youth, ex-SS men were to be posted elsewhere.

The standard list of re-education activities showed many improvements:

Wochenpost / Ausblick – 500 / 225 copies received.

Newspapers – 50 daily papers + weekly papers. Hostels were supplied from the main camp.

Library – 610 books. More needed.

Lectures – regular.

Discussion groups – held weekly by a team of pows who also visited the hostels. A further weekly meeting was held for the youth pows.

Films – from YMCA. A wider range required.

Wireless – 1 set with 8 loudspeakers. Hostels had their own sets.

Camp magazine – 320 copies. More supplies of paper and stencils required. A special paper for the youth pows was planned.

Press review – every Sunday.

English instruction – 109 pupils, 4 grades, 2 teachers, 104 textbooks. Only 8 copies of ‘English For All’ received – more needed.

Other activities –

Religion - Protestant padre, Schwemmer (B+) held Sunday services with about 60 in the congregation. Two Bible classes each week + a daily short service. He also visited the hostels. An English RC priest from Devizes and a Dutch RC clergyman ‘from the nearby Dutch camp’ also visited the main camp.

Education – classes for carpentry, applied electricity, various technical subjects, book-keeping, shorthand, Spanish, French, Russian.

Theatre – 12 members giving shows every 3 weeks and visiting the hostels. Plays needed.

Orchestra – 12 players giving popular music concerts every Sunday.

After this report there are some mixed comments by visiting lecturers. All stated that conditions had improved and that the camp was well organised. Opinions on morale ranged from ‘depressed’ to ‘good’. Politically the camp was usually described as nationalistic and with Nazi views still expressed by many – however, it was also stated to be increasingly democratic in pow outlook.

**10 / 11 August 1946** – P F Doring, a lecturer, gave a glowing report on the camp;

The commandant; “*is the finest type of the professional British officer.”* His work was splendid and the changes brought about astounding. The British staff were a splendid team. The Interpreter, P Lootens, was enthusiastic and devoted – it was revealed that his mother had been killed by Nazis in Holland.

The camp had beautiful flower beds, merry fountains, a model windmill, bee hives, and was spotlessly clean. The commandant had ordered the removal of barbed wire, resulting in *“an atmosphere of trust and even happiness*.”

**11-13 October 1946** – another very positive report by a visiting lecturer, E F Stark, with some comments about the running of the camp. Mr Stark had previously visited the camp when it was Camp 23 and he noted how conditions had; “*markedly improved*” with the main camp and hostels kept “*in a marvellous way*.”

*“… the camp is dominated by ‘Berufsfeldwebel’* [career sergeants] *with a strong military and nationalistic outlook. A few people have been transferred there to do the educational work; all of them are Wiltonians* [Special training centre at Camp 300 Wilton Park]. *Their work, however, is apparently sabotaged by the German camp administration which is definitely against any democratic re-orientation*.”

**9-10 November 1946** – lecturer’s notes. The main camp had been reduced to 800 pows. Good morale.

**Undated, late 1946** – In a report issued by Mr Dagnall, regarding English Education at the camp, he stated that the camp had become more like a transit camp; “*Large arrivals and departures occur at any moment…. Ps/W go straight from Devizes to the boats when repatriated.”*

**10-13 December 1946** – Dr Koch returned to make a report on re-education and carry out further screening. Strength; 4 officers; 1198 O.R.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Numbers: | Main camp | Druid’s Lodge | Everleigh | Patney | Billets |
|  | 753 | 193 | 94 | 85 | 77 |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Screening: | A+ | A | B+ | B | B- | C | Unscreened |
|  | 1 | 65 | 115 | 591 | 279 | 151 | - |

150 appeals had been made against political grades – the better the grade, the sooner repatriated, in theory. 439 pows repatriated to date.

Commandant: Lt Col K J P Oliphant, M.C. Camp leader: O/Fw Streich, Herbert (B)

Interpreter: Capt P Lootens Previously 2nd/Lt Deputy C/L: Uffz. Kolbe (B+)

 German M.O.: Dr Bucholz (C); Dr Alin (B); Dr Pfeil (B) All new.

High praise for the commandant and especially the Interpreter Officer.

“*The camp will be disbanded at the beginning of January, the men and most of the British Officers under the CO will be posted to 114 camp at Westbury/Wilts*.” Westbury = Eden Vale Camp 114. It is believed the camp continued to February. If the CO was transferred it was only for a short time as the Commandant at 114 was recorded as Lt Col Digges in Spring 1947.

The camp leader had been deputy and was ‘promoted’ in September. “*Without political interests, he is capable and reliable.”*

Morale was regarded as fair, slow repatriation and bad news from Germany being the main negative factors.

A secret poll was held with the pows estimating their own political grades – 88% took part and results = 59% considered themselves as A; 39½% as B; 1½% as C. Although this is at wide variance with actual screening, the visitor agreed that many pows had grades which were too high. Attempting to stimulate political discussion, elections for a Camp Parliament were being held, with groupings calling themselves; Communist; Social democrat; Christian democrat; Liberal. Polling day was to be on 15 December and the Parliament would then oversee re-education activities.

Youth pows had their own ‘club’ and camp paper; *Der Junge Weg,* (The Way of Youth).

The standard list of re-education activities was given. For the most part it was very similar to the previous report. Differences – 900 books in the library; COGA were sending popular films; an Information Room had been created.

Religion – moderate interest. Protestant padre, Schwemmer, was still in place and regarded as beneficial. There were two RC priests – Zander (B) and Piechutta (B) who visited 10 other camps. Zander was recorded as a trouble-maker. The Bishop of Berlin had visited the camp on 13 December.

Education classes, theatre and orchestra continued. There was a rare mention of sports which included boxing, football, handball, hockey, wrestling and weight-lifting.

**22 December 1946** – main camp down to 320 pows, though hostels still holding steady numbers.

**February, 1947** – the camp closed.

Known Camp Commandants:

1944 – 1945: Lieutenant Colonel John Trelawney Upton. Previously commandant at The Hayes Camp 5.

1945 - 1946: Lieutenant Colonel Ayers – transferred to Sudbury Camp 23.

March 1946 - 1947: Lieutenant Colonel K J P Oliphant MC.

**After the camp:** Area marked ‘c’ now a residential area.

**Further information:**

Diary and other details of Devizes at War - <https://museumsinwiltshire.org.uk/collections/prisoner-of-war-diary/>

Further details of the journal at the Wiltshire Museum were published by Lisa Brown and Frank Safran in ‘trilithon’, the Newsletter of the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, No.77, September 2015.

\* For further details of the escape plots see - 'For Fuhrer and Fatherland', by R De Normann, Sutton Publishing, 1996.

# National Archives – FO 939/318 – 410 Working Camp, Le Marchant camp, Devizes, Wiltshire. Used above.

# Hostels:

# Druid’s Lodge – about 18 miles from the main camp. NGR SU 097 390.

# June 1946 – hostel opened for pows from USA and Belgium.

# July 1946 – Hostel leader; O/Fw Goldschmidt (B+) “*satisfactory*”. 227 pows. Morale fair. English lessons due to start.

# 9-10 November 1946 – lecturer’s notes - 207 pows.

# December 1946 – same hostel leader. 193 pows.

# Note Everleigh / Patney below; June vs December – changes of places for a couple of hostel leaders, was this a recording error? Sachse also recorded as (B) and then as (C) and the comment made “*unsuitable and will be replaced.*”

**Everleigh** – about 17 miles from the main camp.Possibly in large army camp located in Everleigh. General NGR SU 206 536.

**17 June 1946** – hostel opened with pows from Belgium.Described as; “*open and isolated.*”

# July 1946 – Hostel leader; O/Fw Sachse, Kurt (B) “*satisfactory*”. 106 pows.

# October 1946 – visiting lecturer’s notes – 104 pows. “*the hostel leader… made some very strong anti-Nazi remarks. In this camp, this has to be noted. The hostel is kept tidy, the discipline seems to be good, the morale is higher than in the other hostels of this camp.”*

# December 1946 – O/Feldw. Mummer (B+) Previously hostel leader at Patney. 94 pows.

# Patney – about 5 miles from main camp. General NGR SU 072 584.

**May / June 1946** – taken over from Eden Vale Camp 114. About 70 pows, mostly from the USA. Morale improved when restrictions on walking around the “*tiny compound*” had been removed at the end of June. Gardens started here.

# July 1946 - Hostel leader; O/Fw Mummer, Martin (B+) “*satisfactory*”. 78 pows. 1 small class of 4 pupils learning English. Also classes for French and Russian. Theatre group of 10 men just started.

# October 1946 – notes by lecturer – 102 pows… “*there is not a good co-operation between them and the corporal in charge of the hostel*.” A petty act by the corporal was recorded where he took the wireless set away for the morning of the lecture. *“The lagerfűhrer and his deputy are clear examples of nazified Oberfeldwebels* [master sergeant or senior NCOs]*; their political outlook is nationalistic and they don’t hide their sympathies with the former Nazi regime. The hostel is run in an efficient way.”*

**9-10 November 1946** – lecturer’s notes - about 90 pows.

**December 1946** – Hostel leader O/Feldw Sachse (C). 85 pows.

Article about a pow who returned to visit the site – “*By the time Mr Gibhard arrived at Patney, the war was over and he was allowed to come and go from the camp pretty much as he pleased. But food was still scarce and the inmates used to supplement their diet with rabbits caught using a trained ferret*.” It states that there is now a housing estate where the camp was sited.

<https://www.gazetteandherald.co.uk/news/7309771.pow-finds-wartime-pal-again/>