**Camp 120** **- Sunlaws Camp, Kelso, Roxburghshire**

Included in the 1945 ICRC camp list – Labour Camp. 120. Sunlaws Camp, Kelso, Roxburghshire.

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| **1947 Camp list** | | | | | | | |
| 120(G.W.C.) | Sunlaws Camp, Kelso, Roxburghshire | Sc. | Priswar, Kelso | Roxburgh 208 | Kelso | Lt.Col.J.H.C.Lawlor | 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 |
|  |  | 120 | Sunlaws Camp, Kelso | Roxburghshire |  | German Working Camp | Scotland |

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| **Location:** NGR NT 703 297  **Before the camp:** Private country estate.  **Pow Camp:** Listed as an Italian labour battalion from 1943 to at least 1945, then a German Working camp.  “*The house was requisitioned by the Army just after the outbreak of war in 1939. Uncle Bob was left the Drawing Room, the flat on the ground floor and the Queen's and Chintz rooms next door to each other on the first floor, the military taking the rest. They used the house as the headquarters of the prisoner of war administration for the counties of Roxburgh, Berwick and Selkirk. There was a Commanding Officer with a second in command living in the house, plus a quantity of German prisoners of war. Previously there had been Poles and Italian prisoners at Sunlaws. The house was finally de-requisitioned in 1948.”* **(**From a history of Sunlaws written by Robert Scott-Kerr).  **May and November 1944** - The camp was listed as an Italian Labour Battalion under the Scottish Command area, (WO 32/10737). The pows were regarded as collaborators.  **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 as Germans arrived to replace them.  “*Horst Hassold, 87, was held at Sunlaws House - now the Roxburghe Hotel - near Kelso in 1945. The former gunner in the German navy said he had always been grateful for the way he was treated in Scotland. He returned to the Borders to visit the attic room where he slept. It is now used as a store room, but still has the prisoners' names on the door.* |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1957 |

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*Mr Hassold was moved around camps across Britain before ending up in the south of Scotland. In December 1945 he was billeted in Sunlaws House. Because he had studied English for two years at school he worked as an interpreter and did the accounts for the canteen.”* (BBC News 9 July 2013).

**1 October 1946** – 1st edition of the camp magazine; Neuer Tag – [New Day] [Neuer Tag : Lagerzeitung der PoW-Hostels 120 - The Wiener Holocaust Library](https://www.whlcollections.org/image/112818/). There was a short and very helpful article: *“Which hostels belong to 120? To give all prisoners of war an overview of which hostels belong to 120, we provide a comprehensive overview that should be of interest to everyone. Hostel 120 includes the following:* *ICI, Bowmont, Hopton, Kelso-Store, Roxburg-Mains, Wilton, Melrose, Selkirk, Windy-Walls, Newtown, Springwood and Yetholm.”* I think some of these names are ones used by the pows, rather than official ones.

Results of football matches played between these sites were listed.

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

Believed to have closed at the end of 1947. Site derequisitioned in 1948.

Known Camp Commandants:

1947 Lt Col J H C Lawlor, from the Duke of Wellington’s Regiment.

**After the camp:** For a while the house went back to private ownership. Sunlaws House is now a super hotel called Schloss Roxburghe.

**Further Information:**

**POW NUMBERS**

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

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|  | 1943 (Italians) | 1946 (Germans) | 1947 |
| Sunlaws HQ |  |  |  |
| Chirnside |  | Camp 236? |  |
| Duns |  |  |  |
| Earlston |  |  |  |
| Greenlaw |  |  |  |
| Greenriggs |  |  |  |
| Lauder |  |  |  |
| Melrose |  |  |  |
| Reston |  |  |  |
| Selkirk |  |  |  |
| Sligh Houses |  |  |  |
| Sweethope |  |  |  |
| The Hirsel |  |  |  |
| Bowmont |  |  |  |
| Hopton |  |  |  |
| ICI |  |  |  |
| Kelso-Store |  |  |  |
| Newtown |  |  |  |
| Roxburgh-Mains |  |  |  |
| Springwood |  |  |  |
| Wilton |  |  |  |
| Windy Walls |  |  |  |
| Yetholm |  |  |  |
| Billets |  |  |  |
| TOTALS |  |  |  |

**Hostels**

A former German POW describes Sunlaws as *a big camp, consisting of 22 hostels spread over two counties, Roxburghshire and Selkirkshire, and the headquarter was at Sunlaws House.”* <https://www.adhs.co.uk/local-sites/prisoner-of-war-camp> 22 hostels are listed below!

**Bowmont.** (Location ? Possibly Bowmont Woods, Valley or Court).

**1946** – Named as a hostel in camp magazine.

**Chirnside**

Possibly became - Nine Wells (Ninewells) Camp 236, Chirnside, just to the S of the village at NGR NT 8629 5575. Not confirmed.

**Duns**

**1943** - Known to have held Italian pows.

**Earlston**

**1943** - Known to have held Italian pows.

Possible location - 'The Park' in the East End of Earlston - a group of six wooden 'huts', used to house Polish soldiers – possibly prisoners of war after that.

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| **Greenlaw**  Local memories place it at NT 718 462. >>>  **1943** - Known to have held Italian pows.  **Greenriggs** – Greenriggs farm is just to the S of Wester Howlaws at NT 723 422.  **1943** - Known to have held Italian pows. |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1957 |

**Hopton.** ByHopton Farm, Ancrum. NT 608 241.

“A series of rectangular platforms are visible in aerial photos approximately 400 metres south-west of Hopton Farm opposite the Broom Covert on Ancrum Common. 6 platforms measuring approximately 11 metres by 5 metres and aligned north-east to south-west are readily visible. There are indications that further platforms exist but are obscured by vegetation. The platforms are in a narrow strip field aligned north-west to south-east and form two rows with a central track.” <https://canmore.org.uk/site/353500/hopton-farm>

Memories of Italian pows held here.

1946 – Hopton named as a hostel in camp magazine.

**ICI**

ICI had factories in the Borders area – 1 was at Charlesfield Farm, St Boswells, Roxburghshire, another was at Powfoot – there may have been others.

**1946** – Named as a hostel in camp magazine.

**Kelso-Store**

**1946** – Named as a hostel in camp magazine.

douglas crescent/springwood rise springwood park

**Lauder**

**1943** - Known to have held Italian pows.

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| **Melrose**  Location -NT 548 344; identified in ‘Historic Melrose’ by EP Dennison and R Coleman, Historic Scotland, 1998. >>>  **1943** - Known to have held Italian pows.  **1946** – Named as a hostel in camp magazine.  **Newtown (I think this was Newtown St Boswells**  **1946** – Named as a hostel in camp magazine. |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1957 |

**Reston.** Possible site at NT 885 621, but no confirmation.

**1943** - Known to have held Italian pows.

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| **Roxburgh-Mains.** NGR NT 689 294.  **1946** – Named as a hostel in camp magazine.  **Selkirk** – “*There were also Italian prisoners of War, they were stationed in what is now Bannerfield*” (BBC People’s War.) >>>>>>>>  Bannerfield is on the NW edge of Selkirk NT 460 291.  **1943** - Known to have held Italian pows.  **1946** – Named as a hostel in camp magazine.  **Sligh Houses** – NT 822 594  **1943** - Known to have held Italian pows. |  |
| Aerial photo 1949 |

**Springwood.** (Possibly around Springwood House / Park near Kelso – NT 718 334).

**1946** – Named as a hostel in camp magazine.

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| **Sweethope** - probably Sweethope farm / lodge NT 688 391. >>>  **1943** - Known to have held Italian pows.  **The Hirsel** – Probably in the grounds rather than the house NT 829 407  **1943** - Known to have held Italian pows.    **<<<<<< Wilton (Hill).**  Memories – located on two fields between the A7 and Wilton Manse. Originally a British army camp with at least 44 Nissen huts and other buildings. Italian pows and later Germans.  **1946** – Named as a hostel in camp magazine.  [There was a report of a suicide at this hostel of a Waffen SS soldier – later buried at Wellogate Cemetery. I cannot find any suitable names from the record of graves at that cemetery 1944-1948.] |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1958 |

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| **Windy Walls.** NT 354 335.  **9 July 1945** – Italian pow Pasquale Girolamo, aged 27, was found having drowned in the River Tweed. Register of Corrected Entries stated he was *“last seen alive about 3.45 pm on 8th July 1945. Windywalls Hostel, Sprouston Parish…. Drowning (accidental).”*  **1946** – Named as a hostel in camp magazine.    **Yetholm**  “*Early in the war a search-light was positioned on the playing field and later the area was turned into a small prisoner of war camp for German prisoners, who worked on local farms.”* Information and edited picture from –  <https://yetholmhistorysociety.weebly.com/blog/archives/11-2018>  The full picture shows a cricket match played on the playing field and was taken after the site was a pow hostel. A modern OS map shows recreation grounds at NT 821 284.  **1946** – Named as a hostel in camp magazine. |  |
| Ordnance Survey 1957 |