**Camp 85** **- Victoria Camp, Brandon Road, Mildenhall, Suffolk**

Included in the 1945 ICRC camp list – Labour Camp. 85. Victoria Camp, Brandon Rd, Mildenhall, Suffolk.

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| **1947 Camp list** | | | | | | | |
| 85(G.W.C.) | Victoria Camp, Brandon Road, Mildenhall, Bury St.Edmunds, Suffolk | E. | Priswar, Mildenhall | Mildenhall 2184/5 | Mildenhall (L.N.E.R.) | Lt.Col.H.S.Gill, M.C. | 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 7308 7665 | 174 | 85 | Victoria Camp, Brandon Road, Mildenhall | Suffolk | 4 | German Working Camp | STANDARD type. |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Location:** About 2.5 km NE of Mildenhall.Off the A1065.Why was it called Victoria camp?  **Before the camp:** Farmland  **Pow Camp:** Italian working camp / labour battalion up to 1945, then German and finally Ukrainian pows. The site had a standard layout with a main pow compound, and guards’ huts and offices at the front. Common buildings and facilities at standard type camps included water towers, offices, officer's mess, a canteen, guard rooms, barrack huts, ablution blocks, cell blocks, a camp reception station (medical facility/hospital), a cookhouse, dining rooms, recreation rooms and living huts or tents.  The pow accommodation huts were Ministry of War Production (MoWP), standard huts made |  |  |
| Aerial photo 1944 | Ordnance Survey 1958 |

with pre-cast reinforced concrete frames and wall panels, with windows on alternate bays. It was reported that the guards’ huts were Nissen type.

**1942/1943** – Camp opened for Italian pows. (Probably built by them under military and a local building company’s supervision).

**1943** – Hostels listed for Italian pows: Kentford / Newmarket C.O.D. / Thetford

**5 May 1944** - Hostels listed for Italian pows from this camp, (WO 32/10737): Kentford, Newmarket, Suffolk / Thetford, Norfolk.

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|  | **< 1943**  **May and November 1944** - The camp was listed as an Italian Labour Battalion under the Eastern Command area and then as an Italian POW Working Camp, (WO 32/10737). The Italians were recorded as non-co-operators.  **15 December 1944** – Death of pow, Giuseppe Orlando, Soldato; Italian Army, aged 26. Born 2nd May 1918, in Sestri Levante, Italy. Died on 15th December 1944. He was later reinterred at the Italian Section, Brookwood Cemetery. |
| 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. |
| **9 July 1945** – PID Progress Report 123 (FO 939/383) noted German pows being transferred to a hostel at Summerton Grange. |

**1 August 1945** - urgent memorandum sent to this camp, and others, about maintaining records of Italians who were classed as ‘co-operators.’

**15 September 1945** - Hostels listed (WO 32/10737): Ousden, Newmarket, Suffolk / Woodcock (Hill), Norfolk.

**19/22 March 1946** – English Inspector’s Report. Inspectors met teachers, gave talks, checked teaching texts and resources, and tested the pow pupils.

The HQ camp was still Italian – there was one hostel (Cheveley) which held German pows. It was noted that Somerton and Stoke-by-Nayland Hostels had been transferred.

The inspector stated that the camp spokesman was called Lasinski; “*a very forceful personality*” – he entirely ignored the larger Italian presence.

A very keen interest in learning English noted.

**26 March 1946** – Re-education Report. Strength; 0 officers, 96 Other Ranks in Cheveley Hostel.

Commandant: Lt Col H S Gill, M.C. Camp leader: St.O.Fw Lasinski (B)

Interpreter: Lt A Barnett Deputy C/L: None

German M.O.: None

The Interpreter was mainly working with the Italians, and had no interest in re-education.

At this time, the pows were sergeants and corporals. Some had been prisoners for a long time and held in camps in Canada and the USA. The Camp Leader was captured in 1942. Basic screening figures were given; A – 1 / B – 48 / C – 46 / Unscreened - 1. This was a high number of C grade pows in comparison to most camps, but it was considered that most were; “*no longer ardent Nazis but they remain nationalists and reactionaries*.”

Morale was considered to be ‘fairly good.’ There were concerns over the conditions in Germany. Pows from camps in the USA had lower morale as they had been misinformed that they were being repatriated, instead they found themselves in Working Camps in the UK. Many pows transferred from Camps in Belgium had experienced extremely poor conditions.

Only 16 of the pows were ‘youth’ (under-25), and they were not considered to be a problem.

As this was just a hostel there had been no development of re-education activities. There were no German padres. A small theatre group was starting up. There were no musical instruments to form an orchestra.

**19 August 1946** – English Inspector’s Report. Total strength 2137 in main, 5 hostels and billets. Listed as a German Working Camp with mixed Other Ranks apart from the officer M.O. 294 pupils in 14 classes at all sites.

New camp leader (Lagersprecher): Krause. Teaching was suspended during the harvest.

**19 to 29 September 1946** – Segregation Section visit mainly to complete screening. Strength; 1 officer, 2383 OR.

Commandant: Lt Col H S Gill, M.C. Camp leader: F G Krause (A) – due to be repatriated.

Interpreter: Lt M Maxwell [New] Deputy C/L: Heinbach [New]

German M.O.: Dr Steidler – [New]

The I/O was supportive of re-education.

The new MO was described in a later report – aged 35, “*excellent type, twice before court martial in Wehrmacht, genuine personality, will take part in political re-education*.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening: | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C | C+ | Unknown |
|  | - | 226 | - | 230 | 1086 | 370 | 414 | 4 | 56 |

Despite the high number of C grades, very few were considered to be hard-core Nazis, with exceptions at Bells Paddock hostel.

**29 November – 1 December 1946** – English Inspector’s Report. 88 pupils in 6 classes at all sites. This drop off in numbers was reflected in most camps after an initial interest.

New Camp Leader; Boremann.

The inspector mentioned a funeral for one of the pows on 30 November – but the pow was not named.

Rev Norman Tetlaw (Methodist Minister) visited the camp for bible classes and Sunday services.

**18 December 1946** – A ‘Special Report’ was issued about this camp – but it is not included in the National Archive file. From slight details in other reports, it seems to refer to two matters. 1 Vague references to; “*the situation prevailing before Christmas*” and “*a severe setback following the repatriation of the whites*” (A grades) would indicate some sort of disruption / unsettlement in the camp. 2 The arrival at this camp of 600 pows from 681 Company (listed as Rockport Camp 681, Northern Ireland). They only stayed for a short time and comments were made that they: *“first shed some of their rather clannish feelings of superiority, and having contributed a good deal to the cultural life of the camp during their stay*.” From the following comment, this seems to have been a short term measure to provide additional labour; *“but as long as this camp is frequently called upon to absorb and despatch large batches of P/W required for casual or seasonal labour, the situation at HQ will remain uncertain*.”

**15-18 January 1947** – Progress Report for PID. Strength; 1 officer, 1942 OR.

No opposition, but also no interest in re-education from any British staff in main camp – this was often the case.

The new camp leader was “*painstaking and conscientious, if not very intelligent.”*

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening: | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C | C+ | Unknown |
|  | - | 29 | - | 246 | 936 | 321 | 407 | 1 | 3 |

Since July, 294 ‘A’ grade pows repatriated, together with 58 unfit and 10 timber workers. Pows who were coal miners had their repatriation delayed for unknown reasons – this happened in other camps at the same time.

307 appeals against political gradings were pending – the better the grade, the sooner repatriated, in theory. Many of the C grade pows were ‘youth’ who had been placed into SS units at the ned of the war, regardless of their wishes. Consequently, many of their appeals would be upheld.

Morale was seen to have improved slightly. It was lower in the main camp as many of the men held there were rejects from other camps. Positive factors were repatriation and relaxation of fraternisation rules. Barbed wire was removed from the hostels, but not the main camp.

There was a camp parliament to discuss issues and make plans for activities. The standard list of re-education activities was given:

Wochenpost and Ausblick – separate appendix.

Newspapers – Copies received; The Times – 3; Telegraph, Mail, Herald, Express, Graphic, Mirror and Chronicle – 12; and 300 copies of weekly papers such as Picture Post, Punch, etc. Irregular supplies of a range of German papers. This was a wider range and number than most camps received.

Library – “*Still too small but growing steadily.”*

Lectures – regular.

Discussion Groups – Regular in main, Cheveley and Woodcock.

Films – Supplied by COGA and YMCA, complaints that they were too often, too old.

Wireless – Adequate everywhere.

Camp magazine - Greatly improved. Shortage of paper and stencils (as elsewhere) meant that publication of further issues was suspended.

Press Review – Daily headlines on notice boards.

English Instruction – separate appendix.

Information Room – showing text and pictorial displays, cramped but popular, also used as a reading room.

Other Camp Activities –

Religion – No resident padres. RC padre from Camp 260 visited and was a good influence.

Education – separate list.

Entertainments – An active theatre group and choir.

No formal outside contacts were listed, but it was noted that many pows were visiting the families of colleagues they worked with.

**23/26 April 1947** – English Inspector’s Report. Strength 1732. 177 pupils in 8 classes at all sites.

New camp leader: Pfefferkorn.

Many activities had been suspended as pows were helping to clear up after massive floods in the area.

**28-31 May 1947** – Progress Report. Strength; 2 officers, 996 OR.

A new Commandant – Lt Col O E Bleck. He had no experience of pow work, but stated he was interested in re-education.

There was only a skeleton staff of 20 at the main camp in preparation for receiving Ukrainian pows.

Simplified screening was in place; A 35 / B 905 / C 58. 45 C graded pows in billets were missed from re-screening and a request for an urgent review was made. 124 appeals were pending. 562 pows repatriated to date.

Morale overall was ‘good.’ Repatriation was on all pows mind.

Despite the upheaval of vacating the main camp, re-education activities continued at the other sites largely unhindered. Noted changes were:

Films – YMCA and Travelling Films alternate fortnights. YMCA films were preferred as many of their films were in German, and Travelling Films charged 6d (6 pence).

Camp Magazine – resumed with 200 copies each run, unfortunately the duplicator broke down and was awaiting repair.

Press reviews – the camp received sufficient papers that the headline news on noticeboards stopped. Pows also listed to the BBC evening news reviews.

Other activities –

Religion – There was a resident RC padre, Schiffhauer, who also held services in other camps. In this report he was stated to have a good influence, that soon changed. A Protestant padre, Richter, visited from Camp 260. Pows were able to attend some local church services.

Education – “*Unusually good*” classes listed in a separate appendix.

Entertainments – The theatre group ended when pows were removed from the main camp. Camp football teams were very good and defeated local teams.

There were no formal outside contacts, but it was hoped there would be soon.

**29 July – 1 August 1947** – Re-education Survey. Strength; 1 officer, 1113 OR.

No change to senior personnel. The commandant was generally in favour of re-education, but was also a strict disciplinarian.

18 German pows were employed in the camp office. There was no mention of Ukrainians, so they may not have arrived – they arrived in Scotland during May and were placed in camps there.

Simplified screening in place; A 30 / B+ 146 / B 597 / B- 341. Another 52 appeals pending.

Re-education activities declined through lack of provision, and with good weather the pows preferred to walk out of camp. Changes included –

Newspapers - number of copies reduced, previously excellent, now just satisfactory. Supply of German papers, very poor.

Library – only 600 German books and very few fiction books.

Camp Magazine – good style, but many errors. Reduced to 150 copies.

Information Rooms – Very poor.

Education classes at some sites included; maths, building, civics, drawing, driving, and French.

Outside contacts – 25 pows visited Cambridge colleges. 11 pows attended Mildenhall Council. A small group visited Norwich.

**25/26 August 1947** – Short report following up on previous comments. Strength; 1 officer, 916 OR.

RC padre S/OGefr P Schiffheuer (B), aged 34 – “*was considered by me to be a good type… He has been criticised for anti-British, nationalistic and anti-Jewish statements, as well as his general conduct.”* After investigation; *“I am satisfied, that to a certain extent, these criticisms are justifed*.” He recommended that he be sent to a “*well stabilised camp”* where pows could stand up to his harmful influence.

**22/25 October 1947** – Re-educational Survey. Strength; 0 officers, 658 OR – NOT including the Ukrainians.

Commandant: Lt Col C E Bleck Camp leader: Nil

Interpreter: Lt M Maxwell Deputy C/L: Nil

German M.O.: Nil

The main camp and Cheveley held Ukrainian pows who were ex-members of the Waffen-SS Division Galizien. The division was accused of major war crimes against civilians. They were not included in this report. Woodcock held some Germans + Ukrainians.

Simplified screening in use: B+ 114 / B 431 / B- 113.

Morale was ‘fairly good.’ General comments about attitudes; “*The situation in Palestine has revived some dormant antisemitic sentiments…. The dismantling of German industries is generating heated debates.”*

There were very few changes to re-education activities;

Library – now 1500 books, more fiction supplied.

Films – only YMCA mentioned.

Information Room – PID sent some exhibition materials about; ‘Britain, Country and People.’

Religion – the RC padre was still in place and comments remained extremely unfavourable.

Entertainments – A sports festival was held (27 September) with participants from other camps. Theatre and orchestra ceased due to repatriations.

Formal outside contacts – visits to RDC Mildenhall, some pows attended meetings of the WEA in Munford, and a further visit to Norwich. The hostels suffered from being isolated from main centres.

**20/23 October 1947** – English Inspector’s Report – at same time as last re-education report. 11 pupils with 2 teachers at all sites + a number studying privately.

Noted there were 720 Ukrainians in the main camp.

**4-6 November 1947** – Report on a visit to Ely Satellite Camp – see below.

**19 January 1948** – English Inspector’s Report. Confused numbers given for strength of camp. 8 pupils with 1 teacher.

**23 March 1948** – English Inspector’s Report. 0 classes.

New Commandant: Lt Col T N G Tucker. The camp speaker was Ukrainian – ignored by the visitor.

The site closed as a pow camp soon after this last report.

Known Camp Commandants

c.1946 to April 1947 Lt Col H S Gill, M.C. (I think he was from the Royal Artillery).

1947-1948 Lt Col O.E. Bleck – his initials also recorded as C E and C H in different reports)

1948 Lt Col T N G Tucker from the Welch Regiment

**After the camp:** 1948 - 1401 Ukrainians, no longer classed as pows. 2019 small farm and fields

**Further Information:**

National Archives FO 939/165 – 85 Working Camp, Victoria camp, Mildenhall, Suffolk. Dated 1946-1948. Used above.

Archaeological Excavation at Prisoner of War Camp 85 Victoria, Eriswell 2 Site Extension Scheme, A1065, Eriswell, Suffolk – by Oxford Archaeology East, 2016, on behalf of Anglian Water. <https://eprints.oxfordarchaeology.com/2907/>

**Numbers of pows**

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

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|  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 |
| Main |  |  |  | ? Italian | 560 German | 663 | 698 | 20 | 18 | 6 (1) | 20 (1) | 25 (1) |
| Kentford |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Newmarket C.O.D |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Thetford |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ousden |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Woodcock (Hill) |  |  |  |  | 227 | 243 | 294 | 304 | 235 | 38 (1) |  |  |
| Somerton |  |  |  | With C260 | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Stoke-by-Nayland |  |  |  | With C129 | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Cheveley |  |  |  | 96 German | 91 | 76 | 95 | 88 | 91 | (1) | (1) | (1) |
| Bells Paddocks |  |  |  |  | 262 | 232 |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Cranwich |  |  |  |  | 503 | 544 | 490 | 450 | 624 | 458 | 557 | 159 |
| Kimberley |  |  |  |  | 332 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Ely | Camp 26 | | | | | | | | | | (1) | (1) |
| Soham |  |  |  | With C26 | | | | | | |  |  |
| Histon |  |  |  | Camp 1025 | | | | | | | 169 |  |
| West Tofts |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 297 |  |
| Billetees |  |  |  | ? | 156 | 185 | 155 | 136 | 146 | 156 | 230 | - |
| TOTALS |  |  |  |  | 2137 | 1943 | 1732 | 998 | 1114 | 658 (1) | 1043 (1) | 184 (1) |

(1) Plus Ukrainians not included in these numbers.

**Hostels**

**Bells Paddocks** Newmarket. (10 miles from main camp). Huts.

**9/1946** – Hostel leader; Uffz Peter Kaisers (B+), aged 26, mechanic – *“…very cheerful type. Is said to have turned coat only recently. Definitely of no positive re-educational value.”*

Many young Nazis. 2 C+ pows. 1 C-grade, the canteen manager, was a very bad influence and was transferred to the main camp.

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|  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 |
| Bells Paddocks |  |  |  |  | 262 | 232 |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Cheveley.** Huts. “*There was a PoW camp at Cheveley Park Stud during World War 2, and one of the prisoners came back to marry a local girl.”* TL 670 611

**1946** – see notes above.

**May 1947** – Hostel leader; Ganzauge [Gansauge / Gapsauge - spelling?] (B), aged 35, had been a member of the SA and the Nazi party - “*an excellent type, keen and sound and already an asset in our work.”* No electricity supply. Wireless powered by battery/accumulator.

**8/1947** – same leader; changed later in month to Uffz Michel. Good morale, especially with reduced restrictions. Good relationships with local civilians.

The new leader was aged 26, an agriculturist, no Nazi membership – “*genuine personality, intelligent and ambitious*.” Rev Wimpers (from Woodditton) gave English talks.

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|  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 |
| Cheveley |  |  | German | 96 | 91 | 76 | 95 | 88 | 91 | Ukrainian | Ukrainian | Ukrainian |

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| **Cranwich.** Huts. Satellite Camp, then hostel. TL 775 943.  A labour camp from 1935 to 1939. Some military use early in the war. Memories of Italian pows based here before the entries below.  **1/1947** – Officer i/c; Captain Henry Cator VC MM – he was interested in re-education.  Henry Cator’s military history and award of the VC during WW1 is available on several websites. *“During World War Two, he re-enlisted and, in 1942, was given the rank of captain quartermaster with the 6th Battalion, Norfolk Home Guard. Later in the war, he was posted to a transit camp in Newhaven, Sussex, where he learnt German. His final wartime role was as commandant of Cranwich POW camp in Norfolk, where he improved his German by speaking with the prisoners.*  *He was much liked by some of the POWs, so much so that they remained in touch with him after the war, when they were back in* |  |  |
| 1944 | Ordnance Survey 1958 |

*Germany. Once again, he left his mark, as a letter from one of the former prisoners illustrates. Penned after the war, it said: “It took a long time before I realised that you taught us a lesson worth remembering. In a world full of passion, you demonstrated an independent unanimity. You showed all understanding of the former emergency that we, the prisoners of Hostel Cranwich, have all reason to be thankful to you. I think you gave us an example of how our attitude should be. This letter is to give you our sincere thanks.”* <https://www.keymilitary.com/article/hero-month-45>

**5/1947** – Commenting on Captain Cator, though he showed a great interest in re-education work, *“at times expresses manifestly wrong opinions*” – the visitor did not explain this or even give an example. He went on to say, ”*I am without confidence in Cator’s judgement*.”

Camp leader; Venner (A), regular soldier, no interest in re-education, a disciplinarian, “*upgraded a month ago when he must have revealed qualities which he successfully concealed from me.”*

**8/1947** – Camp leader; Uffz K Beckard (A), aged 31, “*he tries hard to do the job, should be carefully watched and guided*.”

Good morale, especially with reduced restrictions. Good relationships with local civilians. There was a theatre group with 12 members and an orchestra.

**10/1947** – same leader. Cranwich was reduced in status to a hostel.

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|  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 |
| Cranwich |  |  |  |  | 503 | 544 | 490 | 450 | 624 | 458 | 557 | 159 |

**Ely Satellite Camp**. This was independent Barton Fields Camp 26. It was taken over together with 1 hostel at Soham + 146 billetees.

**4-6 November 1947** – Separate report on re-education at this satellite camp. Strength; 2 officers, 717 OR.

Officer i/c: Captain Jones. Keenly interested in re-education. Camp leader; Hfw M Witthaus (B+). German M.O. Dr Burgdoerfer (B+). Dentist Dr W Mueller (B-).

During this visit Col Stuart and Lt Col Faulk, (head of the PoW section of the Foreign Office) – also visited the camp.

Generally high morale – excellent conditions – good contacts with civilians – good relationships with the British staff.

About 250 ‘Rumanian Volksdeutsche’ did not have a high morale. They had received no news at all from home – and it was uncertain whether they would be allowed to return home.

The camp organised a wide range of re-education activities, all of which were regarded as satisfactory or good. Camp magazine - “Wir und die Welt”

There was a popular Protestant minister, Ogefr Spieth. Pows also attended local churches.

A good orchestra gave BBC broadcasts and looked forwards to giving a Christmas performance. The choir gave concerts at local churches.

< Christmas 1947 BBC broadcast.

<https://www.express.co.uk/news/uk/450514/Never-seen-before-pictures-give-glimpse-into-life-of-German-POWs>

Outside Contacts – Visits to Ely Police Court and Quarter Session. 127 pows attended Ely Evening Institute for English, French and book-keeping lessons. Pows attended Ely WEA. Dances were arranged on Sunday evenings.

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|  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 11/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 |
| Ely | Camp 26 | | | | | | | | | | German | Ukrainian | Ukrainian |

**Histon** - TL 4566 6371. Previously independent camp 1025 – see for map.

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|  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 |
| Histon |  |  |  | Camp 1025 | | | | | | | 169 |  |

**Kentford,** Newmarket, Suffolk

**1943** – Recorded as a hostel for Italian pows. Probably attached to a different main camp after 1944.

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|  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 |
| Kentford |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Kimberley**. Huts

Only detail giving clue as to location was; “*30 miles from main camp*.” This may have been Kimberley Park Camp 132 – recorded as being approx. 37 miles by Google maps. No other evidence.

**9/1946** – Hostel leader; Ofw Walter Glienke, aged 36, professional soldier – “*Colourless but pleasant.”*

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|  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 |
| Kimberley |  |  |  |  | 332 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**C.O.D. Newmarket** (Central Ordnance Depot).

Note in 1943 a site recorded as C.S.D. Newmarket was also listed with Barton Fields Camp 26 – same place?

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|  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 |
| Newmarket C.O.D |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Ousden**, Newmarket, Suffolk . TL 735 596  At Ousden Hall - after British army use, became a hostel for Italian and then German pows. Would have been linked to other camp(s) outside this date.   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | | Ousden |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | |  |

**Soham.**

**11/1947** – taken over with Ely Satellite Camp. 48 pows.

Hostel leader – H Henke (B+)

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|  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 11/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 |
| Soham |  |  |  | With C26 | | | | | | | German |  |  |

**Somerton**

“*There were a lot of Italian POW’s based at the village of Somerton. We used to love going to play with them. They’d spend hours playing Neapolitan music on their guitars and mandolins and I developed my love for Italian music and opera during my time with them.*

*Eventually there were 50 or so Sicilian and mainland Italians at barracks at Somerton, but the first twelve to arrive were Sicilians and they were ‘trustees.’ Since they had collaborated with Britain, they were allowed a certain amount of freedom and worked on the farms during the day. Some visited Hadleigh. They were very distinctive: they wore khaki uniforms with triangular badges sewn of to the sleeves and backs of their jackets to show they were POW’s. They weren’t allowed out at night, however, unless they were escorted. They held little dances at the Old Rectory at Somerton and local people were invited. The Italians played the music or used a wind-up gramophone.*

*Armed escorts took them in vehicles to church services on a Sunday, sometimes at Mildenhall. They used to bring Swiss rolls and lemon sherbet powder back for us and because they missed their families, they enjoyed having us around. I remember summer evenings when they’d catch rabbits and cook them with us. They would also catch hedgehogs. They’d gut them, roll them out and make fires in the earth. The hedgehogs were rolled up in clay and baked in the ashes. Then the Italians would hit the clay off and the prickles would come off with it and then they’d eat the meat with bread*.” <https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/50/a3181150.shtml>

**1945/6** – transferred to Hardwick Heath Camp 260

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|  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 |
| Somerton |  |  |  | With C260 | | |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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|  | **Stoke-By-Nayland.** At Tendring Hall, Stoke-by-Nayland. Prisoner of War camp for German and Italian prisoners. Tendring Hall was demolished 1956. TL 992 357  **1945/6** – transferred to Camp 129   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | | Stoke-by-Nayland |  |  |  | With C129 | | |  |  |  |  |  |  | |

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| **Thetford.** TL 857 831  “…*there was a prisoner of war camp up Brandon Road in the Mackenzie Road area. That was all trees, firs and larches and bushes all the way along there, and you’d go through a track and the camp was there, in the back. It was well covered and me sister and I used to go up there. We used to take food, what little we had and give it to the prisoners behind the barbed wire. I think they were Italians and I think there were a few Germans…”* <https://www.wisearchive.co.uk/story/wartime-thetford/>   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | | Thetford |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |   Kilverstone Hall Camp 630, was located on the other side of Thetford. Did it take over this site? |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1958 |

**West Tofts.** Reported to have been atthe West Toft labour camp set up during the inter war years. TL 835 919. Not confirmed.

Would have been attached to a different main camp before this entry.

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|  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 |
| West Tofts |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 297 |  |

**Woodcock** (Hill), Norfolk. 2 miles from main camp. Huts.

Location? – 1 report stated ¾ mile from the main camp, another stated 2 miles, I cannot find a Woodcock within this range. In one list it is called “Woodcock, Norwich,” in another “Woodcock, Mildenhall.” Some list “Woodcock” others list “Woodcock Hill.”

**9/1946** – Hostel leader; Fw Bruno Sziborski, aged 29. Had refused to join the Nazi D.A.F. (*Deutsche Arbeitsfront),* SPD family background.

**5/1947** – Hostel leader; Kettenr [spelling?] (A).

**7/1947** – “*Three POW’s from Woodcock POW Hostel, an annex of Victoria Camp 85, were charged with the burglary of at least twelve properties which included houses in Eriswell and Lakenheath. A revolver, taken from a house in Barton Mills was recovered during their capture. A wide variety of items, including money, clothes and alcohol, were taken. In a plea for leniency it was suggested that the men were hoping to assist their escape back to Germany. Despite occasional problems, by this time POWs were allowed considerable freedom of movement and a number of long-term relationships including marriage and friendships were made.”*

The Bury Free Press. Friday, July 18th, 1947. <https://lakenheath.onesuffolk.net/lakenheath-heritage/time-line/part-6-1935-1948ad/>

**8/1947** – Hostel leader; Uffz E Radtke (B+), aged 40 – “*Good type, is doing a thankless job in a difficult hostel.”*

Low morale. “*Happenings*” in Mildenhall (probably the burglaries mentioned above) led to bad relationships with civilians. There were complaints about the privileges the pows were granted – they were only allowed to sit in certain seats in the cinema, and permission for bathing was withdrawn. The pows claimed this was an “*injustice.”* There were other issues - a brief comment about youth pow morale mentioned; “*no special harm was done by conditions in Woodcock*” – and in the next report there were comments on the Colour Sergeant Major in charge at this hostel being overly strict.

Later in the month, the follow-up report stated that morale had improved. Relationships with the Sgt in charge “*become more harmonious*” and strict military rules relaxed a little.

**10/1947** – same leader.

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|  | 1943 | 1944 | 1945 | 3/1946 | 8/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 5/1947 | 8/47 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 |
| Woodcock (Hill) |  |  |  |  | 227 | 243 | 294 | 304 | 235 | 38 (1) |  |  |