**Camp 91** **- Post Hill Camp, Farnley, Yorkshire**

Included in the 1945 ICRC camp list – Labour Camp. 91. Post Hill Camp, Farnley, Leeds, Yorks.

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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 |
| SE 24 33 | 104 | 91 | Post Hill Camp, Farnley, Leeds | Yorkshire | 5 | German Working Camp |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Location:** The NGR is a general location for the square with Post Hill Quarries. The camp also housed two anti-aircraft guns with the concrete bunker structures.  **Before the camp:** Park and quarries. Park used for motor and bike sports.  **Pow Camp:** Listed as Italian working camp / labour battalion to at least 1945, then a German Working Camp.  **1942 / 1943** – built and opened with Italian pows.    **May and November 1944** - The camp was listed as an Italian Labour Battalion under the Northern Command area and then as an Italian POW Working Camp, (WO 32/10737).  **5 May 1944** - Hostel listed for Italian pows from this camp, (WO 32/10737): Kirk Deighton, Wetherby. Pows listed as non-cooperators.  **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** – 3 hostels listed for pows from this camp, (WO 32/10737), see chart below. |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1958 |

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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. |

**27-29 March 1946** – General Survey, Investigate position of C/L Stitch (see Woolley), Vet billetees. German strength; 0 officers, 344 Other Ranks at HQ, 4 hostels, + billets.

This was the first PID visit. The camp was recorded as “*No 91 Italian Labour Bat,”* but the Italians were NOT recorded in the figure above.

Commandant: Major I L Rowan-Thomson [next report initials GL] Camp leader: None

2nd i/c: Capt E F Bramley Deputy C/L: None

Interpreter : None, (German performing as an interpreter – Gefr Kurt Ruder (B+) German M.O.: None

The lack of an interpreter caused difficulties.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening: | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C | Unscreened. |
|  | - | 10 | 3 | 6 | 129 | - | 63 | 133 |

It was expected that most pows graded C would achieve better grades if they were re-screened.

Morale was regarded as “*generally fair.”* A major negative factor in the camp was the low rate of pay. Pows, except at Woolley, were paid on the unskilled rate of 3 farthings (farthing = ¼ of a penny) per hour rather than the agricultural pay of 3 halfpennies per hour. They were employed in quarry work and brick making. Their wages barely paid for cigarettes and a cake per week. Poor pay had a knock on affect for activities. The Welfare Fund was built up from profits from the sale of goods to pows, it was used to pay for items such as books and newspapers (PID supplied some), low sales resulted in a low Welfare Fund. The Commandant was trying to change this.

Approximately 30% of pows were ‘youth’ (Under-25). They were not seen as a problem and there were no special arrangements for them.

The standard list of re-education activities was given, but they had barely started, this was manly due to it still being an Italian camp. See chart in next report.

Other camp activities –

Religion – No services. No padre for RC or Protestants.

Education – No classes.

Theatre – None, though there was a theatre with a piano at HQ.

Orchestra – None. No instruments.

Choir – 12 men at Woolley hostel only.

**4 June 1946** – Survey of re-education; Further screening of priority pows. Strength; 1 officer (the M.O.), 1089 OR in HQ, 7 hostels and billets.

Now a German Working Company Camp. The visitor was unaware that a previous PID visit had been carried out and listed his report as the first.

Commandant: Major G L Rowan-Thomson Camp leader: Sol Jassmann (A)

Interpreter : S/Sgt F R Carey Deputy C/L: Gfr Draeger (B)

German M.O.: Stbs Arzt Dr Rauch (B)

The senior British staff were said to be supportive of the aims of re-education, that does not mean they did anything to develop them. The lists of activities below were very poor in comparison to many camps.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening: | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C | Unscreened |
|  | 54 | 3 | 7 | 249 | 1 | 177 | 599 |

Morale was higher in the hostels than the HQ. Pows were still settling down with many new intakes over the previous months. The visitor repeated the comment about a low Welfare Fund, but put this down to lack of work and did not mention rates of pay.

There were contradictions both in this report and in relation to the previous one. He stated there were no re-education activities, but then went on to list some. Lists from the two reports:

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **March 1946** | **June 1946** |
| Wochenpost and Ausblick | Separate appendix. | 70 / 0 copies. |
| Newspapers | Each site received about 2 papers given by the British staff.  4-5 German papers were received weekly. | None, other than some Italian papers received in error. |
| Library | None. Pows willing to buy books if their pay was increased. | 169 books, half were texts. |
| Lectures | None. | 2 in May. |
| Discussion groups | Being set up. | None. |
| Films | None | None. |
| Wireless | 1 at all sites. | Set in HQ with 3 extension speakers. None in hostels. |
| Camp magazine | None. | None. |
| Press review | Started, weekly. | None. |
| English Instruction | None. | Starting. |

Other camp activities –

Religion – RC padre, Uffz Braukemper, from Ure Bank camp 247 visited every three weeks. No protestant padre. There was a camp chapel set up by the Italian pows.

Education – Classes for French, book-keeping, science, algebra, art, chess, music, history of literature, and physiology.

Theatre – no group.

Orchestra – Instruments available, but no orchestra. (2 piano accordions, 2 trumpets, 2 guitars, mandolin, banjo, saxophone, clarinet, trombone and a set of drums).

It was noted that a re-organisation of East and West districts was pending and may affect this camp.

There are no further reports in the National Archive file.

The Post Hill site became a satellite / hostel for Butcher Hill Camp 244/5. It seems likely that this occurred during the re-organisation mention in the report above.

Known Commandants:

1946 - Major I L Rowan-Thomson (or G L).

**Camp numbers:**

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | During 1944 | 3/1946 | 6/1946 |  |
| Post Hill | Italian |  | 4 + Italians | 482 | With C244/5 |
| Kirk Deighton |  |  |  |  |  |
| Lindley |  |  | 71 | 72 | With C60 |
| Slead |  |  |  |  |  |
| Stirley |  |  | 120 | 116 | With C60 |
| Woolley |  |  | 74 | 95 |  |
| Tingley Hall |  |  | 75 | 71 |  |
| Cliffe |  |  |  | 99 | With C60 |
| Middleton |  |  |  | 90 |  |
| Shelf |  |  |  | 59 | With C60 then C53 |
| Billets |  |  | ? | 6 |  |
| Total |  |  | 344 (1) | 1090 |  |

(1) Germans only – still an Italian labour Camp.

**After the camp:** The site was used to house [displaced persons](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Forced_displacement) from Europe. In 2002 Post Hill passed into the ownership of Leeds City Council. It is a designated Leeds Nature Area on the western end of [Farnley](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Farnley,_Leeds).

**Further Information:**

National Archives FO 939/170 – 91 Working Camp, Post Hill Camp, Farnley, Yorkshire. Dated 1946. Just 2 reports. Used above.

**Hostels**

**Cliffe (Hill)**

Probably linked to a different HQ before these entries.

**6/1946** – Hostel leader; Fw Werwie

**12/1946** – listed with Overdale Camp 60

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | During 1944 | 3/1946 | 6/1946 |  |
| Cliffe |  |  |  | 99 | With C60 |

**Kirk Deighton**, Wetherby.

One entry – listed as a pow hostel for Italians. Possibly taken over at some point by Scriven Hall Camp 121.

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | During 1944 | 3/1946 | 6/1946 |
| Kirk Deighton |  |  |  |  |

**Lindley** (Moor / Hill), Huddersfield, West Yorkshire **–** (Memories place it atCrosland Road, Lindley).

**1944** – Italian pows.

**9 February 1946** – became a German hostel with intakes from Camps 60 and 160.

**3/1946** – Hostel leader; Fw Bredereck (C), aged 57, “*a good type of NCO who uses fatherly authority to lead his P/W.”* Had been a member of the SPD. “*He holds the SS responsible for the death of his son and he is definitely anti-Nazi. I estimate him to be a B+”*

**6/1946** – same, still graded as C.

**12/1946** – listed with Overdale Camp 60

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | During 1944 | 3/1946 | 6/1946 |  |
| Lindley |  |  | 71 | 72 | With C60 |

**Middleton** (NGR for the Hall – SE 301 284). Note there was a different Middleton Hall, Camp 563.

Memories of Italians at this site before the entry below; “…*my Dad was billeted in the Middleton Hall where I also understand some of them were in huts… The prisoners for the most part were treated reasonably well as most of the guards knew they had not wanted to fight us in the first place…*

*The men’s uniforms were in a disgusting state by the time they got to Middleton and of course the people here had nothing either, things were in short supply for everyone, they were all busy trying to make do and mend.  However, there was an abundance of army blankets, they were also able to get green dye so the two tailors in the camp set to work making uniforms out of them. The evenings were spent making craft things like belts out of the cellophane from cig packets. I still have one, and an embroidered men’s handkerchief of St Antonio done by one of my father’s friends…*

*They used to go for walks and went to the cinema. They couldn’t go to the Tivoli, the manager wouldn’t let them in, so they walked through the woods to the Rex. The Manager at the Rex welcomed them as he said his brother had been shot down in Italy, the Italian people had hidden him and helped him escape from the Germans. He got back home safe. The Italians had to walk down to the Rex, and anywhere else they went, because they weren’t allowed on the trams; not bad in fine weather but after the south of Italy and North Africa they were glad of the blanket uniforms*.” <https://middletonlife.wordpress.com/tag/middleton-hall/>

**6/1946** – Hostel leader; Ofw Abrutsch

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | During 1944 | 3/1946 | 6/1946 |
| Middleton |  |  |  | 90 |

**Shelf.** In the hall, stables and park. SE 124 282.

Probably linked to a different HQ before these entries.

**6/1946** – Hostel leader; Uffz Saeger (B)

**12/1946** – listed with Overdale Camp 60 and in 1948 with Sandbeds Camp 53.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | During 1944 | 3/1946 | 6/1946 |  |
| Shelf |  |  |  | 59 | With C60 then C53 |

**Slead** (Syke), Brighouse, West Yorkshire

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | During 1944 | 3/1946 | 6/1946 |
| Slead |  |  |  |  |

**Stirley (Hill),** Huddersfield, West Yorkshire SE 151 131. Map and photo with Overdale Camp 60.

**1944** – Italian pows.

**13 March 1946** – became a German hostel with intakes from Camps 60 and 73.

**3/1946** – Hostel leader; Ufw Abel (B), aged 27, was a member of the Hitler Youth and the SA. “*His outlook is democratic and he gets on well with his fellow P/W.”*

**6/1946** – same

**12/1946** – listed with Overdale Camp 60

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | During 1944 | 3/1946 | 6/1946 |  |
| Stirley |  |  | 120 | 116 | With C60 + ? |

**Tingley Hall,** Leeds. A building, rather than huts. SE 280 261.

**8 February 1946** – became a German hostel with intakes from Camps 73, 167 and 183. (May have held Italian pows before this date).

**3/1946** – Hostel leader; Ofw Baumgarten (C), aged 49. He had not been a member of the Nazi Party, and was estimated to be a B grade.

**6/1946** – same, still listed as C.

Memories of a German pow – “*Leeds-Tingley Camp Nr 812 Post Hill Camp, Farnley, Leeds*

*It was not a camp really, on the contrary,* [more of] *a building containing several rooms. I guess it must have been a former school. The floors were covered with palliasses* [sic] *to sleep on, still very comfortable*. [We had] *Electric light and even a radio. It had been a pleasure to listen English evergreens. During my stay I worked in a quarry not far away.”* <https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/06/a5972006.shtml> [Why Nr 812?].

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | During 1944 | 3/1946 | 6/1946 |
| Tingley Hall |  |  | 75 | 71 |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Woolley,** Wakefield. (A Woolley Hostel, Sheffield was also listed with Lodge Moor Camp 17 – 25 miles distance Wakefield / Sheffield – same place?).  Located on Woolley Low Moor Lane – SE 305 147, in use as a hostel after the pow camp.  Memories of Italians, so would have been attached to a different camp before these entries.  **12 February 1946** – became a German hostel with an intake from Camp 250. (May have held Italian pows before this).  **3/1946** – Hostel leader; F/Wm Stich (B-), aged 25. “*Suspected by the Commandant*” – the report did not say of what he was suspected! He was believed to have a democratic outlook. The visitor gave him a warning, and the Commandant agreed to give him another chance.  **6/1946** – same leader.   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | 1943 | During 1944 | 3/1946 | 6/1946 | | Woolley |  |  | 74 | 95 | |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1956 |