**Camp 97** **- Birdingbury, Bourton on Dunsmore, Warwickshire**

Included in the 1945 ICRC camp list – Labour Camp. 97. Birdingbury Camp, Bourton, Rugby, Warwicks.

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| **1947 Camp list** | | | | | | | |
| 97(G.W.C.) | Birdingbury Camp, Bourton, Rugby, Warwickshire | N | Priswar, Bourton, Rugby | Marton 314 | Birdingbury (L.M.S.) | Lt.Col.P.W.Dollar | 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 |
| SP 430 698 | 151 | 97 | Birdingbury, Bourton on Dunsmore | Warwickshire | 4 | German Working Camp | STANDARD type. |

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| **Location:** About 1.5 km N of Birdingbury; 10 km SW of Rugby.  **Before the camp:** Farmland / allotments  **Pow Camp:** In 1943 the firstItalian pows were housed in tents while they built the huts. Italian pows, then a German Working Camp.  The site had a standard layout with a main pow compound, with guards’ huts and offices at the ‘front,’ alongside the road. Paths within the camp were concrete. Buildings included a water tower, 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.  **1943** - Hostels listed for Italian pows; Ladbrook – Pailton - Leamington, (Kenilworth Road).  **14 March 1944 -** International Red Cross visit, see below.  **November 1944** - The camp was listed as an Italian Working camp, (WO 32/10737). The Italians were recorded as non-co-operators.  **1944/1945** – As German pows arrived, Italians were placed in hostels or transferred to other camps prior to repatriation. |  |  |
| [raf\_106g\_uk\_1539\_rp\_3231 - Aerial Photo | Historic England](https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/collections/aerial-photos/record/raf_106g_uk_1539_rp_3231) 1946 | Ordnance Survey 1955 |

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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. |

**23-24 March 1945.** Report on re-education activities. 460 pows were employed on farms – but the total strength was not given.

Camp Commandant: Major I.W. Thomson Camp leader: S/Fwbl.Killat

Adjutant: Lieutenant Plane. Deputy C/L: Fwbl. Stűbner

Interpreter Officer: Lieutenant G E Lovelace

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| **International Red Cross Report**  PRISONER OF WAR CAMP Nr. 97.  on 16 March 16 1944.  Postal address “P.O.W Camp Nr. 97, Great Britain"  Capacity 560 non-commissioned officers and soldiers  Camp leader DABEL H, “Feldwebel”  Deputy KAYSER J, “Feldwebel”  M.O. RULLMAN F, lieutenant  Strength l M.O.  5 senior non-commissioned officers  34 corporals  305 appointed  116 soldiers  Total: 461  Nationality – German  This camp is the counterpart of camp Nr. 103. It is an agricultural camp of the 1943 type whose description has already been given in a previous report.  Food  Rations are identical to those of the camp Nr. 103; they were declared sufficient; but the prisoners would like to receive more vegetables. The main meal is served in the evening. Work crews take away a cold midday meal and can prepare hot coffee with milk at work sites.  The cook needs an additional cooking pot. No food is sold in the canteen.  Medical and hygiene care  The medical lieutenant, Rullman, has 4 soldiers working as health staff and a Catholic priest. Five men are housed in the camp's infirmary; 7 others are treated at the military hospital. See list of patients. Lieutenant Rullman is satisfied with the general state of health; the equipment in the infirmary is sufficient. He would like to have a small reserve of Vitamin C tablets; these will be sent to him from German Red Cross stocks. His monthly salary amounts to £. 5.9.-.  The lieutenant-doctor wishes that the medical soldiers be allowed to wear their uniforms during their weekly one-hour prom. He asks if it is |  | - 2 -  customary in England to have protected personnel accompanied by armed guards during outings.  German doctors in England, wishing to keep abreast of progress, asked whether a circular service could be organized for German and Swiss medical journals and publications.  Clothing  The situation is identical to that described in the report concerning camp 103. Rubber boots are in good condition.  Money and pay  Pay ("Taschengeld" [pocket money]) was not paid to the prisoners during their captivity in North Africa, they would like the arrears to be credited to their individual accounts. The Protecting Power is dealing with this matter and has informed the Reich authorities.  Below is a list of prisoners employed to upkeep the camp and other work involving a salary either from the British authorities or from the ‘Welfare Fund.’  The authorities pay: 2 shoemakers (1½d per hour); 2 tailors (1½d); 2 barbers (¾d); 3 office workers (¾d); 1 prisoner responsible for maintaining the sewage treatment installation (¾d); 1 canteen worker (¾d); 2 carpenters (1½d); 2 painters (1½d); 1 blacksmith (1½d); 1 electrician (1½d); 1 Camp Leader (2d); a deputy (1½d).  The ‘Welfare Fund’ pays: 4 medical soldiers (1½d); 8 cooks (1½d); 2 orderlies (1½d); 5 roadmen and fuel attendants (1½d); 1 non-commissioned officer on duty (1½d).  Work  Similar to camp 103; in addition, they prune berries. The prisoners hope to be employed in more varied agricultural work.  The daily schedule is as follows: 6.00 am; 6.30 breakfast; 7.40 roll-call; 8.00 departure for work (by truck); 30-minute break at noon; 18.00 return to camp and roll-call; 18.45 evening meal; 22.00 lights out. Two roll-calls.  Non-commissioned officers are not required to work; none of them agreed to work voluntarily.  Canteen  A list of prices is attached to the report. The canteen manager considers the variety of items on sale to be sufficient; however, he indicates that the quantities affected do not allow him to meet the demands of some of the |

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| - 3 -  the most popular products required by prisoners; a new ‘NAAFI’ regulation will further reduce the quantity of products and items intended for the camp. According to the canteen worker, mineral water, for example, should be limited to ½ bottle per week per prisoner; toiletries to 6 per month; nail scissors at 4 per month throughout the camp.  It is regrettable that the camp canteen cannot sell any food products that are not rationed to the public.  Leisure and intellectual needs  Gefreiter Gunther works as a librarian. The library is being built up with consignments from the book reserve of the German Red Cross in London.  Complete collections of 'Soldatenbriefe' are requested, as are books on the following subjects: agriculture, gardening, natural science, technical subjects, languages ​​(English, French, Spanish, Latin), stenography, as well as copies of the circulars of the 'Oberkommando der Wehrmacht' ('Berufsweiterbildung'). [Regarding professional training].  Unteroffizier Battermann and Gefreiter Petrich are ready to organize English classes for beginners.  There is a sports field, but equipment is still lacking.  Correspondence  This arouses the same complaints as at Camp 103. Almost all the prisoners have received no news of their family since their capture, ten months ago.  The prisoners regularly send letters and four cards per month.  Discipline  A non-commissioned officer and 2 soldiers are under arrest for breaches of disciplinary regulations. They receive normal rations, but are not allowed to smoke.  Requests of the Camp leader  1) Inquires about non-arrival of mail sent from Germany.  2) A written copy of the rules for the administration of the ‘Welfare Fund’ and a list of articles (soap, matches, toilet paper, etc.) that is provided free of charge by the detaining authorities; a copy of the disciplinary regulations and punishments used by the army; |  | - 4 –  3) Transfer from Algeria of the remainder of the Chancellor’s Fund;  4) Payment of back pay (‘Taschengeld’);  5) Complementary study books;  6) Sporting goods  7) Copy of the table concerning equivalencies of ranks in the British and German armies and special agreements concluded between belligerents, (work remuneration, postal correspondence, etc.);  8) More supplies for the canteen;  9) Work break of 45 minutes instead of 30 minutes at midday.  Doctor's requests  1) Authorization for medical soldiers to wear their uniforms during Sunday walks; to be accompanied by unarmed guards; and the duration of the walk be increased to 2 hours instead of 1 hour.  2) The doctor would like to have the possibility of examining illnesses treated outside the camp; (the Commander agreed).  3) Medical literature with a view to maintaining and developing the professional knowledge of doctors.  4) Information about the operation of the Joint Medical Commission; the steps to be taken in order to be included on the lists of repatriable protected personnel, copy of the convention relating to the improvement of the fate of wounded soldiers in the field, copy of the Anglo-German agreement concerning the non-repatriation of doctors and health personnel responsible for treating the sick and the sick in prison.  The various questions of the Camp leader and doctor will be the subject of careful examination; they will duly receive a response.  Conclusion  The conclusions are identical to those mentioned at the end of the report concerning Camp 103.  A better supply for the canteen of in items most needed and most requested by  customers.  Orders and instructions given to prisoners at work by civilian authorities on site should, as far as possible, be transmitted through the prisoner non-commissioned officer in charge of the team. |

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| Price of items in the canteen   |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | | 'Whistle………………………… | 2/8 | Black pencils……………. | -/1 | | Toothpaste: Maclean's………… | 1/1 | Cigarette holders………... | 1/11 | | Toothpaste: Kolynos…………… | 1/3 | Lighters…………………. | 6/6 | | Harrogate salts…………………. | -/9 | Pen holder……………….. | -/3 | | Cigarette papers………………... | -/3 | Feathers – Bulk…………. | 4/- | | Suspenders…………………….. | 3/- | Beer…………………….. | 1/2 | | Notebooks……………………... | -/6 |  |  | | Twine…………………………… | -/1 | Cigarettes: Pack of 10. | 10½ | | Denture cream………………….. | 2/4 | Woodbine……………….. | 10½ | | Elastoplast……………………… | -/6 | Park Drive………………. | 10½ | | Black ink………………………. | -/8 | Craven A……………….. | 10½ | | Pears shaving soap…………….. | -/8 | Players………………….. | 10½ | | - Zu Kol…………… | -/8 | Greys……………………. | 10½ | | Razor blades, pkt……………….. | -/3 | K?’s……………………… | 10½ | | Flints (package)………………… | -/6 | Weights…………………. | 10½ | | Vaseline………………………… | -/4 | Maurier…………………. | 10½ | | Brylcream ¼…………………..... | -/4 | Tobacco: 2oz packs……... |  | | Kolem hair cream…………......... | -/10 | Condor Twist……………. | 2/3 | | Solid Brylcream………………... | 1/10 | Erimore Flake…………… | 2/3 | | Nufix hair cream……………….. | 1/7 | Wells Spr Shag…………. | 2/3 | | Round mirror…………………… | 1/9 | Franklin…………………. | 2/5 | | Pocket mirror…………………… | -/4 | Chairman……………….. | 2/10 | | Shampoo………………………... | -/4 | Honeydew………………. | 2/2 | | Talcum Powder………………… | 1/4 | Players Med.Navy………. | 2/8 | | Sewing needles…………………. | 0/1½ | Peerage………………….. | 2/6 | | Comb…………………………… | -/9 | H Bruno…………………. | 2/6 | | Colored pencils………………… | -/1 | H Julien…………………. | 2/6 | | Tobacco bags…………………… | 6/- | BDV…………………….. | 2/7 | | Money bags…………………….. | 5/- | Honeydew………………. | 2/9 | | Suitcase (14”)………………....... | 8/- | Churchman……………… | 2/6 | | “ (16”)………………..... | 9/7 |  |  | | Nail scissors…………………..... | 2/- | Swiss Rolls……………… | 1/- | |  |  | Minerals…………………. | -/3 |   16.3.’44  [Translated from French by M Sanders]. | Report from 23-24 March 1945 continued:  The Camp Leader (Lagerfűhrer) was interviewed. He had served 12 years as a soldier. He was described as being *Seelenkrank,* (a sick soul) with anxiety about his family and his country. Regarded as an anti-Nazi. (Other visitors also reported him as being depressed).  The German Medical Officer – Unterarzt P Contzen was also regarded as an anti-Nazi - “*Tries to put his ideas over with other Ps/W. A pleasant and sympathetic type.”*  “*Ps/W mess waiters and batmen are employed in Officer’s mess and quarters. This practice, however, is going to be stopped by O.C. Sub-district.”*  There were no education courses taking place, other than teaching English. The stated reasons for the lack of education courses were the late return at 18:30 of the pows from work, and the lack of any driving force in the camp. The English teacher, Ob.Gefr Magnus Peterich, was regarded as a ‘*dark-horse*.’ He had been a foreign correspondent, had written short stories, and was “*a man of some culture.*”    There was a library with 900 books, (830 German, 40 English, 30 French) - however many of them were in bad condition. English newspapers were received, also Wochenpost.  There was a radio, theatre and small orchestra. There had been a few films shown. Sports facilities included a football ground and running track – some sports events had been held.  The visitor’s general attitude to the pows was displayed in his comment; “*Many of them are of a good open-faced type, but probably not overburdened with brains or given to thought*.” He judged the camp to be mainly non-political with just a few Nazis and communists.  The visitor recommended that lecturers should come to the camp to talk about re-building Germany; and give some lectures about history, “*in simple language.*” Little response was given to these requests until April 1946 when a regular series of lectures was given at the camp.  < **May 1945** – Italian letter sheet dated May 1945. The Italians were almost certainly held in separate hostels from the Germans.  **17 July 1945.** A brief report was given about education courses. Very little had changed. Magnus Peterich was still teaching English. |

**14 – 16 September 1945 -** Re-education report. Oh dear!

Strength was declared as 670, “*including 29 Austrians, 12 Poles, 15 Czechs and some other non-Germans*” – not sure if these other non-Germans were the Italians.

*“The Commandant, Major S W Thomas\* has no interest in re-education and is definitely unhelpful.”* (\*In the last report it was I W Thomson – are these different people or a mistake in the names?). Many Commandants had no interest in re-education, it was not what they were there for; they were there to utilise the pows as a workforce. However, this Commandant appeared to be particularly obstructive.

The visitor believed that the overall political gradings of pows as ‘white’ was incorrect – “*there are 61 former party members and 1 SS man…”* He found that a number of pows had not been graded at all and he re-graded the camp as white-grey.

Evidence that Italians were still attached to the camp was given – *“There are two interpreters, S/Sgt Becker and Sgt Marsgall, who also interpret for the Italian camp and both of these are very helpful.”* He did not state where the Italian camp was.

Morale – “*The morale of Ps/W in this camp, especially the camp staff is the lowest I have yet encountered. After investigation I attribute this to the following reasons*.

*Poor camp leadership.* [By this he meant the German pow leadership – the Commandant is mentioned below].

*Promises said to have been made by other visitors that this camp would be among the first to be repatriated.*

*Indifference on the part of the Commandant.*

*Current news from Germany especially the evacuation from the East and prospects of winter starvation.*

*Feeling created by talks with men from other camps whom Ps/W meet at work that Nazis are better treated than they.*

*Acute temporary shortage of cigarettes.*

The camp leader was, “*exceedingly depressed and apathetic and is in a morbid state….. [he] has difficulty in maintaining discipline, and anti-militarism of the wrong sort is prevalent.”*

The medical officer, previously commented on as pleasant and lively, was, “*in little better heart*” than the camp leader. The MO stated that about two-thirds of the camp were unpolitical, but anti-British, and 10% communist, with a few Nazis. “*There is certainly Communist propaganda going on in the camp, which flourishes only because of the lack of any positive influences.”*

The two young padres were without influence.

The only positive remarks regarding the German staff were for an English teacher, Siegel – “*the only live man on the camp staff*” and “*a good teacher”.* He had lived for 10 years in the US – but even he was dissatisfied, “*and regularly bombards the War Office with petitions for his release because of the information he gave after capture.”*

The pows in general were seen to be; “*permeated with nihilism, resented discipline and were cynical about everything*.”

There was a theatre, but no theatre group as, “*everyone in the camp had lost interest and was completely indifferent*” – but, there was a good camp orchestra conducted by a competent man.

English, Swiss and German newspapers were received. The library was good with 1102 books – about half being fiction. There were classes for English, French and Russian. Lectures were very infrequent – the last being two months previous.

A camp newspaper was being considered – but not started - the visitor doubted it would ever start as the Commandant refused to allow any facilities. There were no discussion groups. The radio was not working properly, and the Commandant was not interested; “*He said that the set had been bought by the Italians anyway, and that the Germans were lucky to have the use of it.”*

Recommended:

Replace the camp leaders as soon as possible.

Start a series of lecturer visits.

Get a camp newspaper started – typewriter and paper needed.

A man to organise the theatre.

Music and MS paper for the orchestra.

Old American magazines [ - why?]

Copies of political pamphlets and Ausblick

Crystal radio sets were suggested by the English teacher so that pows could listen to BBC programmes.

Some lecturers did visit the camp after this report. They gave their own general reports on their lectures and the response of the pows – but, six months on from the last negative report, the attitude of the commandant had not changed. This is recorded on:

**20 March 1946.** A visiting lecturer, Dr H L Gottschalk, submitted his report, but also gave an appendix. He complained about his poor reception at the camp by the Commandant, and, “*I should like to know what the reason for this treatment of a lecturer was who came on the expressed wish of P.I.D. and wants nothing but the most primitive courtesy to be expected between gentlemen. And this rudeness contrasts sharply with the behaviour of all the other officers whom I met before.”*

This was acted upon by Major Robert Seeds of the Lecture Section, P/W Camps Committee. He supported the claims made and stated others had made similar comments. He referred the matter to the POW department at the War Office on 25 March 1946.

**1946** – Intake of many pows from camps in the USA and Canada. Most of the ex-US pows had a very low morale as they had been misinformed in the US they were being repatriated. Instead, they found themselves in working camps in the UK. Pows from Canada were often C grade. They had been captured early in the war and retained their Nazi ideology.

**10 / 14 April 1946.** Report on grading unscreened pows. Strength 922 in HQ, 5 hostels, and billets.

Commandant: Major S W Thomas

Camp leader: St.Fw Walter Killat (A), “*has held appointment since 25.9.44; was a clerk in metallurgical works. Fairly well educated. A decent definite anti-Nazi, but lacks personality and decision. Political opinions: social democrat*.”

Deputy C/L: Fdw. Otto Stubner (A): “*aged 32. Was arrested for investigation of his S.P.D. views and background in 1933. Only detained a few days. No Nazi affiliations. Was considered unreliable by the Nazis and therefore never obtained regular employment. A very good type.”*

Overall political complexion: Grey.

“*The Commandant is unco-operative and has no interest in re-education. S/Sgt Becker (Swiss), languages very good; will be demobilized next month. S/Sgt Stanleigh: first class English and German. The Adjt. Lt. Fletcher, was helpful in several ways, including arranging for transport.”* Becker and Stanleigh were the Interpreter Officers for the camp.

More than half of the pows were, “*new or comparatively new arrivals.”*

**4 December 1946**. Report on re-education. Strength 1407 – (1 officer, 1406 other ranks). 6 hostels listed.

Commandant: Lt.Col P W Dollar Camp Leader: Hfw. Robert Gering (A)

Interpreter: S/Sgt Rodney Deputy C/L: Fw. Hubert Warmewitz (B)

German M.O.: S/Arzt Dr Halten (A)

Political complexion: grey – but only 463 of the 1407 pows had been screened.

There was a new Camp Commandant – whether this was a result of previous complaints, or just the regular change-over of staff that occurred in many camps, is not known.

“*Commandant afforded every facility for investigation of re-education and is fully co-operative. The S/sgt knows his job, speaks excellent German and is keen.*”

“*Morale is good on the whole. The fact that repatriation has begun and is likely to increase in volume keeps them cheerful*.”

About 500 pows were ‘youth’ – under-25 – but this was not seen as a problem.

Re-education activities were seen as being “*rather backward*” – but there were signs of improvement. The standard list of activities was given –

Newspapers: English newspapers + Wochenpost and Ausblick

Library: 2000 books.

Discussion group: about 30 pows attending.

Films: regular, but not outstanding.

Wireless: good, controlled in C/L office.

Camp magazine: started – ‘*Aufbau: Lagerzeitung Camp 97’*, (Construction – Camp 97 Newspaper). “No outstanding editorial talent.”

English Instruction: held once a week and at hostels – Banner Hill, Bridge End and Tachbrook.

Other camp activities -

Religion: a hut was being used as a church. Protestant padre. A Catholic Priest comes every three weeks from Ettington Camp 31.

Theatre: “*There is no available talent.”*

Orchestra: 11 performers with leader Gefr Baumgardt (B+).

**22 April 1947.** Re-education survey. Strength 1258 – 1 officer and 1257 other ranks.

Commandant: Lt.Col P W Dollar Camp Leader: Uffz Silberberg (B) [new]

Interpreter: None Deputy C/L: Fw. Scholz (B) [new]

General screening figures were given: A – 3 / B – 1175 / C – 80.

Morale was recorded as; “*Good. There are excellent facilities for study and sport. The whole camp has been screened and the PsW appear quite happy*.”

Re-education activities were noted to be similar as before, but with some progression. The camp magazine had improved in quality. There were classes for book-keeping, French and mathematics. A theatre group had started.

*“It is considered that a good effort is being made at this camp to carry on re-education more especially as the outstanding personalities have been repatriated.”*

**6 August 1947.** Re-education survey. Strength 1207 – 1 officer 1206 other ranks. Main camp, 3 hostels and billets.

Commandant: Lt.Col P W Dearden [new] Camp Leader: Ufw Franz Silberberg (B)

Interpreter: S/Sgt Dole [new] Deputy C/L: Fw. Gerhard Scholz (B)

German M.O.: S/Arzt Dr Brendel (B) [new]

Screening had been largely phased out by this time. Figures given; A – 1 / B – 1206.

The camp leader was described: “*36 years of age… a mining technician in civilian life. He has never been in the party, and has no marked political tendencies. He carries out his duties satisfactorily. Quite a pleasant and energetic character*.”

The deputy: “*36 years of age… a mason by trade was called up for the army in 1940. He is a good understudy to the Camp leader. He carries out his duties efficiently. A good type of working man*.”

Re-education activities were similar to previous reports. An Information Room had been added which displayed press cuttings and translations of articles. It was noted that longer hours spent at the farms during harvest had limited the scope for re-education.

Many pows developed their own relationships with local civilians. Formal outside contacts included small groups attending evening classes at Percival Gild House in Rugby. There were visits planned to the Rugby Town Hall, Stratford Theatre and a boxing match. It was hoped that a master from Rugby school would visit to give some lectures.

**25 September 1947.** A note from a visiting lecturer stated: “*Camp 97 has only 2 hostels now, Bridge End and Banner Hill. A third hostel* [Tachbrook] *was dissolved, recently, and it is rumoured that the main camp itself will be dissolved in a few weeks time.”*

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

**End 1947** – The camp closed. Banner Hill and Bridge End hostels were recorded as part of Ettington Camp 31 by February 1948.

Known Camp Commandants:

1945 - Major S W Thomas, previously at Goathurst Camp 44. (OR I W Thomson – see notes above).

1946 – Lt Col Peter W Dollar from the 4th Queens Own Hussars – a major Polo player – ex pow from Colditz - with a file of some of his private papers held at the IWM, (Cat Documents 1 080). Later transferred to Lodge Moor Camp 17.

1947 - Lt.Col P W Dearden

**After the camp:** A hostel for displaced persons, mostly from Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia. From 1953 emergency council housing for a short time before being dismantled. 2019 farmland.

**Further Information:**

National Archives FO 939/306 – 97 Working camp, Birdingbury Camp, Bourton, Warwickshire. Dated 1945-1947. (Used above).

National Archives - FO 1120/223 – ‘Re-educational survey visit reports for camps 93 to 99’. (3 reports duplicated from file above).

The Imperial War Museum has copies of the magazine dated February / July 1947. Ref LBY E.J. 672.

**Numbers of pows**

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

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 3/1944 | 4/1946 \* | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 1948 |
| Main | Capacity 560 | 461 | 564 | 541 \*\* | 538\*\* | 455 |  |  |
| Banner Hill |  |  | 1944-46 ? | 319 | 240 | 287 |  | With C31 |
| Bridge End |  |  | ? | 218 | 200 | 202 |  | With C31 |
| Bubbenhall |  |  | 61 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Dunchurch |  |  | 50 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Gaydon |  |  |  | 22 |  |  |  |  |
| Ladbroke |  |  | 76 | 77 | 70 |  |  |  |
| Leamington |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Pailton |  |  | 74 | 75 | 70 |  |  |  |
| Southam |  |  | 35 |  |  |  |  |  |
| Tachbrook |  |  |  | 155 | 140 | 141 |  |  |
| Billets |  |  | 48 | ? | ? | 122 |  |  |
| TOTALS | ? | ? | 908 | 1407 | 1258 | 1207 |  |  |

\*Approximate – the figures are 14 short of the total given with the reason given that the nominal rolls were inaccurate.

\*\* including billetees.

**Hostels**

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| --- | --- |
| **Banner Hill.** NGR SP 275 694.  1941 – 1944: Heavy Anti-Aircraft site, H25.  1944 – 1946: ?  1946 – 1947: Hostel to Birdingbury Camp 97.  Late 1947 – 1948: Hostel to Ettington Park Camp 31.  Nissen huts for accommodation, cookhouse, canteen and latrines.  “T*he camp was built at Good Rest Farm. My memories are of sentries and gun-sights and being given toys made by the prisoners, wooden toys, ladders and chickens pecking on a board, also pennies made into aeroplanes. Crunchie bars were a treat as well. Some of the prisoners cycled to work on the local farms and those that worked at our farm stayed to supper after their day's work. There was always a sentry standing at the gate.”*  <https://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/99/a4189999.shtml> |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1954 |

“*One ex-POW recalls that he was employed emptying waste buckets from homes in Leek Wootton with outside lavatories. He also drove a dust cart for the council. Prisoners were paid for the work in tokens rather than currency. Football matches were played between the prisoners and locals who were generally reported to be ‘friendly.’ A reunion of some of the prisoners who could be traced, has been held on the site.”* - [www.geocaching.com/geocache/GC80FGK\_banner-hill?guid=9b8b7a68-e784-4018-abd1-9b4cf89441e3](http://www.geocaching.com/geocache/GC80FGK_banner-hill?guid=9b8b7a68-e784-4018-abd1-9b4cf89441e3)

**December 1946** - Hostel Leader; Ofw. Dransfield (A).

**April 1947** - Hostel leader; Fw P Fateiger (B+) – still there in August 1947 and transferred to Ettington Camp 31.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 3/1944 | 4/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 1948 |
| Banner Hill |  |  | 1944-46 ? | 319 | 240 | 287 |  | With C31 |

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| **Bridge End**  *“There was a German PoW camp at the corner of Myton Road with Banbury Road, where the prep school is today.”* – listed on ourwarwickshire.org.uk. This would be at NGR SP 2877 6448 (Cannot see on map or 1947 aerial photo).  Probably linked to a different main camp before these entries.  **December 1946** – Hostel leader; Ofw. Blume (A)  **April 1947** – Hostel leader; Uffz. H Schellack (B) – same in **August 1947,** and transferred to Camp 31.   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | 1943 | 3/1944 | 4/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 1948 | | Bridge End |  |  | ? | 218 | 200 | 202 |  | With C31 | |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1954 |

**Bubbenhall –** 6 miles from main camp. Site of H66 Anti Aircraft Battery. Different locations listed – SP 33 69 / SP 34 71 / SP 356 728

Probably linked to a different main camp before / after this entry.

**April 1946** – Hostel Leader: O/Maat Helmut Welzer, 88327 (B+); arrived from Canada just one month ago, speaks English; was in Merchant Navy; an anti-Nazi, but he admitted his re-education was not complete. Made a “*frank and decent*” impression. Mittel Schule education.

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|  | 1943 | 3/1944 | 4/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 1948 |
| Bubbenhall |  |  | 61 |  |  |  |  |  |

**Dunchurch** – 4 miles from the main camp. Memories place the site off Southam Road on the right hand side towards Toft Hill.

Probably linked to a different main camp before / after this entry.

**May 1946** - a visiting lecturer reported that; “*In Dunchurch though the greater part are not adherent to nazi-mentality the feelings of the Ps/W are roused by propaganda of a Communist. This man was in the Main Camp prior to his transfer to Dunchurch. Also, they had difficulties with him, as the Protestant Padre informed me. According to his own report he has been in Siberia in earlier years. His propaganda seems to have been not without success. That is a pity as there are a good number of younger boys who in themselves make a favourable impression*.”

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 3/1944 | 4/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 1948 |
| Dunchurch |  |  | 50 |  |  |  |  |  |

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| --- | --- |
| **Ladbroke** – 7 miles from the main camp. NGR SP 421 587.  “*One of the major changes in the pattern of life in the village was the setting up of a Prisoner of War Camp in Radbourne Lane at the beginning of the 2nd World War, initially as an open prison for captured Italians.  It is an indication of the relaxed regime (and of the primitive conditions) that one of the prisoners was allowed to visit Sarah's Cottage in Bridge Lane daily for two large buckets of water since there was no water supply at the camp.  The Italians helped in various local farming and drainage projects and became a familiar part of village life; local children found the camp an ideal place to while away their spare time.  The inmates were naturally Roman Catholic and it was a familiar sight on Sundays to see them all marching into the Convent in Southam, wearing their uniforms of plain brown material with a large red cross on their backs, as a target for marksmen if they should try to escape into the open countryside.*  *Towards the end of the war the site was converted to a German Prisoner of War Camp and the whole atmosphere changed.  High fences were erected, local people were discouraged from going near and the village had little contact with the prisoners.  At the end of the war the camp was changed again and became a centre for displaced persons, mainly from Estonia and Latvia.”* Information from - <https://sites.google.com/site/ladbrokevillage/history>  **April 1946** – Hostel Leader: Fw Josef Webelacker 6737 (A): Upgraded from B. Aged 31. At one time was an R.C. monk in Holland and became a regular soldier. A good disciplinarian, serious minded type and well spoken of by British and PW camp staff.  **December 1946** – Hostel leader: Fw. Ubelacker (B) – still there in April 1947. |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1954 |

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|  | 1943 | 3/1944 | 4/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 1948 |
| Ladbroke |  |  | 76 | 77 | 70 |  |  |  |

**Leamington,** Kenilworth Road

Insufficient detail to identify – possibly what became the site of Cloister Crofts Camp 25, with entrances off Kenilworth Road.

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|  | 1943 | 3/1944 | 4/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 1948 |
| Leamington |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Pailton** – 12 miles from main camp. At the site marked ‘Hutted Hostel’ NGR SP 464 821  **1943 / 1944** - Italian pows.  **April 1946** – Hostel leader; Fw Walter Saelzler (B): reported to be rather senile – still there **April 47**   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | 1943 | 3/1944 | 4/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 1948 | | Pailton |  |  | 74 | 75 | 70 |  |  |  | |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1954 |

**Southam** – 5 miles from main camp.

Probably linked to a different main camp before / after this entry.

**April 1946** – Hostel Leader: “*O/Fw Peter Braun 656785 (B): Not much personality. A simple minded type.”*

**May 1946** - a visiting lecturer recorded that the pows ranged in age from 19 to 42 with younger ones in the majority.

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|  | 1943 | 3/1944 | 4/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 1948 |
| Southam |  |  | 35 |  |  |  |  |  |

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| **Tachbrook**  Probable site at SP 327 612 – shown as Agricultural Hostel in 1954.  Probably attached to a different main camp before these entries.  **December 1946** – Hostel leader Uffz. W Tweitmann (B) – still there **August 47**.   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | |  | 1943 | 3/1944 | 4/1946 | 12/1946 | 4/1947 | 8/1947 | 9/1947 | 1948 | | Tachbrook |  |  |  | 155 | 140 | 141 |  |  | |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1954 |

### DESCRIPT