**Camp 153** **- Fulney Park Camp, Spalding, Lincolnshire**

Included in the 1945 ICRC camp list – Labour Camp. 153. Fulney Park, Spalding, Lincolnshire.

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| **1947 Camp list** |
| 153(G.W.C.) | Fulney Park, Spalding, Lincs | N. | Priswar, Spalding | Spalding 2198 | Spalding | Lt.Col.C.T.Ingle | v/1453/2 |

|  |
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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 |
| TF272 222 | 131 | 153 | Fulney Park, Low Fulney, Spalding | Lincolnshire | 3 | German Working Camp | Formerly a large dispersed camp, currently a market garden |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Location:** Just to the E of Spalding.Huts dotted all over the place!**Before the camp:** **Pow Camp:** Italian and then German pows.**“***Fulney Camp was built and used by the Army as a communications site during the war. After hostilities ceased, it was then used as a POW camp... The Camp covered about 5 or 6 acres, and included a reinforced concrete communications bunker, a large vehicle servicing workshop with underground fuel storage tanks, a cookhouse and mess, an entertainment hall complete with stage, together with numerous Nissen huts for accommodation, plus a brick-built ablutions building. There was also a hut built from insulated panels for use as a medical and sick-bay. The whole site was all served by a purpose-built sewage farm, with all the underground pipes being encased in concrete. It was therefore a self-contained unit, and luckily escaped any direct war damage. The site has all now been restored to its former pre-war state.”* ( <https://www.heritagesouthholland.co.uk/> )**Spring/Summer 1945** – listed as opened with capacity of 500. (Progress report 152 – FO 939/383). May have been open before this time with Italian pows,**1 August 1945** - an urgent memorandum was sent to this camp, and others, about maintaining records of Italians who were classed as ‘co-operators’. At this point many, sometimes all, of the Italian pows were in hostels / billets.**15 September 1945** - Hostel listed for pows from this camp, (WO 32/10737): Kirton, Boston, Lincolnshire |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1958 |

**1946** – Additional intake of many pows from camps in the USA. Most had very low morale as they had been misinformed in the US that they were being repatriated. Instead, they found themselves in working camps in the UK.

**May 1946** - Camp magazine; *Feierabend* (End of the Working Day), edition 9 - [Feierabend Camp 153 : Monatschrift der Deutsche Kriegsgefangenen in Fulney Park - The Wiener Holocaust Library](https://www.whlcollections.org/image/99736/)

**14-16 December 1946** - As part of the re-education programme administered by the Control Office for Germany and Austria (COGA), Paul Bondy, a German-speaking refugee gave lectures at the main camp and 6 hostels.

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| Oversight and development of re-education activities and English teaching for German 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, if any, in activities other than re-education. They rarely mentioned welfare, sports, games, pastimes, crafts, etc of the pows. If there were still Italian pows in hostels, they were usually ignored by PID. |

**6-19 January 1947** – Report on a visit by 2 members of the Segregation Section, mainly to review screening. Strength; 2 Officers (the M.O.s), 1649 Other Ranks. [1681 recorded in screening figures below]. The report stated it was the 5th PID visit – but previous reports are not in the National Archive file.

Commandant: Lt Col Ingle. Camp leader: Obfw Alfred Schauland (A)

Interpreter: S/Sgt Hawkins Deputy C/L: Fw Willi Dehus (B)

 German M.O.: Stabsarzt Dr Heinz Wardemann (B) at HQ / Stabsarzt Dr Gletsmann (Sutton Bridge)

The Commandant had no interest in re-education, (most did not). The camp was run on a, “*strict military basis… Discipline and a very strict adherence to the letter of the law are the guiding principles in this camp.”* The visitor clearly felt this Commandant was taking things too far, “*bordering on pedantry.”*

The interpreter was regarded as good and honest, but limited – “*picked up his rather sketchy German in a pow camp in Germany*.”

Camp leader – aged 34, well respected by British and the pows, “*but seems to have an unfortunate diffidence, bordering almost on fear, of approaching the Commandant on matters concerning his compatriots.”*

Deputy C/L – aged 29, previously graded (C), but after an appeal was upgraded to (B). “*An honest hard-working man.”*

The M.O. was pleasant and efficient. He had been a Rottenfűhrer in the SA in 1933, but it was believed he had little interest in politics.

Gefr Heinz Borges (B-) was a dentist by profession, but served in an infantry unit. In pow Camp 79 he had again taken up the role as dentist. In this camp he was overdue for repatriation having been captured in 1942 – but the Commandant would not release him as he could not find a replacement. The visitors asked for this man’s situation to be addressed in the near future to allow his release.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening: | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C | C+ | Unknown |
|  | - | 87 | - | 260 | 917 | 273 | 144 | - | - |

**20/22 January 1947** – Re-educational survey. Strength 2 officers, 1689 OR.

Morale was affected by the rigid discipline, length of captivity and bad news from Germany.

Youth pows (under 25) – almost 50% of the camp. No special provision for them.

The standard list of re-education activities was given:

Wochenpost and Ausblick - 250/150 respectively.

Newspapers – Extremely poor. Only ‘The Times’ ordered and paid for from the Welfare Fund, (profits raised from sales in the canteen). Other papers were obtained by pows privately. 4/8 German papers received weekly. 0 Swiss papers in the last 6 months.

Library - 1246 books. Hostels could order books from the HQ.

Lectures – regular at HQ and hostels; popular with discussions following. At one lecture entitled; ‘A Mother struggles against Hitler,’ the S/Sgt stopped the discussion and since then the pows had been reluctant to speak out.

Discussion groups – organised by a committee of pows at HQ and the hostels.

Films - Gaumont British weekly and YMCA fortnightly at HQ and hostels.

Wireless – at HQ in the leader’s office with 3 camp loudspeakers – some reception interference. Each hostel had its own wireless.

Camp Magazine – 300 copies produced monthly.

Press review – discussions held about the news.

English instruction – 280 students at all sites with 11 teachers + 75 studying privately.

Information room – being developed.

Other Camp Activities –

Religion – 50/50 Protestant / Catholic. Pows in hostels could visit local churches. Protestant padre Ogefr Welke (B) also visited the hostels. The RC padre from Horbling Camp 80 visited this camp.

Education – small classes for French, Russian, Spanish and book-keeping at HQ.

Entertainment – At HQ a theatre group with 26 members and a 6 member orchestra playing chamber and light music. A choir of 12. Football, handball, table tennis and boxing were popular – an occasional sports meeting was held.

**21/23 May 1947** – Re-educational survey. Strength; 2 officers, 1910 OR.

Commandant: Lt Col C T Ingle. Camp leader: Uffz Hans Meyer (B+)

Interpreter: S/Sgt A Clark Deputy C/L: Owm Karl Blase (B+)

\* (Doctor’s name Gletsmann / Gleitzmann / Gleitsmann) >> German M.O.: Stabsarzt Dr Erich Rohleder (B) HQ / Stabsarzt Dr Hans Gletsmann\* (Sutton Bridge)

The new interpreter had been in place for 6 weeks, he played no role in re-education.

A new leader, aged 37, a member of the SA in 1933 and then the Nazi party – “*a forward type, outspoken and not afraid to assume responsibility*.”

Deputy C/L, aged 32, a merchant.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening: | A | B+ | B | B- | C |
|  | 45 | 295 | 1227 | 344 | 1 |

16 pows were appealing against their political grades – the better the grade, the sooner repatriated – in theory. 413 pows repatriated to date.

As the weather improved there was less interest in attending re-education activities. Noteworthy changes;

Newspapers – a greater range of British papers received. Some Swiss papers to individuals.

Library – 1800 books.

Films – Gaumont / YMCA films alternate weeks. Pows thought many films were poor quality.

English instruction – down to 180 students at all sites, this decline was occurred in most camps. Many studying privately.

Information room – The canteen was used to show exhibitions of texts and pictures sent by COGA. After HQ, the materials were circulated to the hostels.

Education – classes had declined as pows preferred to walk out of camp in their free time.

Entertainment – at HQ, a theatre group continued. The orchestra was “*in reality a jazz band*.” As well as sports, chess was popular.

**19-20 August 1947** – Re-educational survey. Strength 2 officers; 1779 OR.

Only one change to senior personnel – S/Sgt Clark was joined by S/Sgt Kennedy.

The Commandant, though still not supporting re-education, did not put obstacles in the way of activities and was allowing some pows to attend outside institutions.

There were 2 dentists – Uffz Walter Koeber (B) and Uffz Georg Dohrmann (A) – so hopefully Gefr Heinz Borges, mentioned previously, had been repatriated.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening: | A | B+ | B | B- |
|  | 3 | 313 | 1137 | 328 |

872 pows repatriated to date. Morale was recorded as fairly high except at Love Lane, which continued to be low. Slow repatriation and bad news from Germany were the main negative factors.

Although it was considered that there were no Nazis, there were some *“unruly elements which have necessitated special treatment from disciplinary and re-educational angles*.” [Difficult to know how ‘re-education’ would change any ‘unruly element.’].

Changes to re-education activities –

Library - 2600 books

Discussion groups – suspended mainly due to good weather and pows preferring to walk out.

Films – Travelling Films had replaced Gaumont British. Many pows preferred to spend 9d (9 pennies) by going out to the more comfortable local cinema, than spending 6d to see often old films provided by TF in camp. (It also gave them a chance to meet local girls).

Wireless – improved at HQ with 2 sets and 24 loudspeakers. Reception of stations including those from Germany became possible.

Camp magazine – the main publication had ceased due to lack of paper and a working typewriter. A small news-sheet (Rundblick) was issued once or twice a week.

Many pows had developed their own personal contacts with local families and those they worked with. Some additional formal contacts were being developed with – Spalding Council, TocH, Salvation Army, local libraries and churches.

**19-21 September 1947** – Re-educational survey. Strength; 2 officers, 1656 OR.

No change to senior personnel. The Commandant was described as; “*an old soldier.”* He was still inflicting strict military discipline, including, at HQ, four roll calls every day.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening: | A | B+ | B | B- |
|  | 2 | 290 | 1057 | 309 |

893 pows repatriated to date.

There were good relationships with many families in Spalding. 860 civilians attended a variety show given by the pows in a local cinema.

A ‘Lager Parliament’ with 2 groups had started to discuss difficulties in the camp. One group was made up with a representative from each hut. The 2nd group comprised ‘senior’ pows – the leader, deputy, doctor, chaplain, sports organiser, canteen manager, etc. The Parliament had no formal power, but was a useful way to discuss issues.

The camp magazine had re-started.

Religion – The camp padre had recently been repatriated, there was no replacement. RC mass was held weekly by a visiting chaplain. There was little interest, but pows were able to attend local churches.

**October / November 1947** – In the camp magazine*: “Two PoW weddings in our camp.*

*The first two weddings of members of our camp with English "Fräuleins" have taken place. Contrary to all expectations (given the already prematurely advanced state of fraternization in some of our hostels and the apparent lag of the main camp in this area), two comrades from the main camp won the race and set a good example.*

*On October 25, Hans Kastner was married to Miss Gladys Dimmock, and just a week later, on November 1, Georg Vetter and Miss Le Heron followed them to the altar. And, as we hear, these are not the last. The wedding ceremony in the office responsible for this in our camp is said to be quite impressive.*

*Comrade Vetter's wedding was a dignified celebration attended by many camp members. The choir from the Love Lane Hostel sang, and a friend of the hostel leader played the organ. We wish both couples the best of luck on their future endeavors!”* [‘Love Lane Hostel would seem to be well named in this situation].

**20 – 23 November 1947** – Re-educational survey. Strength; 2 officers, 1549 OR.

Commandant: Lt Col C T Ingle. Camp leader: Owm Karl Blase (B)

Interpreter: S/Sgt A Clark & S/Sgt Kennedy Deputy C/L: Willi Reinatz (B)

 German M.O.: Stabsarzt Dr Erich Rohleder (B) HQ / Stabsarzt Dr Hans Gleitsmann (Sutton Bridge)

The leader had been the deputy. Previously he had raised several personal grievances, he seemed to have overcome these, but, “*he is fettered in his utterances by a sense of duty towards the Commandant.”*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening: | A | B+ | B | B- |
|  | 3 | 263 | 994 | 291 |

1169 pows repatriated to date.

Morale – “*Indifferent.”* General depression about continued captivity was made worse by the Commandant. An example was given of Pows receiving sentences of 28 days for being improperly dressed. The two main positive factors were increased repatriations and friendly relationships with locals. However, a note was made that many of the pows had been sent from camps in the north of England and Scotland where they stated the civilians were even more friendly.

Northern Command had issued an order that forbade the use of heating in sleeping quarters. The barracks were increasingly becoming *“a direct menace to health, particularly as most of the men are working in wet fields during the daytime.”* This was recorded in the report and the Commandant had written for permission to modify the order on medical grounds and enclosed a certificate from a civilian doctor.

A good range of ‘formal’ outside contacts was being developed, though the Commandant complained about the additional work this caused. Many of the contacts were for educational purposes such as classes with the WEA, but some were for social events:

* Pows allowed to attend dances at Spalding, but each man had to apply to the Commandant for permission some days earlier, which caused irritation.
* Sutton Bridge Conservative Women’s Club held dances each Monday evening attended by 25-30 pows and 20 women. On Thursdays there was a general dance.
* The Love Lane pow band gave concerts at Holbeach.
* An organist and a string quartet from Sutton Bridge played at a concert in the Methodist Church.
* Pows visited Spalding cinema, some attending several times a week.

There was a new Protestant padre, Gefr Gerhard Schodde (A), “*a good influence.”* He spent most of his time attempting to resolve personal problems that many pows experienced.

The theatre group at HQ had been disbanded, (probably due to repatriations).

**1-3 January 1948** – Re-educational survey. Strength; 2 officers, 1145 OR.

No change to senior personnel.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening: | A | B+ | B | B- |
|  | 3 | 195 | 713 | 236 |

1338 pows repatriated to date.

It was stated that morale had improved. Many pows spent time with local families over Christmas. The request for heating in barracks had been allowed for 3 days a week.

Some pows were requesting to remain in the UK – especially those from the Russian zone where their families advised them not to return. A few of the pows who were due to return to the Russian zone were professing agreement with “*the Russian view of things.”* In some camps, pows stated they were communists, this was not recorded at this camp. 48 men at HQ and 50 at Love Lane had deferred their repatriation.

It was difficult to find replacements for German pow administrative staff as their pay was lower than that for those who worked out of camp.

There are no more reports in the file.

Known Camp Commandants;

1947 Lieutenant Colonel C T Ingle, from the Lincolnshire Regiment.

**After the camp:** Used for a while to house displaced persons. 2019 huge plant nursery.

**Further Information:**

National Archives FO 1120/228 – Re-educational survey visit reports for camps 151 to 154. Dated 1 January 1946 to 31 December 1948. Includes Camp magazine from November 1947. Used above.

The German Federal Archives has a copy of the camp magazine.

**POW NUMBERS**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Open |  |  | With other camps |  |  | Unknown |  |  | Not open |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1945/46 | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 11/1947 | 1/1948 |
| Fulney HQ |  | 364 | 367 | 337 | 317 | 347 | 352 |
| Kirton |  | With C254 | 118 | 119 | 103 | 97 | 117 | 53 |
| Holbeach Drove | With C254 | 66 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Delph Bank | With C254 | 46 | 49 | 49 | 51 | 50 | 24 |
| Love Lane |  | 390 | 418 | 410 | 380 | 318 | 310 |
| Sutton Bridge I | Camp 254 | 121 | 861 | 729 | 642 | 588 | 292 |
| Sutton Bridge II | 433 |
| Weston | With C80 |  | 84 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Billets |  | 69 | 98 | 153 | 171 | 131 | 116 |
| TOTALS |  | 1691 | 1912 | 1781 | 1658 | 1551 | 1147 |

**Satellite camp - Sutton Bridge I and II**, 17 miles from the main camp. Previously independent camp 254. The leader at Camp II was senior.

**1/1947** – C.O. Capt R J McLaughlin. He had been 2nd i/c when the camp was independent.

Hostel leader I: Owm Fritz Gericke (B+)

Hostel leader II: Owm Wilhelm Ballmueller (B-), had been leader when this was camp 254. “*Clever and undoubtedly an opportunist”* – however he was also efficient, popular and had a good influence. The following report stated he was, “*still Nazi inclined”* but he was maintaining discipline “*at the wishes of the Commandant.”*

Many pows were political grade C – Nazis, when this had been an independent camp, including the M.O. Dr Gleitsmann.

Classes held for French, Russian, Spanish, book-keeping, agriculture and electro-technology. An 8 member orchestra played classical, chamber and dance music. 30 member choir.

**5/1947** – Same leaders. Orchestra with 10 players for classical music and gave concerts in church.

**8/1947** – same C.O. A new leader at Camp II; Owm Kurt Rimbach (B+), aged 32, mechanic – “*outspoken personality… should be more benevolent than the former chief Camp Leader.”* The hostel requested that a better wireless set be provided.

**11/1947** – same leaders. There was a request for Russian newspapers – presumably by those who would have to return to the Russian zone. There were loudspeakers in every hut connected to the wireless. A pow had used his own savings to supply the camp with condensers, amplifiers and other equipment.

**1/1948** – same leaders. Most pows were placed in the Sutton Bridge Camp I.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1945/46 | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 11/1947 | 1/1948 |
| Sutton Bridge I | Camp 254 | 121 | 861 | 729 | 642 | 588 | 292 |
| Sutton Bridge II | 433 |

**Hostels**

**Delph Bank**. 8 miles from the main camp. Delph Bank appears on older OS maps – site possibly where a camping site is now located at TF 398 246 – not confirmed.

**June 1946** – recorded as a hostel with Sutton Bridge camp 254

**1/1947** – Hostel leader; Obwm Heinz Hoell (B+), “*very pleasant type and efficient. This is the happiest of all the hostels although conditions are most primitive. Again, nothing is being done about re-education.”*

No electricity supply. Films were shown in a local Youth Club Hall and later in the cinema in Holbeach.

**11/1947** – same leader. There were loudspeakers in every hut connected to the wireless – battery DC power was still in use. **1/1948** – same leader.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1945/46 | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 11/1947 | 1/1948 |
| Delph Bank | With C254 | 46 | 49 | 49 | 51 | 50 | 24 |

**Holbeach Drove**. 12 miles from the main camp.

**June 1946** – recorded as a hostel with Sutton Bridge camp 254

**1/1947** – Hostel leader; Fdw Hans Hunger (B), aged 41, Nazi Party member in 1934 - “*Keen and satisfactory in his work.”* No re-education activities.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1945/46 | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 11/1947 | 1/1948 |
| Holbeach Drove | With C254 | 66 |  |  |  |  |  |

**Kirton**, Boston, Lincolnshire. 12 miles from the main camp.

**15 September 1945** - Hostel listed for pows from this camp, (WO 32/10737): Kirton, Boston, Lincolnshire

**June 1946** – recorded as a hostel with Sutton Bridge camp 254

**1/1947** – Hostel leader; Obwm Eduard Gutbrod (B). A regular soldier “*with not much intelligence*” but he was popular with British and pows. The majority of pows in this hostel “*showing almost surly indifference to anything political.”* **11/1947** – same leader.

**1/1948** – Hostel leader; K Kuenne (B-)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1945/46 | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 11/1947 | 1/1948 |
| Kirton |  | With C254 | 118 | 119 | 103 | 97 | 117 | 53 |

**Love Lane.** Spalding.1½ miles from the main camp.

**1/1947** – Hostel leader; Fw Martin Kuntzsch (B+). Newly appointed, aged 40, a merchant. “*Intelligent and politically sound.”* Re-education was progressing well at this hostel. There were also classes for English, French, and history of art.

The previous leader was Obfw Werner Langner who had to step down due to ill health.

**5/1947** – Hostel leader; Hfw. Kurt Bauschmann (B-), aged 41, textile department manager, “*an opportunist but serves Commandant’s purpose of keeping the hostel in order*.” Low morale recorded as 50% were from camps in the USA. *“The orchestra of 8 indulges in popular tunes.”*

**1/1948** – same leader.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1945/46 | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 11/1947 | 1/1948 |
| Love Lane |  | 390 | 418 | 410 | 380 | 318 | 310 |

**Weston.** 4 miles from the main camp.

**During 1945** - St Lambert’s Hall, Weston. TF 299 266.

**1/1947** – Hostel leader; Fw Bartolomaeus (B+)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1945/46 | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 11/1947 | 1/1948 |
| Weston | With C80 |  | 84 |  |  |  |  |  |