**Camp 78** **- High Garrett Camp, Halstead Road, Braintree, Essex**

Included in the 1945 ICRC camp list – Labour Camp. 78. High Garrett Camp, Braintree, Essex.

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| **1947 Camp list.** | | | | | | | |
| 78(G.W.C.) | High Garrett Camp, Braintree, Essex | E. | Priswar, Braintree | Braintree 735 | Braintree (L.N.E.R.) | Lt.Col.G.W. Ladds | 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 |
| TL 781 274 | 167 | 78 | High Garrett Camp, Halstead Road, Braintree | Essex | 4 | German Working Camp | STANDARD type. Site occupied by a wireless mast |

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| **Location:** About 4.5 km N of Braintree.  **Before the camp**: Farmland  **Pow Camp:** Italian then German POWs.  **1942** – Camp opened.  **12 February 1943** - International Red Cross inspection - Italian prisoners, capacity 750. Camp discipline was described as; ‘*left somewhat to be desired.*’ 24 pows were in detention for refusing to carry out tasks which they believed would assist the war effort. It was not a happy camp at this time and it was noted that; “*There are certainly a few characters in this Camp who do not willingly co-operate with the authorities, but the impression is that a more indulgent attitude towards the prisoners and a more active interest in their welfare would greatly contribute to improve the atmosphere in this Camp*.” (Prisoners of war camps in the United Kingdom – reports FO 916/581). |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1955 |

**1943** – Hostels listed for Italian pows: Belchamp Walter, Boxford, Finchingfield.

**5 May 1944** - Hostel listed for Italian pows from this camp, (WO 32/10737): Belchamp Walter, Sudbury, Essex.

**May 1944** - The camp was listed as an Italian Labour Battalion under the Eastern Command area, (WO 32/10737).

**Summer 1944** – German pows arrive. *High Garrett POW camp stood within sight of the airbase at Wethersfield, in north Essex. By day the USAF, and by night the RAF, took off on a conveyor-belt basis to bomb Germany.*

*Eberhard Wendler, a Pow at High Garrett, recalls the agony induced by this sight. “Every day we saw hundreds of these planes going off to our homeland to smash everything to pieces. A lot of prisoners received letters to say their parents had been killed, children killed, wife killed, house and everything smashed to pieces. And we saw those planes flying off every single day.”* <https://www.echo-news.co.uk/news>

[In 2016 a story appeared in the press and on BBC news about a high-quality violin made in the camp by a pow and marked ‘*1944*’. Inside is the inscription ‘*Hergestellt in Englischer fangenschaft’* (Made in English captivity).

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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. |

**15 September 1945** - Hostels listed, (WO 32/10737): Finchingfield, Braintree, Essex; Stonehouse (Farm), Halstead, Essex; The Towers, Saffron Walden, Essex

**17/18 September 1945** – English Inspector’s Report. There were two pow teachers of English.

Commandant Lt Col C R C Marsh – “*has a very complete knowledge of the Ps/W and a very real interest in re-education*.”

The visitor stated that this was, “*in many ways, the best camp I have ever visited….. The atmosphere is splendid.”*

**28 October 1945** – Gefreiter Oskar Herdmann, aged 38 died. No further details. He was later reinterred at the German Military Cemetery, Cannock Chase.

**23 January 1946** – A visiting lecturer cut short his visit due to “*domestic trouble*” / “*a bad atmosphere*” in the camp – no further details were given.

Pows arrived from USA and Canada. Those from the USA had low morale as they had been misinformed in the States that they were to be returned to Germany, instead they found themselves in working camps in Great Britain. Pows from Canada were often C grade ‘Black’ pows – Nazis. Captured early in the war and shipped to Canada many retained their Nazi ideology. This may be the cause of the troubles mentioned above. A lecturer in June 1946 commented that the pows from USA had largely settled down – but the ones from Canada were still; “*as black as can be imagined*.”

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| **1 March 1946** – English Inspector’s report. (Same Commandant).  One of the four teachers of English was Dutch, the others German.  *“The camp is spaciously laid out, with permanent buildings… yet accommodation for teaching is poor; part of one of these buildings is used as a recreation room and dining hut.”*  **5/6/7 July 1946** – A visiting lecturer, Mr Doring, commented on the atmosphere in the camp shortly after the arrival of a new Commandant.  “*Ps/W in an angry, desperate mood. Atmosphere of unhappiness. Speak with much affection of former Commandant.”* Pows talked of mutiny and strike. The pows from Canada were still “*filled with bitterness and contempt.”*  The atmosphere was clearly unsettled in the camp at this time, however, there may also have been some conflict between the lecturer and the Commandant. The camp report on Mr Doring stated that his lecture was not successful and requested that he should not be sent back. |  |
| Camp token money for use in the canteen. |

**24 July 1946** - English Inspector’s report. Strength 2145 in main + satellite + 4 hostels and billets.

Commandant: Lt Col GWV Ladds Camp leader (Lagersprecher): Bohm.

165 pows were accommodated in tents, the rest in overcrowded huts. Classes in the main camp had been suspended during harvest.

**22 August to 7 September 1946** – Visit by four members of the Segregation Section of PID to look at political screening. Strength; 1 officer, (the M.O.), 2122 OR.

Commandant: Lt Col Ladds Camp leader: Fw Erwin Boehm (A+)

Interpreters: Capt C S Aldon; S/Sgt A Abosch Deputy C/L: Uffz A de Groote (A)

German M.O.: Eduard Melech (B)

The Commandant and Interpreter Officer were stated to be anxious to assist in furthering COGA activities – however this seems to be little more than lip-service as they did not promote any activities, and at times were hostile to PID.

Captain Aldon had been an interpreter for Italian pows for 4½ years – he also spoke French, but not German. S/Sgt Abosch was a Czech who spoke fluent German.

The Camp Leader was aged 35, a master-craftsman who had been a member of the SPD (Social Democrats). “*A quiet, pleasant type who rules his comrades justly and efficiently*.”

The deputy C/L was aged 34, with no political affiliations. Spoke English extremely well, his wife was an interpreter for the British CO at Buxtehude. “*An efficient assistant to the Camp Leader and they make an ideal team*.”

The M.O. was aged 50. He joined the Nazi Party and the NSKK (National Socialist Motor Corps). “*He is efficient at his job but is backward politically. No change recommended*.”

Protestant Padre, Walter Wilke (B+), aged 40, was from the Russian zone. He stated he had been watched by the Gestapo, but his story was doubted – “*Only since his captivity has he emerged as a Padre.*” He was on the repatriation list for medical reasons – also in doubt. He showed little interest in his flock. A change was recommended by the visitor. A lecturer, Rev.Pastor Bűsing, also expressed doubts about this man after talking to pows. Although this matter was passed on to PID, no apparent action was taken and he was left in place until Spring 1947.

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| Screening: | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C | C+ | Unknown |
|  | 4 | 178 | - | 600 | 1144 | 164 | 26 | 3 | 4 |

Overall, the pows were seen to be making good political progress due to re-education activities and the democratically minded Camp Leader. Negative influences were:

1. Prolonged captivity with no release date.

2. Bad news – or no news – from home.

3. The belief that Nazis were employed back in Germany, while they were still held captive.

All of these were partly true, but also exaggerated by rumours and lack of information.

**28 September 1946** – English Inspector’s Report. Strength 2298. 196 pupils in 11 classes at all sites. “*This is a happy camp*.”

**17 January 1947** - English Inspector’s Report. Strength 2350. 122 pupils in 13 classes at all sites.

A new Lagersprecher; Groote.

A very major change in reporting about the atmosphere in this camp. “*In my previous report I said this was a happy camp. Possibly, from a material point of view, but intellectual work of any type is certainly not encouraged by the Cmdt. He told me openly that he regarded COGA ‘visits’ as a ‘farce.’ My presence in fact, was barely tolerated….”* This may have just been a ‘bad day’ for the Commandant and/or the visitor as it was not reflected in other reports.

As was the case in most camps, the commandant had little interest in re-education. Commandants were not required to promote re-education, which was developed by the Foreign Office – the camps were under the control of the War Office. The purpose of the camps was to hold pows and to set them to work when possible. Many Commandants preferred to concern themselves with welfare and other activities rather than re-education – though some did not do that either. If the camp was working and kept under control that was sufficient as far as many Commandants (and the War Office) were concerned.

A handwritten note on the report suggests that a particular English Inspector, Major Raffles, should be sent for the next visit, but there is no record of him doing so.

**18-22 January 1947** – Visit to review Re-education and screening. Strength; 1 officer, 1686 OR.

Commandant: Lt Col G W V Ladds Camp Leader: Wachtmeister Hans Allekotte (B)

Interpreter: S/Sgt Alfred Abosch Deputy C/L: Franz Ducke (B)

German M.O.: Oberstabsarzt Eduard Mele(s?)ch (B)

Referring to the Commandant – “*Though he doubtless wishes to be helpful in the scheme of re-educating German PsW, he fails to understand the true meaning of our work… he made it clear that our efforts would have his backing provided they were conducive to the efficient and smooth running of his camp. In giving to PsW the same treatment he metes out to the British soldier, he considers his contribution to the work of re-education completed.”* A later comment stated - “*The commandant is very fair, and the PsW are assured that they will always receive a square deal at his hands.”* Each evening he made himself available for 1 hour for pows to approach him to discuss matters – he also visited each hostel once a week.

Simplified screening in use: A 22; B 1600; C 65. 53 pows were appealing against their grades - the better the grade, the sooner repatriated, in theory. 481 pows repatriated to date.

Good morale. The layout of the camp and quarters were regarded as excellent. Recent lessening of fraternisation restrictions had a positive effect.

629 (35%) of the pows were ‘youth’ (under-25). They were not seen as a particular problem.

The standard list of re-education activities was given:

Wochenpost and Ausblick – separate appendix.

Newspapers – 90 British daily newspapers + 10 weekly papers were received, a wide range of titles. The papers were distributed between the main camp and hostels. 10 German papers received each week, but they were sent to individuals. A request was made for supplies to be sent by COGA.

Library – Inadequate - 833 books, many of which were English. Request for German books to be sent.

Lectures – regular with mixed reception according to interest in the topic.

Discussion groups – 30-50 pows attended one group. Little overall interest.

Films – YMCA monthly; free. English films fortnightly with a 6d charge which most considered too high.

Wireless – Adequate. News and BBC POW broadcasts were eagerly listened to.

Camp Magazine - ‘*Camp Post.’* “*Excellent effort, but not representative of the whole camp*.” 200 copies weekly. Shortage of paper.

Press review – Every other day; fixed to noticeboards and sent to hostels; much appreciated.

English Instruction – separate appendix.

Information room – Popular; also used as the camp reading room.

Other camp activities –

Religion – Not much interest. RC services for about 40 pows were conducted by a priest from Halstead. Protestant Padre, Walter Wilke was still in place and generally unpopular.

Education – small classes held for mathematics, German, history, shorthand and book-keeping. None in the hostels.

Entertainment – Orchestra, choir, brass quartet and a variety group. These groups also visited to perform at the hostels.

**19/27 May 1947** – Progress Report. Strength; 1 officer, 1445 OR. (Not including Ukrainian pows).

No changes to senior personnel.

The Commandant was on leave, the visitor was met by the 2nd I/C, Major Bebe.

The main camp was changing to a Ukrainian camp. German pows were being moved out to two main hostels. About 178 Germans were remaining as administrative staff and to train the Ukrainians. 930 Ukrainians had just arrived and 230 more were expected. The Ukrainians were ex-members of the Waffen-SS Division Galizien. The division was accused of major war crimes against civilians, but would escape prosecution in the UK.

Simplified screening in use: A 12; B 1416; Unscreened 18. 200 appeals had been made against political grading – unfortunately no figures were given as to how many were successful – in many camps they were often 90-100% successful. 681 pows repatriated to date.

Morale had deteriorated from the previous report to “*Generally poor*.” The main influences being slow repatriation and bad news from Germany. Many were unhappy with the way they had been politically graded. The visitor had regraded 67 ‘C’ category pows to ‘B.’ Most pows were politically apathetic.

60% of the pows were ‘youth’. The report does not state the reason for this increase from 35%. It was usually due to young pows being shipped from camps in Belgium where conditions were very poor, to working camps in the UK.

The standard list of re-education activities was given – there was little change from before. German newspapers, the library and supply of paper for the magazine, all remained inadequate. There were attempts being made to start and develop activities in the two main German hostels at Andrewsfield and Birch.

Religion – the unpopular protestant padre had been replaced by Ludwig Pongraz (A) who held weekly services at the two large hostels. A RC priest from Ashford Camp 129 visited every 2 to 3 weeks. There was not much enthusiasm for religion by the pows. Attendance at camp services was about 20.

Education classes for German pows had ceased.

**21-24 October 1947** – Progress Report. Strength: Germans – 2 officers, 536 OR / Ukrainian – 1 officer, 1125 OR. Total 1664

Commandant: Lt Col B G Lynn-Allen Camp Leader: Ogefr Josef Schmitz (B+)

Interpreter: S/Sgt Alfred Abosch Deputy C/L: Unnamed Ukrainian.

German M.O.: Oberstabsarzt Eduard Mele(s?)ch (B)

It was remarked that the change of Commandants was; “*considerably for the better*.”

The majority of staff in the main camp were Ukrainians working with ‘The Ukrainian Relief Committee.’ However, the report concerned the German pows.

All the pows were classed as ‘B.’ 1052 pows repatriated to date.

Morale was regarded as ‘Fair.’ The main positive factor was an increased speed of repatriations; a negative factor included news that many German factories were being dismantled by the Allies.

Few re-education activities were happening. The library had increased to about 1700 books.

There was no German padre remaining. Some services were still held by the priest from Camp 129.

All entertainment groups had been affected by repatriations.

Formal external contacts –

‘The Braintree Experiment’ – This was established by local people, including the Rotary Club of Braintree and Bocking. It was an attempt to educate groups of pows from various camps about the British way of life. It mainly involved visits to local institutions such as police stations, social clubs, local courts and factories. Some visits were also made to the camp by locals such as trade unionists.

Trips to London by coach arranged by the YMCA.

**10 November 1947** – English Inspector’s Report.

Same Commandant and Lagersprecher. Strength; 467 Germans / 1120 Ukrainians. 29 pupils in 3 classes at Andrewsfield.

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

No further reports in the National Archive file.

A list of the main camps holding Ukrainian pows published in late spring 1948 did not include High Garrett.

Known Camp Commandants

1945 Lt Col C R C Marsh - Conrad Richard Cresswell MARSH. He served in 'Kings Shropshire Light Infantry'.

c.1947 Lt Col G W Ladds. G W V Ladds of the Gloucestershire Regiment – his war medals are held by the Gloucestershire Regimental Museum. Moved to Bampton Road Camp 92 in August 1947 to 1948.

1947 Lt Col B G Lynn-Allen from the Welch Regiment.

**Numbers of pows**

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|  | Open |  |  | With other camps |  |  | Unknown |  |  | Not listed / not open |

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|  | 1943 (Italian) | 1944 | 1945 | 7/1946 | 9/1946 (1) | 9/1946 (2) | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 10/1947 (b) | 11/1947 |
| Main | 750 cap |  |  | 1471 | 1038 | 985 | 741 | 176 | 120 | 70G / 591U |
| Belchamp Walter |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Boxford |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Finchingfield |  |  |  | 73 | 75 | 73 | 63 |  |  |  |
| Stonehouse |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| (The) Towers |  |  |  | 102 | 119 | 111 | 102 |  |  |  |
| St Andrews Field |  |  |  | 268 | 455 | 460 | 163 | 503 | 206 | 245 G |
| Messing Park |  |  |  | 88 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Peldon |  |  |  | 70 | 70 | 66 | 61 |  |  |  |
| Birch |  |  |  |  | 265 | 416 | 368 | 596 | 19 | 20 G / 529 U |
| Sobraon Bcks. |  |  |  |  |  | 73 |  |  |  |  |
| E Anglian D.I.T.C. |  |  |  |  |  |  | 26 | 6 | 5 |  |
| Colchester D Mess |  |  |  |  |  |  | 32 | 31 | 43 |  |
| Others |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 6 (a) | 1 (b) |  |
| Billetees |  |  |  | 78 | 101 | 114 | 131 | 128 | 144 | 132 G |
| TOTALS |  |  |  | 2145 | 2123 | 2298 | 1687 | 1446 | 1664 | 1587 |

+ Lyons Hall - see below.

G = German / U = Ukrainian.

a. 3 in H.M. Civil Prison; 2 with No 9 Coy BOAC; 1 in Colchester hospital. B. 1 in Civil Prison.

b. Numbers were only broken down for German pows. The 1126 Ukrainians were based at the main camp and Birch hostel.

**Further information:**

National Archives FO 939/158 – 78 Working Camp, High Garrett Camp, Braintree, Essex. Dated 1945-1947 and FO 939/304 dated 1945-1948. Both used above.

The IWM has a copy of the camp magazine dated December 1947, Ref LBY E.J. 343. The German Federal Archives also have a copy, date unknown.

Catalogue entry - [18 - Church Register of the Evangelical congregation at camp 78 - 1945-1946](https://www.thcatalogue.org.uk/calmview/Record.aspx?src=CalmView.Catalog&id=W%2fSGG%2fA%2f5%2f5%2f18)

**After the camp:** For a while the site was under the control of the US military. It is reported that inside the water tower was a “*high-tech Marconi communications fortress that acted as an early warning system for the Wethersfield airbase and other local airfields*.” A large mast was built in the 1970‘s on the site, used by Essex Police and other local services. The water tower was converted into a house. Open field alongside a crematorium.

**SATELLITE CAMP**

**St Andrews Field. (Andrewsfield).** (Nr Braintree and Shelford Green). 8 miles from the main camp. Hutted. Possibly at Andrewsfield Airfield TL 687 247.

**July 1946 –** a visiting lecturer commented: “*bleak, ugly place, no books, no football grounds.”* The arrival of 100 pows from Canada, many still Nazis, created a difficult camp.

**September 1946** – Camp leader; Stabsfw Harald Glovalla (B+), aged 35, ex-policeman. Claimed to have been reprimanded for making derogatory remarks about the S.A. *“A good type*.”

**January 1947** – CO Captain Russell from the Seaforth Highlanders – said to be co-operative with re-education and English teaching. Camp leader: Heinz Merkart (B).

The camp had more C class pows than elsewhere and many were under-25. The visitor referred to; “*its present unwholesome character*.”

There was a discussion group at the camp.

**May 1947** – same CO. Camp Leader; Herbert Heinze (B+) had been leader at The Towers and Peldon hostels. “*Underneath his quiet exterior, he may possess a force capable of really organising his camp in the re-educational sphere*.”

Education – English classes and a book-keeping course.

Entertainment – a very active ‘Variety Circle’ gave monthly shows, usually of burlesque and humorous sketches. There was a shortage of materials for props, costumes etc.

**October 1947** - Camp leader; Wilhelm Autin, had been leader at Birch hostel. Interpreter S/Sgt E H Martin.

A joint theatre group and band continued and had given musical concerts in Rayne and at main camp. Table tennis was very popular.

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|  | 1943 (Italian) | 1944 | 1945 | 7/1946 | 9/1946 (1) | 9/1946 (2) | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 10/1947 (b) | 11/1947 |
| St Andrews Field |  |  |  | 268 | 455 | 460 | 163 | 503 | 206 | 245 G |

**HOSTELS**

**Belchamp Walter.** Possibly located at the earthworks at TL 829 408 (not confirmed). “*The pond and the earthworks were also the site of a Italian WW2 prisoner of war camp. The oak trees on the East bank of the pond have graffiti carvings in Italian.”* <https://tempusfugit.me.uk/monks_pond_bw.html#links>

**1943 / 1944** – Listed as a hostel for Italian pows.

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|  | 1943 (Italian) | 1944 | 1945 | 7/1946 | 9/1946 (1) | 9/1946 (2) | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 10/1947 (b) | 11/1947 |
| Belchamp Walter |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Birch** (nr Tiptree). 10 miles from main camp. Possibly at Birch airfield – not confirmed.

**January 1947** – Hostel leader: Harald Glowalla (B). Father Gay (R.C.) from Kelvedon visited weekly to hold discussion groups with the advanced English class. Held its own small discussion group.

**May 1947** – Given the status of satellite camp. Camp leader; Wilhelm Autin (B+) – “*a humorous and hard working man*,” but his abilities to administer a large camp was doubted.

Education – “*A very poor state of affairs.”* Just 1 class for shorthand. Entertainment – a very popular theatre group.

**October 1947** – CO Captain Jewell.

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|  | 1943 (Italian) | 1944 | 1945 | 7/1946 | 9/1946 (1) | 9/1946 (2) | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 10/1947 (b) | 11/1947 |
| Birch |  |  |  |  | 265 | 416 | 368 | 596 | 19 | 20 G / 529 U |

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| **Boxford** TL 969 408.  **1943** – listed as a hostel for Italian pows.  *”There was a prisoner of war camp built half way up Cox Hill which housed Italian prisoners of war. They were guarded by soldiers too old for active service. ,,, The prisoners mainly worked on farms and also the sugar beet factory in Ipswich. Some of them were very talented making cigarette cases and lighters from old pieces of metal. They also made wicker baskets from the willow. The village dump of course was next to the POW Camp, so they would rummage through to get bits and pieces they needed. After Italy surrendered, the prisoners were allowed out of the camp and into the village and they were not any trouble at all. Roger Loose.”* Box River News April 2024.  Later listed with Ashford Lodge Camp 129 – dates uncertain.   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | 1943 (Italian) | 1944 | 1945 | 7/1946 | 9/1946 (1) | 9/1946 (2) | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 10/1947 (b) | 11/1947 | | Boxford |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1959 |

**Colchester District Mess**

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|  | 1943 (Italian) | 1944 | 1945 | 7/1946 | 9/1946 (1) | 9/1946 (2) | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 10/1947 (b) | 11/1947 |
| Colchester D Mess |  |  |  |  |  |  | 32 | 31 | 43 |  |

**East Anglian District I.T.C.**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 (Italian) | 1944 | 1945 | 7/1946 | 9/1946 (1) | 9/1946 (2) | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 10/1947 (b) | 11/1947 |
| E Anglian D.I.T.C. |  |  |  |  |  |  | 26 | 6 | 5 |  |

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| **Finchingfield**, Braintree, Essex. Hutted.  Location – “*the POW camp Finchingfield - which is now the last housing development on the Brent Hall Road.”* TL 681 328  **1943** – Recorded as a hostel for Italian pows.  **January 1947** – Hostel leader; Walter Lehmann (B)  < Site after it was a pow camp and became a hostel for displaced persons and then for USAF personnel. Finchingfield village in the background.   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | 1943 (Italian) | 1944 | 1945 | 7/1946 | 9/1946 (1) | 9/1946 (2) | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 10/1947 (b) | 11/1947 | | Finchingfield |  |  |  | 73 | 75 | 73 | 63 |  |  |  | |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1958 |

**Lyons Hall.** Boreham Road, 8km S of Braintree. TL 737 156

**April / May / June 1946** – three lecturers referred to this hostel – but, it does not appear in the report made in July 1946, or after. In June the lecturer stated that 70 out of 116 pows at this hostel attended his talk.

**Messing Park.** 15 miles from the main camp. Described as a house, rather than huts. TL 893 180

Probably attached to other main camps outside of this one entry.

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|  | 1943 (Italian) | 1944 | 1945 | 7/1946 | 9/1946 (1) | 9/1946 (2) | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 10/1947 (b) | 11/1947 |
| Messing Park |  |  |  | 88 |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Peldon.** (Nr Colchester)  During the Second World War the hostel had been used for Italian Prisoners of War. It was then designated a Women's Land Army hostel. After the Women's Land Army left, German Prisoners of War stayed at the hostel and helped out on some of the local farms  ***From When I Can Remember*** by ***Pixie Farthing…*** her father's account of what the hostel was like -  *“The Hostel building had an unimposing appearance from the outside but the girls said the atmosphere inside was homely and comfortable with all modern conveniences...there was a long dormitory of cubicles that held.. double bunks... Only twelve hand basins in the washroom… only four toilets… There was a spacious recreation and dining room…”*  **July 1946** – described as a ‘Local Authority’ hostel.  **January 1947** – Hostel leader; Hans Hasdingteufel (B), a former barber – *“A very quiet simple character. Satisfactory*.” Pows were able to attend the local church. “*A happy well-satisfied hostel; the quarters are excellent*.” |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1958 |

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|  | 1943 (Italian) | 1944 | 1945 | 7/1946 | 9/1946 (1) | 9/1946 (2) | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 10/1947 (b) |  |
| Peldon |  |  |  | 70 | 70 | 66 | 61 |  |  |  |

**Sobraon Barracks,** Colchester. A building rather than huts. SK 968 730.

Just 1 entry

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 (Italian) | 1944 | 1945 | 7/1946 | 9/1946 (1) | 9/1946 (2) | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 10/1947 (b) |  |
| Sobraon Bcks. |  |  |  |  |  | 73 |  |  |  |  |

**Stonehouse** (Farm), Halstead, Essex. TL 839 354.

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|  | 1943 (Italian) | 1944 | 1945 | 7/1946 | 9/1946 (1) | 9/1946 (2) | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 10/1947 (b) |  |
| Stonehouse |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**The Towers**, Saffron Walden, Essex. (Nr Malden). Appears on maps as either ‘The Tower’ or ‘The Towers’ – TL 571 379. 16 miles from the main camp. Described as a house, rather than huts.

**January 1947 –** Hostel leader; Herbert Heinze (B)

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|  | 1943 (Italian) | 1944 | 1945 | 7/1946 | 9/1946 (1) | 9/1946 (2) | 1/1947 | 5/1947 | 10/1947 (b) |  |
| (The) Towers |  |  |  | 102 | 119 | 111 | 102 |  |  |  |