**Camp 117** **- Walderslade Camp, King George Street, Chatham, Kent**

Included in the 1945 ICRC camp list – Labour Camp. 117. Walderslade Camp, King George St, Walderslade, Chatham, Kent.

|  |
| --- |
| **1947 Camp list** |
| 117(G.W.C.) | Walderslade Camp, King George St., Walderslade, Chatham, Kent | E. | Priswar, Chatham | Bluebell Hill 324-5 | (Blank) | Lt.Col.P.Goldsmith, M.B.E. M.C. | v/1453/2 |

|  |
| --- |
| **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 |
| TQ 757 643 | 178 | 117 | Walderslade Camp, King George Street, Chatham | Kent | 4 | German Working Camp |  |

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Location:** On a field opposite the Poacher’s Pocket public house – formerly called the Hook and Hatchet.**Before the camp:** Farmland**Pow Camp:** Italian and then German pows.**1943** – camp opened for Italian pows. In 1944 they were listed as co-operator pows.**1944** - A hostel for Italians was listed at Cotherstone.**1945/6 –** Camp changes from an Italian to a German Working Camp.**14 February 1946** – Strict fraternisation rules were in place. Mrs Emily Polhill, whose bungalow was alongside a camp in Walderslade was summonsed; “*for conveying without lawful authority a piece of cake to a PoW.”* She was fined £1, but the pow received 28 days hard labour from the Commandant. |  |  |
| **1946 -** [raf\_cpe\_uk\_1789\_rp\_3181 - Aerial Photo | Historic England](https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/archive/collections/aerial-photos/record/raf_cpe_uk_1789_rp_3181) | Ordnance Survey 1955 |

**1946** - Newspaper article – *“Admitting that they had spent the greater part of the night in the woods with two escaped German prisoners, two girls, aged 14 and 15, pleaded guilty at Chatham Juvenile Court today to having acted in a way likely to prejudice discipline of prisoners of war. Detective-Inspector E.G.Everett stated that when the men were reported missing from Walderslade camp, a search was organised which continued most of the night. The girls, who had also been reported missing, were seen at 4.30 a.m., coming home through the woods. When questioned they said, “We have been with two prisoners in a hut.”*

*Asked by the Chairman (Mrs.H.E.Mitchell) why they went with the Germans, one of the girls replied, “We did it because we liked them.”*

*Mrs.Mitchell: “Are you not disgusted with yourselves?”*

*“No.” replied the girls*

*Putting the girls on probation for three years, the Chairman commented, “This was a disgraceful thing to have done. However well behaved the prisoners are, it is a great temptation to them to have girls such as you hanging about the camp.”* (Original story from the Lancashire Evening Post; reported on kenthistoryforum.co.uk).

**1946** – Large intake of pows arrived from camps in the USA. Most had very low morale as they had been misinformed in the US that they were being repatriated. Instead, they found themselves in working camps in the UK. Additional pows were transferred from Camps in Belgium where many had experienced extremely poor conditions.

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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. |

 |
| Camp ‘token money’ issued by the War Department – various values were used. They could only be exchanged in the camp of issue and were stamped on the back each time. |

**14-16 August 1946** – Re-education Report. Strength: 0 officers, 1915 Other Ranks in HQ, 9 hostels and billets. This was the 6th PID visit – unfortunately the first 5 are not in the National Archive file.

Commandant: Lt Col F Goldsmith Camp leader: O/Fw Franz Rank (B)

Adjutant: Captain Halsey Deputy C/L: Fw Luderer (B)

Interpreter: S/Sgt John Horner German M.O.: U.Arzt Dr Harald Knapp (B-)

The Commandant was on leave; he played no part in developing re-education activities, however he was described as “*considerate*.”

S/Sgt Horner was described as a, “*very efficient and intelligent young N.C.O.”* He was helping to develop re-education at HQ and the hostels “*with great enthusiasm and skill.”*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening:  | A+ | A | B+ | B | B- | C | Unknown |
|  | 5 | 118 | 34 | 559 | 31 | 213 | 955 |

As in most camps, apart from the Interpreter, the British staff had no interest in re-education.

Discipline and ‘labour’ in the camp was regarded as ‘*excellent*,’ but morale was described as ‘low’ for a range of reasons:

1. Some anti-fascist pows transferred from Camp 197 had apparently been told they were being transferred for 3 months before repatriation – this did not happen.
2. Statements in the House of Commons about a possible long-term retention pows in the UK.
3. Newspaper reports about rationing and sending money home.
4. Restrictions on correspondence to families.
5. No detailed scheme for repatriation.
6. Some Pows returned to Germany were then sent back to the UK, while officers were sent home.
7. Savings from work carried out was not at their disposal and they could not send it home.
8. Pows working in cement factories were not supplied with the protective goggles and clothing that British workers had.
9. Relentless pressure while at work.
10. Pows working at farms were not paid if bad weather prevented them from working. Even quarter hours were deducted.

There was little expression of Nazism, however many pows were anti-British for the stated reasons. Some pows were tending towards communism. In a later report it was revealed that S/Sgt Horner was a communist, and it was alleged that he upgraded pows who were also communist.

About 50% of the pows were ‘youth’ (under 25). They were not considered to be a problem.

The standard list of re-education activities was given:

Wochenpost and Ausblick – respectively; 200 / 0 recently.

Newspapers – Sufficient British papers. Only 5-6 German papers received weekly; insufficient.

Library – 400 books; “*totally inadequate*.”

Lectures – Regular and popular.

Discussion groups – Under the leadership of a ‘Democratic Council’ meeting regularly, “*high standard*.”

Exhibitions – 2 held so far, 1 about the camp itself, 1 about ‘Europe Under Nazi Occupation.’

Films – COGA and YMCA films once in 3 weeks.

Wireless – adequate. The adjutant was asked to consider extending ‘lights out’ to allow pows to listen to the pow broadcasts by the BBC.

Camp Magazine – Der Neue Weg. Issued at HQ, all hostels received copies.

Press review – Published daily, copies sent to the hostels.

English instruction – 16 courses with 185 pupils throughout the camp.

Other Camp Activities –

Religion – Protestant Padre Naderer held popular services and Bible classes at HQ and hostels. RC pows from HQ were marched to church on Sundays – no provision for RCs at the hostels distant from HQ.

Education – Classes in HQ for; mathematics, building, economics, painting.

Theatre – High standard of performances, the group visited the hostels.

Orchestra – 16 members. Well equipped, playing light and some classical music. Visited the hostels.

**19/23 November 1946** – Visit by the Segregation Section of PID, mainly for political screening. Strength; 0 Officers, 1806 OR.

Only change to senior personnel – a new deputy C/L; Fw Rudolf Glodny (B+). Elected by the pows. “*Popular and efficient.”*

The Camp Leader was a Sudeten and served in the Czech Army 1937/8. Aged 32, a confectioner. Captured in Guernsey. “*Well liked by all*.”

M.O. Knapp, aged 28; “*a trifle arrogant… not popular*”, but doing his job efficiently.

No padres at the camp. Local British protestant (able to speak German) and RC padres visited.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening: | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C | C+ | Not Recorded |
|  | - | 38 | 7 | 371 | 1087 | 58 | 7 | - | 238 |

Pows spoke well about treatment received from farmers, dockers, cement-workers, hop-pickers, etc. They wanted to be allowed more freedom to come into closer contact with British families. There was a great mistrust over Russia and pows received bad news of others in the Russian zone, including men being taken away and rape.

Some pows had been sent to Munster Lager for discharge on medical grounds by British doctors. On arrival in Germany, they were passed as fit by German doctors and were sent back to England.

Fraternisation rules were increasingly relaxed to reflect changing relationships between civilians and pows at this time – “*That Christmas of 1946 brought a dramatic breakthrough of human feeling.* *All over the country invitations poured into the camps…. The villagers at Walderslade near Chatham had earlier protested at the building of a camp for German POWs, and later had tried without success to have the names of girls published who – illegally of course – had fraternised. Now they sent over two hundred invitations up to camp*.” (Thresholds of Peace, p 187 – Matthew Barry Sullivan – 1979 – Hamish Hamilton).

The local Salvation Army band visited the camp on three occasions during 1946 – one comment; “*A programme of music and song suitable for the occasion was rendered and well appreciated by the crowd that packed the hall to overflowing. The singing of the prisoners was grand, especially the carol “Stille Nacht” sung in German*.”

**21/26 April 1947** – Re-educational Survey. Strength; 1 officer, 1349 OR in HQ, 6 hostels + billets.

Commandant due to leave the army on 15 May 1947.

A new Interpreter Officer; S/Sgt Williams – did not speak German!

The Camp Leader was upgraded to (A).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening: | A | B+ | B | C | Unscreened |
|  | 43 | 144 | 981 | 180 | 2 |

222 pows were appealing against their political grades – the better the grade, the sooner repatriated, in theory. 438 pows repatriated to date.

Accommodation in the main camp was over-crowded; the barrack rooms were “*dark and rather dismal*.” Barbed wire around the camp was still in place, (many camps had removed or reduced it). The nearby towns of Chatham and Rochester had been placed ‘out-of-bounds’ to pows due to the British military presence.

Morale was regarded as ‘fair.’ With the loss of S/Sgt Horner, the pow’s ‘Democratic Camp Council’ collapsed – it was up to the pows to develop re-education activities, the British staff played no part. ‘Double Summer Time’ also had an effect as many pows did not arrive back at the camp until 7/7.30 p.m., in time for an evening meal, but with little energy for further activities. Changes recorded to re-education activities:

Discussion groups – no longer led by the Democratic Council. Each hostel had its own group formed by their own study-leaders. A weekend debate was held monthly at HQ, open to all pows, if transport allowed.

Films – YMCA films continued, but Gaumont British had not returned since Christmas.

Other camp activities –

Religion – little interest. No padres. Rev Naderer, chaplain to the bishop of Rochester took an interest in the camp, (he lived next to the Ridges hostel). A RC priest visited occasionally.

Education – classes for French, Russian, agriculture and arithmetic.

Entertainments – Two theatre groups – HQ and Ridges – played an important part in camp life. Performances were ‘exchanged’ with Camps 40 and 86. There was a shortage of materials, clothes, etc. HQ had an orchestra and a dance band which visited the hostels. Gramophone recitals were held.

**18/21 June 1947** – Re-education Progress Report. Strength; 0 Officers, 1376 OR.

Commandant: Lt Col W H Rowe, CBE, DSO. Camp leader: O/Fw Franz Rank (A)

Interpreter: S/Sgt Drechsler Deputy C/L: Fw Glodny (B+)

 German M.O.: U.Arzt Dr Harald Knapp (B-)

The new Commandant was considered to be supportive of re-education.

The Interpreter was “*a very young man, inexperienced and lacking initiative.”*

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Political screening: | A | B+ | B / B- | C | Unscreened |
|  | 45 | 268 | 1060 | 1 | 2 |

All but 1 of the C-grades had been upgraded or transferred. 15 appeals pending. 638 pows repatriated to date.

Morale had improved with the new Commandant – but was negatively affected by delays to repatriations. The barbed wire fences were removed. Pows were allowed to visit Rochester, but not Chatham where there were still many British service personnel. There was a growing feeling that Germany was getting a ‘raw-deal’ from the allies.

There were additional newspapers, including Swiss papers, and more library books.

Discussion groups had been diminished due to longer day light times and increased freedoms for walking out.

Travelling Films Ltd had replaced Gaumont British.

General education had also suffered from pows preferring to do other things – mathematics and agriculture classes continued.

The theatre groups and orchestra were finding it difficult to continue due to repatriations.

Apart from informal contacts with civilians, formal contacts had barely started with just a visit to Rochester Cathedral. More contacts were hoped for.

**27-29 August 1947** – General Survey of Re-education. Strength; 1 officer, 1405 OR.

A new Camp leader – Hwm Heinrich (B+); had been hostel leader at West Malling. “*Carrying out his duties to the satisfaction of the Commandant and his fellow PW.”*

Simplified screening in use; A – 1, Remainder B+,B, and B-. 701 pows repatriated to date.

Morale had improved due to repatriations, greater freedoms and good weather.

Discussion groups had ceased in the hostels and was greatly reduced at HQ – mainly due to better weather, long harvest work and a preference for walking out of camp in free time. Education classes had also ceased, it was hoped they would restart in Autumn.

The orchestra and theatre group had disbanded due to repatriations.

**6-10 October 1947** – Re-educational Survey. Strength; 1 officer, 983 OR in HQ, 7 hostels and billets.

A new Deputy C/L – Joseph Schroll (B).

Political screening; A 2, B 982. 802 pows repatriated to date.

Morale was recorded as fair. The local police asked that the ban on pows visiting Chatham be continued due to the British military presence. They also asked that pows not be allowed into the woods behind the camp, but no reason for this was given in the report. It was noted that although local civilians were generally unfriendly, pows were able to contact others when further afield, such as in Rochester and Maidstone.

The disinterest in activities of ‘youth’ had been previously regarded as not a problem, as no issues arose. This report changed that view as their continued apathy was regarded as a problem and needed to change if they were to return to Germany and play a positive role. It was recommended that as many youth pows as possible be sent to the special youth training camp.

As pows were increasingly repatriated, especially the politically active leaders, re-education activities slowly decreased.

Formal outside contacts continued to be poor; a small number of pows had attended Town Council meetings at Gillingham and Chatham.

**11/14 November 1947 –** Re-educational survey. Strength; 1 officer, 1065 OR.

Coming so soon after the last report there was very little change. The Interpreter, S/Sgt Drechsler, continued to lack initiative and the Commandant requested that he be transferred.

A few pows were attending evening classes at the WEA. 3 pows attended Fabian Society meetings in Maidstone.

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

**24 December 1947** - The Bishop of Rochester visited. Over Christmas, many pows were hosted by local families.

**6/16 January 1948** – Re-educational Survey. Strength; 1 officer, 1395 OR at HQ, 9 hostels and billets.

Commandant: Lt Col W H Rowe, CBE, DSO. Camp leader: Fw Fischer (B)

Interpreter: S/Sgt Drechsler Deputy C/L: Paul Roessler

 German M.O.: U.Arzt Dr Harald Knapp (B-)

Despite the Commandant’s request, the young Interpreter was still in place. He was due to be demobbed.

Number of pows repatriated to date; 1003. 173 were ‘civilianised’ – to settle in the UK, and more were being considered.

Morale had improved due to speedier repatriations.

333 pows were ‘youth’ – there were no details of any attending the youth camp as requested.

24 wireless sets had been rented for the camp paid for by the pows. This allowed a range of broadcasts to be listened to.

There had been a slight improvement in contacts with local civilians. Pows attended Council meetings at Maidstone. A small number of pows attended WEA evening classes at Swanscombe, Chatham and Maidstone. The Society of Friends assisted pows. A successful public concert had been given by pows in a reformed camp orchestra together with some civilian soloists.

**8/11 March 1948** – Report on Outlook / Re-education. Strength; 1 officer, 1483 OR.

A new Camp leader: O/Gefr Diry. The Interpreter had left, but had not been replaced.

Number of pows repatriated to date; 1733. 214 were ‘civilianised.’

Many of the reports issued by PID at this late stage were self-congratulatory. This one recorded that the Commandant expressed his opinion that; “*we had done good work in the camp”* and that “*re-education had fully justified itself.”*

A survey was conducted in camps still open at this time concerning pow attitudes to the British. It was pointless, carried out far too late and in totally random ways. Some visitors simply gathered whoever was around and asked them to give a show of hands to the questions, some only asked a ‘selected’ group – most did not state how the data was gathered or the numbers involved. For what it is worth, the results are listed further below.

Resettlement lecturers were touring camps – again far too late – and they had not yet visited this camp.

Many pows maintained informal contacts with local families. Formal outside contacts had improved – especially for Swanscombe. Council meetings, Magistrates Courts, and meetings of the Fabians and Labour Party had been visited. 2 pows were studying for B.Sc at Medway Technical College and some were taking Cambridge University courses. Church social and religious events had been held.

80 pows visited London on a trip organised by the Society of Friends. Pows attended some local concerts by invitation or at reduced costs, as well as giving their own performances. Football matches were played against local teams.

**25/29 April 1948** – Re-educational Survey. Strength; 6 officers, 1549 OR at HQ, 14 hostels and billets.

As other camps were reduced, they were attached to this camp to be administered as hostels. This led to a wide dispersal and frequent changes of personnel.

Commandant: Lt Col W H Rowe, CBE, DSO. Camp leader: O/gefr Heinz Diry (B)

Interpreter: Stm Horvay Koloman (B) Deputy C/L: None

 German M.O.: St.Arzt Dr Dieckmann (B)

The Camp Leader had only been at the camp for 7/8 weeks, transferred from Somerhill Camp 40.

The Interpreter was a German pow, but he was regarded as satisfactory.

Political screening was simply stated as; ‘B’. 2571 pows repatriated to date. Screening was regarded as a failure by the pows and that “*The biggest Nazis stayed at home.”* (Die groessten Nazis sitzen zu Hause).

The same pointless survey of attitudes was repeated:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| % Attitude to the British: | Hate | Dislike and distrust | Indifferent | Appreciation | Like |
| March 1948 | 3 | 40 | 15 | 30 | 12 |
| April 1948 | 0 | 12 | 30 | 50 | 8 |

100% of pows held anti-Russian sentiment. An interesting comment from 1948 – *“It appears to be generally realised that Germany’s future lies in some form of European Union.”*

A resettlement lecture had been given a few weeks earlier. Most re-education activities had ceased.

The majority of pows worked on road repairs and construction – except at Mereworth Castle where the majority were employed on farms.

Religion – RC padre Kaplan Friedrich Horsch (B+)

**End May 1948** – the camp closed.

Known Camp Commandants;

1946 Lt Col P/F ? Goldsmith, M.B.E. M.C. (or MM).

1947 Lt Col W H Rowe, CBE, DSO from the Buffs.

**After the camp:** 2019 residential area with small park.

**Further Information:**

National Archives FO 1120/227 – Re-educational survey visit reports for camps 117 to 119. Dated 1 January 1946 to 31 December 1948. Used above.

Camp Magazine No 4 from 1946 - [Der Neue Weg : Herausgeber der Demokratische Lagerausschus Kriegsgefangenlager Walderslade 117 - The Wiener Holocaust Library](https://www.whlcollections.org/image/99718/)

Many posts - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/101258603269217/search/?q=pow%20camp&locale=en_GB>

**POW NUMBERS**

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

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Main |  |  | 415 | 331 | 321 | 347 | 209 | 313 | 216 | 141 |
| Cotherstone |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Swale Bridge |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Borough Green | With C40 |  | 96 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Detling |  |  | 90 | 117 | 97 | 104 | 94 | 85 |  |  |
| East Malling |  |  | 135 | 166 | 146 | 161 | 184 | 236 | 202 | 71 |
| Kingsferry |  |  | 285 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Newington |  |  | 152 | 120 | 122 | 99 | 69 | 83 |  |  |
| Ridges |  |  | 296 | 273 | 281 | 262 | 107 | 144 | 155 | 58 |
| Walderslade |  |  | 127 | 20 | 28 | 49 | 15 | 35 | 17 | 11 |
| West Malling |  |  | 275 | 270 | 306 | 294 | 221 | 22 | ? | 15 |
| Wetham Green |  |  | 37 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| Wouldham |  |  |  |  | 21 | 21 | 18 | 18 |  |  |
| Eastchurch |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 101 |  |  |
| Swanscombe |  |  | Camp 154 | 300 | 230 | 203 |
| Halstead |  |  | With Camp 40 | 51 |  |
| Mereworth Castle |  |  | Camp 267 / Satellite for Camp 40 | 450 | 461 |
| Mereworth Woods |  |  | With Camp 40 | 147 | 130 |
| Goodnestone |  |  | With Langdon Barracks Camp 412 | With Woodchurch Camp 86 | 107 |
| Charing |  |  | With Stanhope Camp 86 | With Woodchurch Camp 86 | 10 |
| Woodchurch |  |  | With Camp 282 and 86 | 192 |
| Dover |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 14 |
| Gaza Barracks | Army barracks and storage site | With C40 |  |  |  |  | 5 |
| Normanhurst |  | Camp 145 | 50 |
| Wootton Court |  |  | With Camp 412 | With Camp 86 | 12 |
| Shorncliffe |  | Camp 33 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 39 |
| Billets |  |  | 7 | 53 | 54 | 69 | 67 | 59 | 16 | 36 |
| TOTALS |  |  | 1915 | 1350 | 1376 | 1406 | 984 | 1396 | 1484 | 1555 |

**Hostels**

**Borough Green**

**1943** - Hostel for Italian pows with Somerhill Camp 40

Did this site become, ‘Labour Camp 629, Broom Cottage Camp, Borough Green, Sevenoaks, Kent’?

**8/1946** – Hostel leader; Fw Habermann (A)

**11/1946** – Hostel leader; Sold Kurt Krűger (B). Elected. “*Nothing special about him*.” Resentment recorded in this hostel due to pows; “*forced to huddle in one tent in Gravesend during recent inclement weather and kept there without pay.”* This matter was under investigation – no further information given.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Borough Green | With C40 |  | 96 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Charing.** Huts.

**4/1946** – Hostel attached to Stanhope camp 86 for German pows, (may have held Italians before this).

**1/1948** – With Woodchurch camp 86.

**4/1948** – Listed as a hostel with Walderslade Camp 117 prior to closing.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Charing |  |  | With Stanhope Camp 86 | With Woodchurch Camp 86 | 10 |

**Cotherstone** (in Epsom, KT19 9EF – NGR TQ 2081 6250).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Cotherstone |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Detling.** *“A mansion house with showers and slipper baths.”*

**10 July 1946** – Hostel opened for German pows, (may have held Italian pows before this). Intakes from USA and Belgium.

**8/1946** – Recorded as being a new hostel. Hostel leader; O.Gefr L Zimmermann (B+) – “*able and suitable*.” **11/1946** – same leader.

**4/1947** – Hostel leader; Fw Fischer (B). **8/1947** – same leader. Noted to be a “*happy hostel*.”

**10/1947** – Hostel leader; Ofw Wilhelm Mull (B+). **1/1948** – same leader.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Detling |  |  | 90 | 117 | 97 | 104 | 94 | 85 |  |  |

**Dover.**

No details to identify. Possibly attached to Camp 86 and / or Camp 412 in Dover.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Dover |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 14 |

**Eastchurch.** (Possibly at the aerodrome – NOT confirmed).

**1/1948** – Hostel leader; Bernhard Genstwa.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Eastchurch |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 101 |  |  |

**East Malling**

**16 July 1946** – Hostel opened for German pows, (may have held Italian pows before this). Intakes from USA, Belgium and Germany.

**8/1946** – Recorded as being a new hostel. Hostel leader; S.Gefr P Berge (A), “*quite suitable from every point of view;”* he had been an inmate at Belsen Concentration Camp in 1934.

**11/1946** – Hostel leader; newly elected Ogfr Otto Herhuth (A).

**4/1947** – Hostel leader; Ofw Klingsohr (B-). **8/1947** – same leader, it was recommended that he should be watched as the visitor considered him to be, “*an unreliable type*.”

**10/1947** – same leader.

**1/1948** – Hostel leader; Heinrich Tolander.

**3/1948** – Hostel leader; Wilhelm Mull, had been leader at Detling. **4/1948** – same leader.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| East Malling |  |  | 135 | 166 | 146 | 161 | 184 | 236 | 202 | 71 |

**Gaza Barracks. (Hildenborough).**

**May 1947** – a small “*retaining force to prevent huts falling into the hands of squatters*” attached to Camp 40.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Gaza Barracks | Army barracks and storage site | With C40 |  |  |  |  | 5 |

**Goodnestone**

Previously with Langdon barracks Camp 412 and Woodchurch Camp 86.

**4/1948** – Hostel leader; Horst Broy (B-)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Goodnestone |  |  | With Langdon Barracks Camp 412 | With Woodchurch Camp 86 | 107 |

**Halstead.** NGR TQ 483 615.

Previously attached to Somerhill Camp 40.

**3/1948** – recorded as closing down.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Halstead |  |  | With Camp 40 | 51 |  |

**Kingsferry.** (Seen mention that it was near Kingsferry Bridge and that it held Italian pows).

**8/1946** – Merged with Swale Bridge hostel. Hostel leader; O.Wm Gerlach (A). Morale extremely low and anti-British feelings openly expressed. A recent incident involved pows painting demands for release on walls along the Southern Railway line. When the culprits were not found, the Commandant dismissed the hostel leader (Uffz Knauthe) without a hearing.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Kingsferry |  |  | 285 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Mereworth Castle**

Previously independent Camp 267, then satellite camp for Somerhill Camp 40.

**3/1948** – Hostel leader; Moritz Kieres (B) – had been leader at Somerhill Camp 40. **4/1948** – same leader.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Mereworth Castle |  |  | Camp 267 / Satellite for Camp 40 | 450 | 461 |

**Mereworth Woods**

Previously attached to Somerhill Camp 40.

**3/1948** – Hostel leader; Gűnter Teubner. **4/1948** – same leader.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Mereworth Woods |  |  | With Camp 40 | 147 | 130 |

**Newington.** (Reported to be at Newington Manor, holding Italian and German pows – NGR TQ 857 645).

**8/1946** – Hostel leader; O.Fw Hagenow (A). Education classes for book-keeping, shorthand, French and farming.

**11/1946** – Hostel leader; San.Ogfr Werner Turley (A). Elected, “*very intelligent” - t*ook great interest in cultural and political activities.

**4/1947** – Hostel leader; Fw Gűnther Teubner (B+). **6/1947** – same leader. Poor morale noted as local residents were “*unfriendly*” and pows had few outside contacts.

**1/1948** – same leader.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Newington |  |  | 152 | 120 | 122 | 99 | 69 | 83 |  |  |

**Normanhurst** - ‘Ex-145 Camp’

**4/1948** – Hostel leader; Heinz Rother.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Normanhurst |  | Camp 145 | 50 |

**Ridges** - about 900 yards from the main camp. ‘The Ridges’ was the vicarage for St James’ Church on the corner of what is now Sussex Drive and Walderslade Road. The Rev Naderer, mentioned above, lived there.

**8/1946** – Hostel leader; O.Maat Schneider (A)

**11/1946** – Hostel leader; Ogfr Otto Rosenkranz (A-), was a member of the KPD (German Communist Party) from 1930 to 1935. An anti-Nazi and anti-militarist – doing his job satisfactorily.

**4/1947** – Hostel leader; Wm Rau (B). **10/1947** – same leader.

**1/1948** – Hostel leader; Wilhelm Braun. 3/1948 – same leader.

**4/1948** – Hostel leader; Lugerus Terwey (B).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Ridges |  |  | 296 | 273 | 281 | 262 | 107 | 144 | 155 | 58 |

**Shorncliffe**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Shorncliffe |  | Camp 33 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | 39 |

**Swale Bridge**

**8/1946** – this hostel had been merged with Kingsferry.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Swale Bridge |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Swanscombe.** TQ 605 739.

Previously independent camp 154.

**1/1948** – Hostel leader; Hans Vesper. Had its own theatre group which gave performances at HQ and hostels. Also had its own library. **3/1948** – same leader.

**4/1948** – Hostel leader; Anton Kraemer (B)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Swanscombe |  |  | Camp 154 | 300 | 230 | 203 |

**Walderslade Hostel** - about 500 yards from the main camp. (Aka Walderslade Lane) I think it shows in the aerial photo – NOT confirmed.

**8/1946** – Hostel leader; O.Fw Herbert Heinrich (B)

**11/1946** – *“This hostel is used as a sick and transit hostel only.”*

**6/1947** – Hostel leader; Uffz Voss (B). There was a change to hostel leaders – Voss to Walderslade / Heinrich to West Malling, in an attempt to improve morale where conflict had arisen between leaders and S/Sgts. **8/1947** – same leader.

**10/1947** – Hostel leader; Uffz Willy Blank (B+). **1/1948** – same leader.

**3/1948** – Hostel leader; Hoehnekamp.

**4/1948** – Hostel leader; Franz Helker (B)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Walderslade |  |  | 127 | 20 | 28 | 49 | 15 | 35 | 17 | 11 |

**West Malling**

[A hostel for West Malling was also listed for Kings Cliffe Camp 702 during 1946. It was much smaller with just 38 pows listed and so may not be the same place.]

**17 May 1946** – opened for German pows (may have held Italians before this). Intakes from Belgium and USA. Pows employed at brick production and at farms.

**8/1946** – Recorded as being a new hostel. Hostel leader; Gefr Ernst Siebenhaar (A) – “*able man, devoted to his task.”* **11/1946** same leader

**4/1947** – Hostel leader; Uffz Voss (C). Particularly low morale recorded owing to unpopularity of the S/Sgt in charge. He did not allow pows to leave the hostel grounds in the afternoons, even if they had no work. The commandant promised to look into these complaints.

**6/1947** – Hostel leader; HWm Heinrich (B+). There was a change to hostel leaders – Voss to Walderslade / Heinrich to West Malling, in an attempt to improve morale where conflict had arisen between leaders and S/Sgts.

**8/1947** – Hostel leader; Fw W Hermann (B+) – “*does not make a good impression… discontented and not sound politically*.”

**10/1947** – Hostel leader; Fw Fischer (B), transferred from Detling hostel.

**1/1948** – No hostel leader listed

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| West Malling |  |  | 275 | 270 | 306 | 294 | 221 | 22 | ? | 15 |

**Wetham Green**

Possible site – NOT confirmed - TS3 (Thames South 3) AA gunsite and camp was located at Wetham Green (460 metres north of Red Brick Cottage and circa 1km north of Upchurch village south of the River Medway). Many similar sites were used and it is known that this location was later used to house displaced persons.

**8/1946** – Recorded as being a new, temporary hostel, opened for ‘invalids.’ No hostel leader listed.

**11/1946** – Hostel leader; Fw Heinrich Fischer (B). Elected, popular.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Wetham Green |  |  | 37 |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |

**Woodchurch** (Ashford)

Previously attached to Brissenden camp 282, then Camp 86.

**4/1948 –** Hostel leader; Erich Hinz (B+)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Woodchurch |  |  | With Camp 282 and 86 | 192 |

**Wootton Court**

Previously attached to Camp 412 and camp 86

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Wootton Court |  |  | With Camp 412 | With Camp 86 | 12 |

**Wouldham**

**8/1947** – described as a temporary detachment.

**1/1948** – Hostel leader; Fritz Heinrich.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 1943 | 1944 | 8/1946 | 4/1947 | 6/1947 | 8/1947 | 10/1947 | 1/1948 | 3/1948 | 4/1948 |
| Wouldham |  |  |  |  | 21 | 21 | 18 | 18 |  |  |