

AN ABSTRACT OF THE THESIS OF

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Title: Farm Work and Friendship: The German Prisoner of War

Camp at Lake Wabaunsee

Abstract approved: Patrick H. O'Brien

A German prisoner of war camp was established at Lake Wabaunsee, approximately five miles west of Eskridge, Kansas, during World War II. Early in the war POWs had been interned in Kansas at two large base camps near Salina and Concordia. Kansans were initially afraid of the POWs, but they gradually realized that most of the Germans were not dangerous. Americans found that POWs were good workers, and that their use could help solve the labor shortage created by the war.

The labor shortage was especially acute in rural areas of Kansas such as Wabaunsee County. Wabaunsee County farmers used several different methods to cope with labor shortages, but none had the desired results. Howard C. Myers, Wabaunsee County Agent, and local farmers believed that a prisoner of war camp in the county was the only real solution to the labor shortage.

Farmers faced several obstacles before a prisoner of war camp was established at Lake Wabaunsee. Eskridge City commissioners initial-

ly denied the farmers permission to lease Lake Wabaunsee on financial grounds. Local citizens opposed the camp, and some of them felt that the POWs posed a threat to their safety. Myers and the farmers persevered and overcame all of the obstacles.

POWs had many jobs while interned at Lake Wabaunsee. They worked at a wide variety of agricultural tasks, and use was made of their skills in crafts such as masonry, carpentry, and painting. POWs also worked at the Army Ordnance Shop at Topeka.

Although many Wabaunsee County farmers were initially suspicious of German POWs, friendly relations often developed between POWs and farmers. Farmers were pleased by the POWs' appealing personalities and diligent work habits. Many area farmers were of German descent, and these farmers developed especially close relationships with POWs.

Friendships between Americans and POWs often continued after the war. Attitudes of many POWs toward the United States was influenced by their experiences on Kansas farms. Not only have POWs corresponded with Kansans for over 40 years, but several have crossed the Atlantic to renew old ties.

Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

FARM WORK AND FRIENDSHIP:
THE GERMAN PRISONER OF WAR CAMP
AT LAKE WABAUNSEE

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CHAPTER I:

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CHAPTER I:

TRANSPORT OF POWS TO KANSAS

He was an American soldier who had fought the bitter enemy, Nazi Germany, in the blistering heat of North Africa, leaving behind many fallen comrades. Eventually he received a furlough and went to visit his beloved sister in Eskridge, Kansas. During the visit he ambled to one of her windows, peered outside, and saw German soldiers working peacefully in the garden. At first he was stunned with disbelief that German prisoners of war were working in America. He later wondered, as did many other Americans, why German prisoners of war ended up spending World War II in comparative safety and luxury while American GIs were fighting and dying all over the globe.¹ There were a number of reasons why German POWs were interned in America and specifically why they were housed near Eskridge, Kansas.

One of the dilemmas that faced the Allies during World War II was what should be done with captured German soldiers. Originally they were shipped to Great Britain. It was a small country, however, and could not absorb all of the POWs. The Allies decided to send some of them to Canada and the United States.²

It was sensible to send the POWs across the Atlantic for the duration of the war. Canada and America had more space to intern large numbers of prisoners. The American government sent ships loaded with troops and supplies east to Europe. These ships were empty on the return trip west to the United States, and so it made sense to fill them with POWs on the return trip to America. POWs were less of a security risk in North America. Where would a POW go if he

did escape? German POWs were at least 3000 miles from home, and Klaus Majer recalled that he was shipped from Oran, Algeria, on the few, if any Americans were sympathetic to the Nazi cause.³

Many German soldiers felt frustrated at their capture. Klaus Majer recalled that he and Georg Stanglmeir were nineteen year old German troops serving under Field Marshall Erwin Rommel in the "Hell on Wheels" Panzer Division when they were taken on May 9, 1943. The Americans rounded up Majer and Stanglmeir, along with many others, at Porto Farina in Tunisia, North Africa. Majer remembered that he knew it was the end because the Germans had run out of gas and ammunition, and that they could neither move nor shoot.⁴

POWs did not know what to expect from their American captors. Gustav Kölmel recalled that the Nazis had given the Germans a bad impression of Americans, which made him apprehensive about how he would be treated. Hermann Dorn, however, claimed that the Germans had never really considered Americans as the enemy. For the first three months after they were captured, Klaus Majer recalled they had many doubts about whether the Americans were humane people.⁵

They were taken to Camp Chanzy on the Sahara Desert, where they had almost no food to eat or tents to protect them from the elements. Majer remembered that the POWs were transported in freight cars that were closed during the day when it was hot inside, but opened at night when it was cold. Gustav Kölmel recollected that he, too, was taken prisoner by the Americans on May 9th, but in his case the Americans turned that group of prisoners over to the French, who in turn transferred them to the British. By June, 1943, the Americans once again had control over Kölmel and his group of prisoners.⁶

One of the most memorable events in the captives' experience as POWs was their transport from their place of capture to Kansas.

Klaus Majer recalled that he was shipped from Oran, Algeria, on the Duchess of Bedford to Liverpool, England. At Liverpool Majer and other POWs were put on another ship, the Edmond R. Alexander, for the voyage to New York City. Ernst Künzel had a somewhat different experience. He, too, was shipped from Oran to Liverpool, but his group of POWs were put on a train to Birmingham. There they were put back on a train to Liverpool. This time he left Liverpool either on the Queen Mary or Queen Elizabeth for America. Once at New York prisoners were put on trains headed for America's hinterlands. Willie Dressing remembered that three POWs were placed in a seat for two.⁷

Once the POWs reached American soil, Americans and Germans had to face their fears and prejudices about one another. For many POWs their first camp was Concordia. Security was a high priority at Concordia, and barbed wire, double fences, watch towers, guarded gates and daily roll calls were used to discourage escapes. Franz Schieder recalled that the guards at Concordia feared the POWs because they thought all POWs were Nazis and "kinderfresser mit doppeltem gebiß" (childeaters with two set of teeth).⁸

The POWs also had mixed emotions about their American captors and being prisoners. Although they were loyal to "the Fatherland," many were glad to be out of the war. According to the Alma Enterprise, "The brighter side for enemy soldiers is to be taken as war prisoners. The war and its horrors are over for them. They are not too unhappy of their plight. They have food, shelter, and comparative safety." One POW said that his father had told him to surrender to the Allies if he ever had the opportunity. Some POWs said that being a prisoner of war in America was certainly more pleasant than being shot at on the Russian Front.⁹

The POWs discovered that life as a prisoner in America could be a pleasurable experience, often because they had some control over their own lives. Ernst Künzel remembered that camp cooking was good because the Americans provided plenty of food and allowed POWs to cook for themselves. Klaus Majer commented that the cooks seemed to be able to get any kind of food they asked for. Housing at Concordia was good, even though POWs had only cots to sleep on. POWs made their dormitories more pleasant through their own initiative.¹⁰

The guards and prisoners became more friendly toward each other until an unfortunate incident occurred. According to the POWs, they had been allowed to play soccer at the camp, and could retrieve the ball when it was kicked outside the security perimeter. One day during a soccer game, however, a POW went to retrieve a ball outside the "security line" and an American guard shot him in the head and killed him. Relations between guards and POWs became more formal at Concordia after that incident.¹¹

POWs had warmer relations with Americans when they were transported from Concordia to smaller prison camps around the state. Lieut. Col. L. H. Shafer, commanding officer of the Fort Riley camp, said the official attitude was "Half way between 'kill 'em or kiss 'em.' We should do neither . . . but treat them justly, bearing in mind they are still our enemies." Security was looser at Fort Riley than at Concordia. However, prisoners were highly guarded even at Fort Riley. Klaus Majer remembered that one American guard accompanied every three POWs when they left the camp to do farm work. Being guarded at Fort Riley was not really all that bad. According to Hermann Dorn, once the guards realized that POWs were friendly and hard working men, relationships between them became open and cordial.¹²

CHAPTER II

Another reason for improved relations between POWs and Americans at branch camps was that American officials had screened the POWs into different groups, depending on their degree of sympathy with National Socialism. Only those who were considered to be no threat to the safety and well being of civilians were sent out to branch camps such as Lake Waubaussee.¹³

A severe labor shortage in American industry and agriculture was among the consequences of World War II. Kansas farmers were especially desperate for labor with many young men in the military and the exodus from the country to defense industries. One reason for the acute problem was that more farm work was done manually in the 1940s than it is now, and consequently a larger labor force was needed than when agriculture became more mechanized.

Over 7000 Axis POWs were interned in Kansas during World War II. They were first confined largely in two camps near Concordia and Salina. As Kansans gradually realized the POWs posed little threat and labor became increasingly scarce, farmers came to regard POWs as a large and valuable source of labor. Farm communities proposed that POW camps be located close by to make labor readily available. This was true in Waubaussee County. Many methods were used to eliminate the labor shortage.

First of all, the ~~Waubaussee County Extension Service~~ organized a farm labor committee that consisted of four members and the county agent. The committee selected a farm labor chairman for each township. The farm labor committee and township leaders took a survey that revealed that there was indeed a severe shortage of farm labor.¹⁴

Second, the labor committee urged civilians who hadn't traditionally worked in agriculture to gravitate to the fields. The farm labor committee encouraged women and high school students to sign up on farm labor lists. Male students of St. Mary's College gave of their time also. The committee insisted that if an individual had only

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ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PRISONER OF WAR CAMP AT LAKE WABAUNSEE

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an hour or two to spare, even that small segment of time could be beneficial to the war effort. Third, farmers worked cooperatively to harvest crops and fill silos.¹⁵

The establishment of a German prisoner of war camp promised to bring relief to labor-starved Wabaunsee County. In 1943 a prisoner camp was established at Camp Fremont, the abandoned Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) camp east of Council Grove which housed 400 men. The prisoners at Camp Fremont were available to farmers in Wabaunsee, Morris, Chase and Lyon counties.¹⁶

On August 26, 1943, a meeting was held in the Eskridge City Park to discuss and explain the use of war prisoners. By September 2, 1943, eight German prisoners of war from Camp Fremont, watched by two guards, helped to put up silage at the Clyde Penrice farm. The Eskridge Independent reported that: "Mr. Penrice was well staisfied with their first day's work. These young Germans . . . of the Afrika Corps were willing workers and quick to catch on to what was desired."¹⁷

Although the German prisoner laborers, with their qualities of hard work and intelligence, worked out well, relatively few farmers used prisoners from Camp Fremont. The 35 farmers who did use prisoner labor were large operators. Most farmers could not afford the drive to Council Grove to pick up and return laborers. Wabaunsee County farmers desired a closer prisoner of war camp, preferably in Wabaunsee County. A special meeting to discuss POW labor was held on a Friday evening of September 24th at 8:30 PM at the courthouse in Alma. New conditions were established under which these men could be employed for agricultural purposes.¹⁸

Howard C. Myers, Wabaunsee County Extension Agent, took steps

to establish a prisoner of war camp in Wabaunsee in early 1944. He attended a labor meeting in Topeka on February 19 of that year. Myers conducted a survey to determine how many Wabaunsee County farmers would use POW labor. By March, 20 farmers had indicated their intention of using POW labor. Farmers planned to use POWs to fix fence and cut hedge and brush. Myers encouraged other farmers who would want additional labor in the summer and fall to contact him, and he reassured farmers that an indication of a desire to use POW labor at that time would not compel them to use it later. Also the county commissioners had agreed to use prisoners to repair bridges. Myers hoped to have the camp established by May 1.¹⁹

By March 1944, Myers announced the working conditions that had been drawn up for POW labor: "40¢ per hour for the time the man actually works on the farm. Farmers will be expected to furnish the noon meal and provide transportation. A credit of 21¢ for the noon meal will be allowed. Transportation costs will be credited with a refund of 5¢ per mile up to a maximum of 60 miles per load."²⁰

Once a sufficient demand for POW labor had been established, the next question that arose was where the camp should be located. The ideal location for a prisoner of war camp in Wabaunsee County was thought to be at Lake Wabaunsee, located approximately five miles west of Eskridge. The City of Eskridge owned Lake Wabaunsee. During the 1930s a National Youth Administration (NYA) camp was established at Lake Wabaunsee; it had barracks, a dormitory, and a mess hall. Although abandoned by the NYA, the camp was used in the early days of World War II as a place of rest and relaxation for the US Army. Army officers inspected the former NYA camp at Lake Wabaunsee in April, 1944 for use as a POW camp. "They were very impressed with

it and fell in love with the location. They rated it the second most suitable location in the state."²¹

The Eskridge City Council proved to be a stumbling block to a prisoner of war camp at Lake Wabaunsee. A request had been made by March 23rd to use the lake for a prisoner of war camp, but the Eskridge City Council declined to make a decision.²²

A City Council meeting was held in March, 1944, to discuss whether a prisoner of war camp should be established. Both those for and those against the camp were invited to attend, but only Frank G. Blecha, State Labor Supervisor, and Howard C. Myers, Wabaunsee County Agent, were present. Blecha told the group that Wabaunsee County could have a camp for 100 German war prisoners established in its boundary by the summer of 1944.²³

Blecha assured councilmen that the POWs he would send to Wabaunsee County were good men. He said that men who worked on Kansas farms were carefully selected by the Army out of the 7000 German POWs in Kansas. POWs desired to work because it became tedious to sit inside a barbed wire fence day after day, Blecha told councilmen. A prisoner, Blecha emphasized, was used under strict rules: "He must not be abused or overworked. He is entitled to his rest period. He must be fed the same kind of meal as the rest of the family and other employed men are fed. He must not be pampered. Nor is it permissible to discuss the war or political topics with him. The prisoners are not to be used in competition with free labor, and if a man asks a farmer employing the prisoners for a job, he must be given one also." Myers and Blecha told city council members that a prisoner of war camp at Lake Wabaunsee would contribute to the war effort. Farmers filled a vital role in fighting the war by producing crops that fed

and clothed both soldiers and civilians.²⁴

The Eskridge City Council waited a week to vote on whether to allow a prisoner of war camp to be established at Lake Wabaunsee. A motion was made and seconded, at a city council meeting on April 3, that the City of Eskridge permit a camp at Lake Wabaunsee. On a roll call the vote was: Carl Harrold, "No"; E. A. Peterson, "Yes"; Stanley, "No"; C. C. Meeker, "No"; Lucky, "Yes"; and so the motion lost 3-2.²⁵

There were two reasons for the council's refusal. First the City of Eskridge, which had always owned Lake Wabaunsee, wanted the lake to be self supporting at the least, or even to make a profit. If a prisoner of war camp was established, people might be unwilling or unable to use the camp for recreational purposes. Then the citizens of Eskridge would have to pay for the lake because no revenue would be generated. Second, the prospect of a large number of the enemy living at Lake Wabaunsee evoked negative community reaction. Some people thought that the men would attempt to escape, especially in the wooded areas around Alma. The Eskridge City Council members may have been especially prone to veto the German prisoner of war camp because all but one member had fought against Germany in World War I.²⁶

The Eskridge City Council claimed that there was not enough demand for prisoner labor to justify restricting lake usage. The city council reassured farmers that a camp might be established along the Kaw River Valley near Wamego. Alma had also been considered as a possible location for a prisoner of war camp. The problem of a camp at Wamego was that, like Camp Fremont at Council Grove, it was a long distance for a farmer to drive to get laborers.²⁷

On April 19th the council had met with a group of farmers at the request of C. H. Houseworth and Win Stratton. Farmers who urged the council to change their minds at this meeting were: Merle Converse, Jim McKnight, Win Stratton, Glen Schwarting, Jim Thompson, and Franklin Van Petten. Dr. G. M. Umberger of Kansas State College also was present. The farmers spoke in favor of establishing the camp because they believed that there was going to be an acute labor shortage, especially during the harvest season in July. The farmers pointed out that even their spring work hadn't been completed because of labor shortages, and many farmers were unwilling to plant crops if they couldn't be harvested. The farmers insisted that producing crops was essential to victory. Myers suggested that 100 men would not be enough to meet the demand for labor, especially at silo filling time. He stated *that 60 men would be put to work immediately in Wabaunsee County.*²⁸

Three Eskridge City Council members, C. C. Meeker, E. A. Peterson, and Carl Harrold, made a written request to Ivan D. Conrad, Mayor of the City of Eskridge, to call a special meeting of the Eskridge City Council. The meeting, scheduled at 10:30 AM, April 21, 1944, was to be held "for the purpose of reconsidering the granting of permission of the farmers of Wabaunsee County to establish a camp for German Prisoners of War at Lake Wabaunsee during the summer and fall of 1944 to provide and make available labor for their use." The council members wanted to make sure that the action taken at the April 21st meeting would be legal and binding, the same as if the action had been taken at a regular meeting.²⁹

On April 21, 1944, the Eskridge City Council finally approved a camp to house 100 German prisoners of war at Lake Wabaunsee and agreed to lease the part of the grounds with the buildings. This spe-

cial session was held at the Harrold Produce Co. office in Eskridge. Mayor Conrad served as chairman of the meeting. Councilmen Peterson, Stanley, Harrold, Meeker, and Lucky were all present. The council members drafted a resolution permitting the establishment of the camp, and then voted by a show of hands to adopt the resolution.³⁰

Perhaps the reversal by the council was less from concern for the farmers' plight than a guarantee that a prisoner of war camp at Lake Wabaunsee would not lose the City of Eskridge money. The farmers and councilmen agreed to charge farmers using the prisoners an additional rental fee of 2¢ per man hour. The council's opposition to spend taxpayers' money on the camp was spelled out in the official agreement:

WHEREAS: It is apparent that there will be an acute shortage of farm labor in Wabaunsee County during the coming crop season, and many farmers will not be justified in planning an extensive program nor able to execute such a program as they are capable unless a sufficient amount of extra labor is made available,

BE IT RESOLVED

That the City of Eskridge Governing Body consents to the establishment of, and the leasing of certain buildings of Lake Wabaunsee, owned by the City of Eskridge, to the Wabaunsee County Farm Labor Committee for the purpose of maintaining a seasonal camp for German Prisoners of War to alleviate the farm labor shortage in this section of the State of Kansas. That the camp be maintained and operated under the joint supervision of the Committee and the United States Army, without expense to the city for additional improvements, alterations, repairs or maintenance. That all boundaries and buildings used and alterations be subject to approval of the City Council of Eskridge in order that the rights of the public and property owners at Lake Wabaunsee be fully protected according to the obligation of the City of Eskridge.

The prisoners were to arrive around May 20th.³¹

In late April and early May, definite plans were laid concerning farm labor in Wabaunsee and surrounding counties. At a meeting of the Wamego Lions Club, local farmers decided not to establish a sub-

subsidiary camp at Wamego. A May 3rd meeting was held to organize the County Farm Labor Committee and the following officers were elected: President, M. W. Converse; Vice President, A. W. Steuwe; and Secretary-Treasurer, Howard C. Myers. The other members of the committee were Albert Kaine, Wamego; Raymond Morton, Wamego; Dr. G. M. Umberger, Harveyville; and Leo Leonard, Alma. The committee voted to have a member of the Eskridge City Council on the labor committee. The council accepted this invitation and Carl Harrold was voted as the member to represent the city council.³²

The committee paid the government around \$800 to guarantee that the prisoners of war would be worked, and to cover the cost of preparing the camp for the POWs. The money was refunded to the committee when the amount was paid to the government in wages. As the committee was responsible for payment of wages to the government, it was decided to have the farmers pay for the work in advance. The wage rate for general farm work was set at 37¢ an hour. It had originally been decided to charge 35¢ an hour, but 2¢ an hour was added to pay for the rental at Lake Wabaunsee. Myers announced after the May 4th meeting that prisoner labor would be available by May 20th.³³

The Wabaunsee County Farm Labor Committee faced other obstacles after the Eskridge City Council. Despite Myers' assurances that farmers would be able to obtain prisoner labor from Lake Wabaunsee by May 20th, the establishment of a camp at all was seen as doubtful as late as June 15th. The major problem that confronted the committee was that the Army was unwilling to invest the capital necessary to convert the old NYA camp into a POW camp. Another difficulty was dealing with all the rumors about the camp. One story was that all

enlisted rank POWs were being shipped to Indiana and the whole project was off. The committee used several methods to combat the problems.³⁴

First, meetings were held about the use of POW labor. On May 9th a meeting was held in Holton, Kansas, concerning the labor program. E. Stratton, Ralph John, Leo Leonard, Walter Hund, Norman Steuwe, and Howard C. Myers were among those who attended the meeting. Later in May the county agent and two representatives of the labor committee drove to Concordia to further define plans for the camp.³⁵

Second, members of the committee helped to prepare the camp to meet the specifications of the Army. Some of the committee members, prospective employers of the POWs, advanced money to cover the costs of complying with Army specifications. Mrs. Howard C. Myers recalled that her husband, the county agent, "really hustled" to ready the camp for the POWs. Myers searched second hand stores for hooks to hang their clothes. She was dismayed when he ransacked their home for mirrors to hang at the POW camp.³⁶

Third, the Wabaunsee County Farm Labor Committee formalized their organization to achieve their goal. The committee was renamed the Wabaunsee County Grower's Association. The role of the Association was to act as a go-between of the farmers wanting prisoner of war labor and the Army. Despite all of the obstacles, the Association persevered and a prisoner of war camp was established in the summer of 1944. The Association completed agreements with the Army in late June. An advance team of 20 POWs was sent out under the direction of an Army detail from Fort Riley. They worked for about two weeks to ready the camp for use. By July 6th the POWs were laboring outside of the camp. Eight of them were sent to help build Wabaunsee County bridges. POWs also began work on farms: eight were taken to the Koenig

farms of Alma and four to the M. W. Converse farm.³⁷

Another 80 POWs had arrived at Lake Wabaunsee by July 13.

The Eskridge Independent reported that 82 out of 100 POWs were being put to work. The newspaper thought that 82 would be the average

number of POWs at work. The location of the camp made it appealing. Wabaunsee County is in a scenic area of Kansas, and POWs had a good view of the lake. The Eskridge Independent reported³⁸ that: "both the Army men and prisoners are delighted with the prospect of living

at Lake Wabaunsee this summer."³⁹

The camp had an almost peaceful atmosphere. POWs were allowed to plant flowers and engage in woodworking projects. They decorated their walls with pictures of German officers and pin-up girls. Ernst

Kunzel recalled that sleeping accommodations were much better at Lake Wabaunsee than they were in the German Army. The camp commander selected movies for the POWs' viewing. POWs had a piano in the mess hall. They enjoyed listening to the record player and radio. Klaus

Majer singing songs such as "You Are My Sunshine" that they learned from the radio at Lake Wabaunsee.⁴⁰

POWs enjoyed playing soccer at the camp. George Dishl recalled that his family often drove over to Lake Wabaunsee to go fishing on Sunday afternoons. The Dishl family found it hilarious "to see 10 green men chasing after our little ball." Dishl remembered that the only sports his family knew about were football and baseball. He said that it was years before the family figured out the POWs were playing soccer.

POWs had cultural, educational, and religious opportunities

CHAPTER III:

CAMP LIFE AT LAKE WABAUNSEE

Most of the POWs were pleased with their experiences at the Lake Wabaunsee camp. The location of the camp made it appealing. Wabaunsee County is in a scenic area of Kansas, and POWs had a good view of the lake. The Eskridge Independent reported that: "both the Army men and prisoners are delighted with the prospect of living at Lake Wabaunsee this summer."³⁹

The camp had an almost homelike atmosphere. POWs were allowed to plant flowers and engage in woodworking projects. They decorated their walls with pictures of German officers and pin-up girls. Ernst Kunzel recalled that sleeping accommodations were much better at Lake Wabaunsee than they were in the German Army. The camp commander selected movies for the POWs' viewing. POWs had a piano in the mess hall. They enjoyed listening to the record player and radio. Klaus Majer and Georg Stanglmeir 40 years later can still recite jingles and sing songs such as "You Are My Sunshine" that they learned from the radio at Lake Wabaunsee.⁴⁰

POWs enjoyed playing soccer at the camp. George Diehl recalled that his family often drove over to Lake Wabaunsee to go fishing on Sunday afternoons. The Diehl family found it hilarious "to see 30 grown men chasing after one little ball." Diehl remembered that the only sports his family knew about were football and baseball. He said that it was years before the family figured out the POWs were playing soccer.⁴¹

POWs had cultural, educational, and religious opportunities at Lake Wabaunsee. The Fort Riley base camp sent out 20 books for the

POWs at Lake Wabaunsee to read. Many POWs also had their own books. POWs studied many different subjects at Lake Wabaunsee. The most popular course was English. Some individuals also studied Hebrew, mathematics, and chemistry. A parish priest from Eskridge conducted religious services for the prisoners.⁴²

Pets made life more enjoyable for POWs. One had a pet rabbit. Many POWs had dogs who they taught tricks such as rolling over, playing dead, and at the command, "mach schön" (make yourself pretty) to sit up and with two paws on each side of the head. After the war the POWs were compelled to leave their pets behind.⁴³

One of the dogs was adopted by the George Diehl, Sr., family. George Diehl, Jr., who was a boy of about 10, was excited at the prospect of getting a dog who could do many tricks. However, George was initially disappointed because the dog only responded to commands in German. Diehl remarked, however, that the dog quickly learned English when the dog jumped on his mother's couch. Diehl taught his dog, whom he named Terry, to tree squirrels. Then Terry would chase the squirrels around the tree to the side where Diehl was so that he could shoot them.⁴⁴

Army guards were usually housed separately from the POWs. However, Ernst Künzel lived in the same building as the Americans, perhaps because he was a cook. The buildings that housed the US Army personnel and POWs have been put to many uses since the end of the war. The Army personnel stayed in the old NYA dormitory, which has been converted into a restaurant and private club known as the Flint House. Most of the POWs stayed in the old barracks. These were converted into the Rainbow Dining Hall and Tap Room after the war, but on April 5, 1947, the old mess hall burned. According

to Otis Reed, a couple of barracks were also lost in the fire.⁴⁵

These barracks allegedly became quite important to two POWs who returned to live in the United States after the war. They had settled in St. Louis, but they came back to the camp to recover money they had hidden in one of their barracks. They were quite dismayed to find the barrack had burned down, along with all of the money they had cached.⁴⁶

Ernst Kunzel praised the camp commander, Thomas Michou, who he believed aided the successful operation of the camp. Kunzel recalled that Major Michou told the POWs in an orientation address that he wanted them to be obedient, and to basically behave as they had in the German Army. He reassured them that if they were obedient, he would give them no problems. Kunzel reported that the POWs seldom gave Michou any difficulties at the camp or on work details. Kunzel described Michou as a "wonderful soldier" because he always kept his promises and treated them as he would American soldiers. No POW interned at Lake Wabaunsee ever attempted to escape despite ample opportunity. Klaus Majer said they had no desire to escape because they "had it good" at Lake Wabaunsee.⁴⁷

Lax security measures contributed to the friendly atmosphere at Lake Wabaunsee. Hermann Dorn said that at Lake Wabaunsee you could almost forget that you were a prisoner. Even though the camp was enclosed by a barbed wire fence, the POWs considered the fence to be only "symbolic." By the time the camp was established at Lake Wabaunsee, authorities realized that it was unnecessary to guard POWs 24 hours a day. POWs were usually sent out on work details without any guards. However, J. O. Warren recalled that guards supervised the work of POWs at his home. This may have been because they were

working in Eskridge. The Army may have believed that the POWs presented a greater security risk in the city, or appeared to be a security risk, and therefore assigned guards to them.⁴⁸

POWs and Wabaunsee County farmers often developed friendly relations, even though they often had to overcome cultural and language barriers. The POWs' hard work and personal qualities won over many Americans. Most POWs were friendly, fun-loving, and kind. J. D. Warren commented that "the POWs were nicer men than the CCC boys; of course the CCC boys were the scum of the earth." Warren recalled that he became friendly with one. The POW spoke good English and enjoyed visiting with Warren because they were both in their thirties. The POW often discussed his relatives who were political prisoners in Germany.⁴⁹

Americans were impressed by the POWs' love of children. Joey Diehl recalled that once when one of the POWs was eating a sandwich, he stopped, pulled the meat out, and handed it to one of Diehl's children to eat. When Roger Schwalb visited Fred Kunzel in Germany after the war, Kunzel joked that he should have a candy bar for Schwalb. Kunzel had given Schwalb a candy bar every day that he worked on his father's farm. Despite the neighbors' warnings, Mr. and Mrs. Roland McKnight trusted their children with several of the POWs. For example, they sent Helmut Grahf on a pony to pick up their first grade daughter at a rural school. Mrs. McKnight remembered that one POW, Johannes, from Austria had a low chuckle that terrified her six year old daughter, Virginia. She refused to have anything to do with Johannes. This "really upset him because he really wanted her to like him." Myrtle Thierre remembered that Alfred enjoyed showing snapshots of his family. "He was just crazy to see and hold my niece

CHAPTER IV:

RELATIONS BETWEEN POWS AND CIVILIANS

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because he had a child that age." Helmut Grahl's affection for three year old Lois McKnight was poignant because he believed his own little boy in Germany was probably dead.⁵⁰

Ernst Künzel repeatedly asked John Schwalm to take him on a cattle selling trip to Kansas City. Presumably Künzel was interested in drinking liquor unobtainable in Kansas, which allowed only 3.2 beer. Schwalm told Künzel not to worry about being detained by law enforcement officers. "After all," Schwalm joked, "you're already a prisoner. What more can they do?"⁵¹

Künzel himself joked about his status. "I was originally from Czechoslovakia, where I was drafted into the German Army. The Army sent me to Italy and then to North Africa where I was captured. I was sent to Liverpool, England, before being shipped to New York. At New York I was put on a train and eventually ended up at Lake Wabaunsee. It was a trip only a rich man or a prisoner could take!"⁵²

POWs often showed a sense of humor and a spirit of fun. When Helmut Grahl met Caroline Stratton, an attractive school teacher, he jested that he "wouldn't mind going back to school." George Diehl, Jr., remembered that the two POWs who worked for his father were playful and often engaged in water fights at a water pump. Myrtle Thierer recalled another example of POW humor. POWs at her childhood home hauled gravel in the driveway. Mrs. Thierer playfully took a shovel and began to scoop gravel. The POWs noticed this and laughed: "Ah - Superwoman!"

The Roland McKnight family benefited greatly from the hard work and kindness of the POWs. Mr. McKnight had fallen off a silo in September, 1944, at the Beasterfield farm and sustained major injuries that forced him to lay flat on his back for 99 days. The POWs were

kind to McKnight. During his recovery they would help him to a chair so that he could see the activity on the farm. Later they would dress him in overshoes, coat and gloves so that he could go outside and see his livestock. Mrs. McKnight felt that the POWs were "just like Kansas farm boys."⁵⁴

The quality and quantity of food served to POWs had a large impact on how hard POWs worked on the farms. Some people tried to save money by feeding POWs poorly. Fritz Ott told Edwin Ringel about an experience he had working on a Kansas farm. No one brought the POWs any food or even water to the fields. Ott was even more insulted that they were hauled to town to eat dinner in a restaurant rather than being fed in the farmer's house. He said that when they had been badly treated they would not work hard, but they would merely "piddle along." However, Ott said they would work diligently if they were treated well. Ernst Kunzel recalled that he gave his "best" while working at the Schwalm farm because of their good treatment. According to George Diehl, Jr., POWs wanted to go places where they were fed well.⁵⁵

Many farm families fed the POWs more than they were required. Farmers served POWs food for humanitarian reasons as well as a reward for hard work. Kunzel said that the camp commander was "concerned that the POWs were not getting enough to eat, so he sent out a letter to the farmers that requested they feed the POWs extra food. Many of the farmers had already been serving extra snacks or even complete meals. George Diehl, Jr., recalled that the POWs had a poor breakfast of only oatmeal at the camp so many farm wives, such as Cora Ringel, gave them a large breakfast of pancakes, bacon, eggs, and hash browns upon their arrival at the farm. Mrs. Clarence Gnadl fixed a meal for

the POWs at 4:30 PM before they returned to camp. Myrtle Thierer's parents were Swedes who shared their afternoon coffee with the POWs. Lothar Gilg recalled that farmers even gave POWs food to take back to the camp and share with their friends.⁵⁶

Roger Schwalm's father used another method to curb POW hunger. Mr. Schwalm told Ernst Künzel to take a shot gun and go out into the pasture. Whenever he saw a clump of grass that had a little entrance that looked like an animal had rested there, he was to shoot into the clump. Künzel followed Schwalm's instructions and bagged ten rabbits. He took the rabbits back to the camp kitchen where they were cooked and served to POWs.⁵⁷

POWs expressed preferences in food. Many Americans remembered they scorned corn as "swine food" or something to fatten chickens or cattle for slaughter. Esther McKnight recollected that POWs also felt that pumpkins were unfit for human consumption. They preferred the dark breads common to Germany over the American white and refined bread. Many of the POWs felt that white bread was unhealthy. Some of the POWs called white bread "cake" and reserved it to the last of the meal to eat as a dessert. Clarence Gnadt recalled that the POWs were "meat and potatoes" men. The Alta Vista Journal, in an article entitled "Corn on the Cob Not Fit Food for the Superior Race," reported that they had a hearty appetite for mashed potatoes and gravy, peas, and tomatoes. Fried chicken was a favorite of POWs, according to Myrtle Thierer. Edwin Ringel remembered that a POW told him that water was never brought to field workers in Germany. Beer or wine was served instead, because water would spoil out in the field during the day.⁵⁸

Communication between the POWs and the American farmers was

sometimes quite easy, but often difficult. Many people in Wabaunsee County are of German descent and many of them in the 1940s still spoke German. Farmers who spoke German developed especially close relations with POWs. For example, Edwin Ringel spoke fluent German because his grandparents had immigrated from Germany and he had attended Catholic parochial school where German and English were both taught. Ringel still corresponds with a former POW, Fritz Ott, but interestingly enough, they write in English. Ringel's German has grown impaired by disuse. Joyce Thierer recalled her mother's recollections of Joyce's grandfather laughing and laughing at a POW's stories in German, even though he was Swedish. Apparently there was enough similarity between the languages so that the two could understand each other. Most of these stories were considered bawdy and unfit for the children's ears, so they spoke German and not English.⁵⁹

Not all farmers of German descent were so lucky. Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Gnadl spoke some German, but the dialect was different from the prisoners'. Their conversation in German with the POWs was severely limited, however, even the bare bones communication was a godsend. A neighbor of the Roland McKnight family, Figge, came every morning to the McKnight farm to get the POWs lined up for work. He would give them a short explanation in German and, although they didn't understand everything he said, they usually got the main ideas.⁶⁰

Even farmers who didn't speak German found ways to communicate with POWs. Some POWs spoke English, which naturally helped. Myrtle Thierer commented that many of their POWs waited to see how they were going to be treated before revealing that they could speak and understand English. Many of them picked up a lot of English while in America. Farmers often commented on the speed at which POWs learn-

ed the language. Georg Stanglmeir was aided in his learning of English by Caroline Stratton who taught at a country school.⁶¹

Even when the spoken language was of no help, communication wasn't impossible. Farmers would demonstrate and gesture to show what they wanted accomplished. This often proved adequate, because many times all they wanted done was simple labor. A POW at the Garland Gideon home used drawings to communicate with the Gideons. Mrs. Gideon recalled that many of the drawings were humorous cartoons that brought many chuckles to the Gideons.⁶²

POWs who could communicate with the farmers in German were at an advantage as they could not only express gratitude and complaints, but the use of the same language also emphasized a common bond between so-called enemies. Farmers who conversed readily in German had to realize that the POWs were human beings similar to themselves. The POWs were delighted at being interned in a German ethnic community, and they especially enjoyed eating traditional German dishes at American homes.⁶³

One POW, Heinrich Wolgast, found out that he was actually related to an American family. Wolgast and Herman Fink were out doing errands in Alma when they passed Wolgast Lumberyard. Heinrich Wolgast saw the sign and mentioned the coincidence that he and these Americans shared the same last name. On a lark, Fink suggested that they go inside and visit with William Wolgast, the owner of the lumberyard. Wolgast took Fink up on the offer. Fink introduced Heinrich Wolgast to William Wolgast. They discovered that Heinrich was William's cousin's child and that their ancestors came from the same town in what is now East Germany. The two Wolgasts became fast friends because William Wolgast spoke fluent German. Herman Fink brought Heinrich

Wolgast in once a week to the lumberyard so the two Wolgast men, one a prisoner of war and the other a well-to-do American businessman, could have a nice long visit.⁶⁴

Americans often broke rules regarding POW use and treatment because of their kind feelings toward them. For example, the farmers were not supposed to buy or make clothes for the POWs. However, the McKnights bought the POWs straw hats. Because the POWs knew this violated the rules, they refused to take the hats back to camp, and hung them on hooks on the back porch. The Warrens of Eskridge also wanted to give the POWs small gifts, but as it was forbidden, they would merely lay apples and gloves around so the POWs could "discover them."⁶⁵

The Army authorities at Lake Wabaunsee were somewhat more lenient in enforcing the rules in the case of the McKnights because they were aware of their plight. For example, they allowed the POWs to drive automobiles and trucks for the McKnights. However, the authorities absolutely forbade any lone women to pick up or return POWs, so Mrs. McKnight had to depend on one of her neighbors, a Mr. Figge.⁶⁶

Many Americans treated POWs more as friends or even members of the family rather than as prisoners. The Wichita Morning Eagle of September 24, 1944, said: "The old farmer-farm hand relationship, normally kindly, is difficult to down, however, even in the case of Germans." For a local example, John Schwalm introduced Ernst Künzel as "my German boy" instead of "a German prisoner of war working for me." The Schwalms also demonstrated their kindness toward the POW on his 21st birthday. He requested to be excused from farm work on June 1 because it was both his birthday and a Catholic holiday

in Germany. Schwalm told him that he needed to work, and he deferred. The Schwalm's gave him a surprise birthday party instead.⁶⁷

Relations between German POWs interned at Lake Wabaunsee and American civilians were better than anyone had ever expected. Some Americans were alarmed by the close relationships that developed between them. George Edgerton said that farmers and POWs "got along almost too well." Howard C. Myers, Wabaunsee County Agent, believed that some of the farmers of German descent were too close to the POWs and were actually sympathetic to them.⁶⁸

Many people had serious reservations about using POW labor or even having a camp in the area. Jim Busenbark led the opposition. He reminded local citizens that POWs were the enemy who had recently tried to kill American troops. Consequently, they would be poor labor. He believed that they might sabotage American production, or at least work half-heartedly. Busenbark also believed that to use the POWs as laborers would reduce them to slaves, which would be an immoral policy. Busenbark contended that the labor shortage was not severe enough to warrant using POW labor, and that 100 men couldn't make that much difference if the labor shortage was genuinely acute.⁶⁹

Ray Lovell wrote a letter to the editor condemning the POW camp at Lake Wabaunsee. His letter was published in the July 13, 1944,

Eskridge Independent:

The next time you see Jim Busenbark on the street, a trip step up and shake hands with a grand old man who has the guts to stand up and say what he thinks.

Some The prisoners in other work camps have proven no great success and there have been some escapes and some of the citizens have been hurt. Just give this thing time and it may blow up and shatter our court house; go clear down and reach the county agent's office.

Shawnee County won't let the German killers in, but

oh, no! We must have them to carry on! Railroads or any other industry won't have them, but the farmer is the dumping ground for everything.

With the equipment our larger operators have, could they not trade work with the smaller farmers? It is work they can't do or is it their greed? Why don't (sic) our county save the road money and give the road work after the war is over, (sic) to that list in the paper that is growing longer each month?

If there was any way to get this question on our county ballot, I would be sure of the result.

Judgement day is coming for everyone of us. It isn't what we have but how we got it. It isn't the total score but how we played the game.⁷⁰

A letter from a serviceman opposing the camp appeared in the September 14, 1944, Eskridge Independent:

. . . Do you see Jim Busenbark? I saw a piece in the paper about him and what he thought of the prison camp at the Lake. I sure wish there were more men like him at home. He will stand up and say what he thinks. I sure hate to see those guys ruin our nice lake that way and I bet a lot of guys in the Army feel that same way. If you see Jim tell him thanks a lot from me , , ,⁷¹

Many people shared Ray Lovell's concern that POWs would escape from the camp and commit sabotage in the area. Some even suggested that the wooded areas around Alma would make excellent hiding places for POWs. Mrs. Howard C. Myers recalled that many times a misunderstanding in language caused POWs to wander off in a different direction than the farmer intended. Farmers often panicked because they thought POWs were trying to escape and called the county agent. Usually by the time Myers arrived, the affair had been long settled and a trip had been made for nothing.⁷²

Some Americans reported that POWs were unwilling or unable to work. One POW at the Roland McKnight home not only refused to work, but discouraged his fellow prisoners from working. The POW spent the whole day at the McKnight farm, but he was hauled back

to Fort Riley in the evening. Sherman Mertz, who was 70 years old and the second largest sheep raiser in Kansas in 1944, was uncomplimentary toward the POWs. He said about their labor: "Well . . . they don't mind backing up a little." Mertz believed that prisoner labor was not as valuable as civilian labor because of "language and mechanical deficiencies." Mertz meant that the POWs' unfamiliarity with the English language and American farm methods limited their value as laborers. H. R. Richter recollected that when POWs worked on road construction projects, signs were posted that read: "Slow -- Men Working." Richter joked that the signs were accurate because the POWs were men who worked slow.⁷³

Americans occasionally knew a POW whom they disliked. One of the three POWs who worked on the J. O. Warren home in Eskridge was hostile toward Americans. He complained that prisoners did not receive their noon meal at the Warren home but ate at a cafe in Eskridge. The Warrens disapproved of his conversations with the other prisoners in German because they believed that he was threatening them against being too friendly to Americans.⁷⁴

Myrtle Thierer reported that one POW gave her the "creeps." She said that he followed her around with his eyes. This was understandable because Mrs. Thierer was an attractive blonde teenager at the time. Another POW repelled her because he had the habit of pulling a piece of shrapnel out of his pocket and showing it to people to prove that he had been wounded. The Imthurn family of Maple Hill also had a negative experience with one POW. Mrs. Imthurn called him "a little monkey."⁷⁵

Americans often feared POWs because of all the propaganda they had heard about German atrocities. Charlotte Imthurn recalled that

she was apprehensive when she learned that POWs were going to work on the Inthurn farm. However, she remembered that once she got to know the POWs she realized that they were simply human beings caught in a bad situation. Imthurn explained that most of the POWs were good German boys who hadn't volunteered for military service, but had been drafted just like many American youths. She commented that there had been atrocities, but "these boys" hadn't committed any.⁷⁶

The POW program. The farmer was required to furnish a man meal, for which he was reimbursed at the rate of 25¢ per meal. The owner had to furnish his own transportation of POWs, but he was reimbursed 7¢ per man per mile up to 50 miles.⁷⁷

The county agent urged farmers to cooperate to make the program successful. Farmers had to give advance notice of at least 12 hours before a job was to start, as well as notice of at least a half day of the completion of a job. Farmers had to pay \$4.00 daily per day before the work could start. Mr. Howard Myers remembered that farmers often called at four o'clock in the morning to cancel an order for prisoner labor. These early morning calls were especially annoying for two reasons. First of all, the Myers had an infant daughter who was awakened by the calls and proved difficult to put back to sleep. Second, Myers, unlike many other county agents, was not being paid for his work with the prisoner of war camp. According to Mrs. Myers, Howard C. Myers considered his work on the prisoner of war camp to be his contribution to the war effort.⁷⁸

The American Army operated POW camps in accordance with the Geneva Convention of 1929. It stipulated POWs could not be paid less than 80¢ per day. Maximum working hours were ten hours a day, including travel to and from a job. Employed POWs were to be allowed

CHAPTER V:
FARM LABOR

one 24-hour consecutive rest period each week. The Convention required POWs, except for officers, to work for the benefit of their captors. However, the work could not be directly related to war operations. Farmers who used POW labor had to follow the conditions set up by the Wabaunsee County Grower's Association. The cost for the use of POW labor was eventually set at 40¢ per hour, 5¢ was to reimburse the Association for any expenses they might incur because of the POW program. The farmer was required to furnish a noon meal, for which he was reimbursed at the rate of 25¢ per meal. The owner had to furnish his own transportation of POWs, but he was reimbursed 1¢ per man per mile up to 50 miles.⁷⁷

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one 24-hour consecutive rest period each week. The Convention required POWs, except for officers, to work for the benefit of their captors. However, the work could not be directly related to war operations, nor could it jeopardize the health and safety of prisoners. The prisoners were also supposedly required to have qualifications or aptitudes for the work they were assigned.⁷⁹

The Army also had many regulations in regard to POW use. As previously mentioned, farmers were not supposed to discuss the war or politics with them. POWs were not to be allowed to drive vehicles. Women were not permitted to drive POWs anywhere, even to camp. The Army strictly enforced its rule that POWs had to be returned at 5:00 PM. This rule created difficulties for several Americans. Esther McKnight recollected how she had worried when Figge, a neighbor, rushed to return the POWs on time, even on slippery roads.⁸⁰

Joseph Diehl of Alma also struggled with the Army's regulation that POWs had to be back at Lake Wabaunsee by 5:00 PM. Diehl drove one of the county trucks that delivered and returned POWs from Lake Wabaunsee to the farms where they worked. A. L. Garanson was always late at bringing his POWs to the location where Diehl picked them up. Diehl waited on Garanson, and he inevitably reached the camp at Lake Wabaunsee late. Army officials complained about Diehl's habitual lateness, so he decided to leave without Garanson's POWs if they weren't at the rendezvous point on time. Predictably, the next day Garanson didn't have his men there on time, and Diehl left without them. When he arrived at the camp, Diehl told officials that he would be short five men.

Diehl was certainly surprised when a camp official told him that his usual cargo of 40 men unloaded out of the truck. He later

found out that Garanson had arrived late, as usual, at the rendezvous point with his POWs. When Garanson found that Diehl had already left, he simply followed Diehl in his own vehicle, and Garanson had the POWs leap out of his vehicle and jump into the truck Diehl was driving when it stopped at a stop sign.⁸¹

Some farmers were skillful at coping with the restrictions on POW use because they had prior experience using German war prisoners. According to the county agent reports, 35 farmers had obtained POWs from Camp Fremont near Council Grove, but all of these farmers were large operators and it made financial sense for them to drive up to 40 miles one way to get laborers. However, even the small operator could afford to drive five, ten, or twenty miles one way to Lake Wabaunsee to get laborers.⁸²

Many farmers decided against transporting POWs themselves and instead used various trucking services. Both the county and private individuals hauled POWs to the Alma community at the height of their use by farmers. Two of the trucks were privately owned and operated. These trucks were driven by Clarence "Buffalo" Frank and Randall. Art Meseke filled in for the private truck drivers. Three of the trucks were owned by Wabaunsee County. Joseph Diehl recalled that Myers asked him to drive a truck for the county. He told Myers that he didn't want to, but Myers coaxed him into driving the POWs by insisting that it would only be for a couple of weeks. Diehl reluctantly agreed to drive a POW truck, but he found that his duties did not end after several weeks. He decided that the only way to avoid transporting POWs was to transfer his duties to his brother, George Diehl, Sr. Even this did not work because Myers simply found Joseph Diehl another truck. Diehl arose at 5:00 AM and drove to Lake Wabaunsee

where he picked up his load of POWs. He distributed them to farms in the communities of Alma, Wamego, and Belvue. Most farmers believed that the expense and effort of picking up and returning POWs was justified by their labor.⁸³

Although POWs were not coerced into working, many of them preferred to work instead of brooding inside a prison camp. They had a financial incentive to work because they were paid 90¢ a day if they worked and only 10¢ a day if they didn't work. POWs used the extra money to buy things they wanted such as cigarettes, candy, dental and shaving supplies, soap, and shoe polish. Americans resented the fact that POWs could buy things at their canteen at Lake Wabaunsee that the general public couldn't purchase. Joseph Diehl remembered that POWs had high quality cigarettes, and Americans had to settle for "Wings" and "Dominoes." Americans were rationed only a small quantity of sugar, but POWs enjoyed candy bars.⁸⁴

POWs worked at many different agricultural tasks. Josef Vesper and four Americans raised and dressed 5000 turkeys one summer. A POW was sometimes responsible for feeding and counting cattle. The Federal Land Bank used German POWs to cut weeds on the Godwin place. POWs at the George Diehl, Sr., farm pumped and carried water to calves. Gustav Kolmel helped raise bulls on the Schwalm farm. Ernst Kunzel recalled he butchered many cattle and hogs for farmers in the area. POWs were especially in demand to help fill silo, put up hay, and shock feed.⁸⁵

Farmers received POWs partially on the basis of immediate need. POWs only worked at building fences, hauling manure, building cattle and machine sheds, painting, and similar chores when they weren't needed at more pressing jobs. The county agent reported in October,

was cut the first thing in Germany. Myrtle Thierer remembered that 1944, that even with 150 POWs, there was shortage of 50 men to fill the POWs were appalled when a hog shed was deliberately burned the daily requests for POW labor. Myers warned that violators of the notification rules would be fined. Once again non-pressing farm jobs such as carpentry and cutting wood had to wait.⁸⁶

POWs labored on Wabauensee County farms even in winter. The winter wage rate was set at 35¢ an hour at a meeting of the Wabauensee County Grower's Association at Alma. Winter POWs' work included painting, carpentering, stone mason work, cutting wood, repairing fences, hauling feed to livestock, plastering, and sorting hybrid corn for seed.⁸⁷

Horses had great appeal for many POWs. Myrtle Thierer recalled that they were quite interested in learning American ways of "doctoring horses." POWs had to go and tell the horses good-bye when they left the McKnight home for the last time. Charlotte Imthurn remembered that a POW jumped on a horse and attempted to ride it, even though it was obvious that he had no experience with horses.⁸⁸

POWs noticed many differences between American and German agriculture. Gustav Kolmel recalled that "many things seemed strange to us but we could see the advantage to them." POWs noted the technological advancement of American agriculture which allowed larger acreages to be farmed with smaller amounts of labor. Klaus Majer remembered that Americans used tractors, but ox teams and four strip cultivation were still used in Germany. America was a large open land compared to Europe.⁸⁹

Waste horrified the Germans. Accustomed to using every tiny bit of ground, the POWs were dismayed to see that the ends of the rows were left standing. They explained that the ends of the rows

were cut the first thing in Germany. Myrtle Thierer remembered that the POWs were appalled when a hog shed was deliberately burned down. They said that in Germany it would have been torn down and the lumber reused in another building. Many of the POWs thought that Americans were careless because they didn't keep things up properly. POWs hated to see brush taking over pastures and weeds growing in fence rows. What the POWs may not have fully understood is that, unlike Germans who had a highly intensive system of agriculture, Americans farmed greater acreages of land and could not expend the concern over every square inch of property.⁹⁰

Even after 40 years, many Wabaunsee County farmers remember that POWs were "real industrious people." Steve Hund recalled that they were willing to work in blistering heat and blinding snow storms. Vincent Glotzbach recollected that when he left the POWs without supervision they did not take advantage of an opportunity to be idle, but instead "worked their heads off."⁹¹

The willingness of POWs to work made them in great demand as laborers. By July 24, 1944, 30 more POWs were sent to Lake Wabaunsee to meet the demands for labor. A total of 50 additional men were brought to Lake Wabaunsee in the summer of 1944. The county agent reported that during the harvest of 1944 all of the POWs were used and 20 or more could have been used if they had been available.⁹²

POWs' compulsion to work sometimes endangered their health and even their lives. Myrtle Thierer retained the memory of her father ordering POWs to take it easy and not work so hard because her father felt that they were risking their health (by their hard work). Some POWs in Eskridge worked so hard that they tore the skin off their hands. The most serious threat to the safety of POWs was unfamiliar

farm work. Although some POWs at Lake Wabaunsee, including Heinrich Wolgast, Franz Scheider, and Werner Burow had lived and worked on farms before the war, farm work was a new experience for many POWs. They boldly attempted any farm chores, even when they had no experience.⁹³

One POW, Wilfried Vögele, tragically lost his life in a farm accident at the Ed Tembrink farm near Alma. Clarence Gnadl remembered that a POW was helping to put up silage when the POW was killed. According to Gnadl, Vögele was getting on a wagon when the mules were startled by a train whistle and started to run. He attempted to grab the reins, but the front end of the wagon broke off and he was run over by the wagon. Gnadl believed the POW was killed instantly. When Army officials learned of the accident, they sent out an ambulance to pick up Vögele. The ambulance took the body back to Fort Riley for burial. Gnadl felt that the matter was "hushed up." No article about the accident appeared in any local newspaper.⁹⁴

Some Axis POWs who died in American internment camps are buried at Fort Riley. Of these 77 men, 62 were Germans. Even today the US Army is reluctant to release information about POWs' deaths in Kansas; according to the Wichita Eagle-Beacon the deaths were due to "natural causes." Obviously this is untrue. For example, Vögele did not die of natural causes. His death appears to have no scandal attached to it, but it still cannot be classified as a death of "natural causes."⁹⁵

The memory of the POWs buried at Fort Riley has been observed in several ways. Every POW's final resting place has a white grave marker. Ceremonies have been held in honor of the dead POWs. Many relatives of dead POWs attended an especially memorable observance

in November, 1976. The ceremony began with a benediction from an American chaplain. It continued with a gun salute by a seven-man color guard and the playing of "Taps." German, Japanese, and Italian officers, who were dressed in World War II uniforms, saluted and laid wreaths on their countrymen's graves at the end of the ceremony. Klaus Majer and Georg Stanglmeir visited the cemetery at Fort Riley when they came back to Kansas in 1980 and took photographs of Wilfried Vogele's tombstone for his family back in Germany.⁹⁶

POWs demonstrated remarkable skills outside of agriculture. No matter what task needed to be done, people in the community assumed that a POW could be found at the camp who was trained in that field. George Ferguson said that the POWs were skilled perfectionists. Ralph Stratton credited the Germans' skills to their training. Few Germans attended college, and usually learned a trade as an apprentice under a master. An apprenticeship lasted at least four years, but the novice was not released from service until the year six mark, which meant an apprenticeship could last longer than four years. One POW worked with LeRoy Roller repairing the county trucks that hauled the POWs. Joey Djehi recalled the POW as a "Nazi who had no use for Americans," but who proved useful as a mechanic that nobody cared.

The work of these POWs was not limited to the military. One POW worked in a barn for the Stratton family of Eskridge that was being used 40 years later. Ralph Stratton reported that he had been looking in vain for someone as well at wiring for many years. POWs proficient at masonry also built the local plant in Eskridge that was being used in 1984. A POW constructed a shed at the Imthurn home that was different style than those in America, but it proved durable. POWs helped remodel the J. C. Warren home. POWs put in a cement floor and steps underneath the house and ran a drain. American guards supervised their work and ordered the POWs around. American plans failed because the drain was off a foot or two. The POWs took over, made measurements, and got it right.⁹⁷

Artists POWs used their

CHAPTER VI:

NONAGRICULTURAL WORK OF THE POWS

Ernie used the palms of his hands to make designs at the bottom of the wall. POWs demonstrated remarkable skills outside of agriculture. No matter what task needed to be done, people in the community assumed that a POW could be found at the camp who was trained in that field. One POW who worked near Paxico sold some of his paintings to Americans. Steve George Edgerton said that the POWs were skilled perfectionists. Ralph Stratton recalled that at least some of the paintings had religious themes and were sold to churches.

POWs may have been less thrilled to do some of the manual labor under a master. An apprenticeship lasted at least four years, but the novice was not released from service until he knew his craft, which meant an apprenticeship could last longer than four years. One POW worked with LeRoy Noller repairing the county trucks that hauled the Shawnee. POWs also repaired Webster County roads and bridges.

POWs. Joey Diehl recalled the POW as a "Nazi who had no use for Americans," but who proved so useful as a mechanic that nobody cared.⁹⁷

The work of POWs often had longevity. A POW installed wiring in a barn for the Stratton family of Eskridge that was being used 40 years later. Ralph Stratton reported that he had been looking in vain for someone do as well at wiring for many years. POWs proficient at masonry also built the local plant in Eskridge that was being used in 1984. A POW constructed a shed at the Imthurn home that was a different style than those in America, but it proved durable. POWs helped remodel the J. O. Warren home. POWs put in a cement floor and steps underneath the house and ran a drain. American guards supervised their work and ordered the POWs around. American plans failed because the drain was off a foot or two. The POWs took over, made measurements, and got it right.⁹⁸

Artistic POWs used their talents in behalf of Americans. Ernie

CHAPTER VIII:
AFTER THE WAR

painted murals on the farm house walls of Howard Lietz' parents' home. The murals covered two or three walls in the living room. Ernie used the palms of his hands to make designs at the bottom of the wall that looked like wallpaper. Then he put a border above that, and finally added the mountain scenes to the work of art. Another POW who worked near Paxico sold some of his paintings to Americans. Steve Hund recalled that at least some of the paintings had religious themes and were sold to churches.⁹⁹

POWs may have been less thrilled to do some of the manual labor jobs they were called upon to do. Eight to ten POWs worked at a rock quarry south of Eskridge. Work at rock quarries was used as a punishment at some POW camps, and it may have been so at Lake Wabaunsee. POWs also repaired Wabaunsee County roads and bridges.¹⁰⁰

The military used POWs in mechanical work at the Army Ordnance Shops in Topeka. Nyle Miller remembered that POWs worked one block south of the Kansas State Historical Society. Two bus loads of POWs went into Topeka every day. Some citizens of Eskridge were angered that Shawnee County Commissioners refused to house them in Shawnee County, but were quite willing to have them brought to Topeka to work. According to George Edgerton, Shawnee County Commissioners felt that Topeka, because it was the state capital, was a sensitive area, and that housing POWs in Shawnee County was a potentially dangerous act.¹⁰¹

CHAPTER VII:

AFTER THE WAR

The end of World War II signaled the end for the camp at Lake Wabaunsee, but the beginning of a new life for the POWs. On May 8, 1945, VE Day (Victory in Europe) was announced and all prisoners and guards were kept in camp. When VJ Day (Victory over Japan) was announced on August 14, 1945, the prisoners were once again kept at the camp. The POWs felt they were treated worse after Germany lost the war. During the war POWs found the food to be delicious and plentiful, but after Germany lost the war, the meals were poorer in quality and quantity. However, Gustav Kolmel recalled that, after the first horrible week, the food gradually improved week by week until the POWs departed for Europe in December, 1945. Heinrich Wolgast remembered that the POWs were put on a 1000 calorie a day diet after the war in Europe. Hermann Dorn complained that the food after the war consisted of "dry vegetables and dog food." Ernst Kunzel recalled that the POWs were fed salt herring every morning for breakfast.¹⁰²

The camp was officially closed on December 1, 1945. The POWs were disappointed that they couldn't take their woodworking projects home with them. POWs also had to leave behind cameras, field glasses, binoculars, and suitcases. Prisoners were restricted from taking any American currency with them. Canteen coupons were redeemed, canteen profits were distributed, and prisoner trust accounts were liquidated. Prisoners were issued government checks. The men were usually left with about \$50. POWs from Lake Wabaunsee were shipped back to Fort Riley before their departure to Europe. Luggage was limited to 30 pounds for enlisted men and 175 pounds for officers. POWs were issued

a barracks bag, several woolen blankets, a first aid kit, and eating utensils. The POWs wished to express their appreciation for their good treatment in America and especially at Lake Wabaunsee, therefore, they volunteered to paint the barracks at the lake for the City of Eskridge in appreciation for their treatment.¹⁰³

Most POWs had mixed feelings about returning to Europe. Although they wanted to see their families in Germany, they regretted leaving the friends they had made in America. Many POWs would also have liked to have stayed because of the economic opportunities in the United States. Helmut Grahl dreaded to return to his home in Dresden because he feared that all of his family had been killed in Allied bombing raids.¹⁰⁴

The Allies wanted to delay the return of committed Nazi POWs to Germany. Heinrich Wolgast remembered that POWs were shipped in 1946 from Fort Riley to Fort Eustis, Virginia. Americans spent six weeks at Fort Eustis indoctrinating the POWs in democracy. Hermann Dorn recalled Fort Eustis as the place where POWs were classified as either "Nazis" or "Democrats." "Democrats" were sent home immediately, but "Nazis" had to work in Great Britain or France before returning home.¹⁰⁵

Wolgast was evidently considered a "Democrat." In March, 1946, he was sent to a release camp in New York for 14 days. There he was put on a troop transport ship for Le Havre, France, that took 11 days to cross the Atlantic. When the POWs arrived in Europe, they were put in the notorious Bolbec camp under French guards. Wolgast said that he received the worst treatment of his captivity there. GIs moved prisoners to Bad Aibling, Bavaria, in April and May. When they reached Munich, Wolgast was put into an American release camp for

approximately six weeks. Then the Americans put him on a train for Munster in northern Germany. There Wolgast and other POWs were turned over to the British. After six weeks in the British camp, Wolgast was released as a free man in September, 1946.¹⁰⁶

Interestingly enough, many of the POWs who had been trusted farm hands in Kansas were classified as "Nazis" and had to spend time in England or France before their return to Germany. Lothar Gilg recalled that the Fort Riley Commander Shafer promised that they would be sent directly home to Germany, and they were emotionally crushed when they were not.¹⁰⁷

Many POWs had bad experiences at French hands. Hans Greiner claimed that when the ship he was on reached LeHarve, France, the Americans sold the German POWs to the French for a few dollars. Greiner spent two years in a French prison camp before he was released in 1948. Greiner believed that he got a "dirty deal," and he still has "absolutely no sympathy toward the American government." However, Greiner said that his bad feelings toward the American government did not change his good opinion of the American people. Gustav Kölmel remembered that the French took away all the nice things that the Americans had given to the POWs, including new clothes, which the French replaced with old, worn out clothes. Lothar Gilg recalled that they reached Europe at Rotterdam and were put in a camp at Waterloo. Treatment was so bad at the camp that Gilg asked to be spared "the pain of telling you how we fared there."¹⁰⁸

Several POWs were interned in Great Britain before they were returned to Germany. Hermann Dorn recalled that he spent a year in Helensburg, Scotland. Werner Burow labored for farmers in England as he had in the United States. However, he reported that he was

not treated as well in Britain as he had been in America. One difference that he noted was that in England POWs ate sack lunches instead of eating dinner at the home of a family.¹⁰⁹

POWs faced a wide range of experiences on their eventual return to Germany. Some found it quite easy to return to their way of life before the war. Kolmel was able to get his prewar job back at an automobile manufacturing plant, even though the factory had been destroyed during the war. Dorn returned to his job as a salesman for a blanket factory.¹¹⁰

Other POWs found that their professional prospects were greater after the war than before as the consequence of skills they had acquired. Ernst Kunzel first worked as a chauffeur to the American Army because of the English he had learned as a POW. Later he opened an air conditioning and refrigeration shop. Although he had some knowledge in the field because of his prewar work in a butcher shop, Kunzel gained a great deal of practical knowledge about refrigeration during his internment in the United States. He recalled that the American refrigeration technology was ten years ahead of the German. George Stanglmeir's knowledge of English and his ambition was helpful to him in becoming a beer truck driver after the war and eventually a wholesale liquor distributor and retailer specializing in German wines.¹¹¹

However, not all POWs returned to such happy circumstances. For example, when Lothar Gilg returned to Germany, he found that he could not return to his prewar home in the Sudetenland. Werner Burow returned to a part of Germany controlled by the Russians. His family had been well-to-do, with a prosperous farm, before the war. However, after the war everything had changed. Burow's father had

disappeared during the war, and the family believed that the Nazis were responsible. The Communists said that it was immoral for only Burow and his mother to live on the Burow farm. The Communists forced the Burows to take many strangers into their home. They experienced great shortages of food and clothing.¹¹²

Werner Burow turned to the families he had worked for in the United States for help. The Arnold Ringel family of Alma sent a package to Burow immediately after the war that contained razor blades, tobacco, and cigarette papers. Burow's letter to the Ringels expressed his and his mother's appreciation for the package, but indicated a particular need for food, especially difficult to obtain spices, and toiletries such as soap and toothpaste.¹¹³

Responsive to Burow's plea, the Ringels sent him many packages with needed items. Whenever he got a package, Burow sent a letter to the Ringels that listed every item received, to ascertain whether the package had been tampered with enroute. One of the packages contained the following items: three packages of tobacco, one pocket knife, one razor, three packages of shaving blades, two tubes of shaving cream, two tubes of dental cream, five bars of wash and five bars of toilet soap, one and one-half pounds of cocoa, and some cigarette papers.¹¹⁴

When Werner Burow married, the requests to the Ringels increased. He asked for proper clothes in which to be married, and the Ringels sent him a complete set of clothes, including shoes and underwear. Then Burow's bride wrote the Ringels that she had no appropriate clothes in which to wed. The Ringels came to the rescue with an outfit of clothes.¹¹⁵

Soon after the marriage, Mrs. Burow became pregnant and the

Burows called upon the Ringels for help. They had no clothes or utensils for the baby, and once again the Ringels came to their aid. The Ringels' only child, Clark, was grown and they had no need for the left over baby things, so they boxed up everything they had used in the nursery, such as a rubber sheet, baby clothes, diapers, and bottles and sent them.¹¹⁶

The Ringels helped not only Werner Burow and his wife and children, but also his mother and a woman in Burow's village. The Burows not only used the baby items for their own children, but also gave some of the things to a widow woman, Amanda Neumann, in the local village. This woman wrote to the Ringels and said that she had five small children and her husband had disappeared at the Russian Front. She asked the Ringels to send her anything they had left over. She said that normally she would have been assisted by her family, but that times were so tough that they needed everything they had for themselves. Burow's mother also wrote letters requesting items.¹¹⁷

The Ringels made the Burows' 1947 Christmas happier by sending them several packages. Among the contents of the packages were: two overcoats, five pounds sugar, five pounds flour, one can baking powder, one can pepper, one box nutmeg, one box cinnamon, one box cloves, three pairs of children's shoes, one pair adult's brown shoes, one suit with trousers, vest, and jacket, one pair of work trousers, one pair stockings, one pair socks, two pairs gloves, one hat, two dresses, buttons, snaps, and needles.¹¹⁸

Eventually the packages received by the Burow family were so numerous and heavy that it was a great inconvenience for Burow to transport them from the post office 20 miles to his home. He still had his bicycle from before the war, but the tires were worn out

and he wrote to the Ringels for new ones. The Ringels wanted to help but didn't know the size tires he would need, so they sent him a page from the Montgomery Ward catalogue and asked him to circle the ones he wanted. Burow circled those that would work best and the Ringels saw that he got them. They didn't fit exactly, but Burow hammered them on and away he went.¹¹⁹

Werner Burow was not the only POW to receive aid from Americans after the war. Gustav Kolmel and Hermann Dorn received packages from former employers after the war. Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Mertz offered Lothar Gilg a job on their farm and even offered to pay his way back. Gilg declined their offer because, after a long search, he had finally located his parents and he had to help support them. Viola Gideon said they helped one POW, perhaps Werner Burow, by sending him packages of food and clothing, but that he became a "beggar" constantly demanding packages, and they discontinued contact with him.¹²⁰

Many POWs have corresponded with American farm families for many years. Fritz Ott and Josef Vesper are just two of the POWs who have kept in contact with Americans for 40 years. The John Schwalm family and Ernst Künzel have also corresponded for years. Künzel always wanted the Schwalm family to come to his home in Germany to show them the kind of hospitality they had shown him as a POW. He finally got his wish when Roger Schwalm visited Europe in the early 1980s and stayed at the Künzel home. Schwalm reported the Künzels treated him royally and tempted him with fine foods and liquors.¹²¹

The Vincent Glotzbach family maintained contact with a POW named Josef Vesper for over 40 years. The Glotzbach's daughter, a Roman Catholic nun, visited with Vesper in Augsburg, Germany. Mr. and Mrs. Glotzbach saw Vesper on their golden wedding anniversary trip to Europe

in 1973. They were on a group tour and did not feel that they could leave it to visit his home. In fact, Vesper had to drive three hours to see them, and he brought his daughter and grandfather along. He was disappointed that the Glotzbachs could not enjoy the hospitality of his home.¹²²

Unusual circumstances sometimes brought POWs or their family members into contact with Americans they met as POWs. One brother of a POW was in the American Army and stationed at Fort Riley during the 1980s. He visited the camp at which his brother had been interned and some of the families he had worked for. The brother had worked for the Figge family of Eskridge.¹²³

An American Army officer was on Reforger in Goepfingen, West Germany, with the 1st Brigade when he met two former POWs who had been interned at Lake Wabaunsee. The officer, Colonel Ed Hood, was in a wine shop in Germany when he made the initial contact. Hood and the German employees at the store had difficulty communicating. The employees decided to bring the owner, Georg Stanglmeir, from the back of the shop to help them. The owner spoke such fluent English that Hood asked Stanglmeir how he had learned to speak English so well. Stanglmeir replied that he had been a prisoner of war in America during World War II. When Hood inquired into Stanglmeir's statement, he was amazed to discover that Stanglmeir had been a POW at Fort Riley. Hood was stationed at Fort Riley, and consequently his chat with Stanglmeir soon blossomed into friendship. Stanglmeir introduced Hood to one of his friends, Klaus Majer. As Stanglmeir was well-to-do, Hood suggested that he return to America to tour the country and visit his old camp. Stanglmeir took him up on the offer and along with Majer, sales manager for a souvenir selling firm, came

to the United States in May of 1980.¹²⁴

Majer and Stanglmeir, along with their wives, Margaret and Frieda, flew to Chicago, rented a car and drove to Kansas. Majer said of Kansas, "We love this state and the people. It has a wonderful landscape. Kansas is the best state we've seen yet." They had seen Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri.¹²⁵

The POWs had several places they wanted to visit in Kansas. First, they desired to see the farms and visit the families they had worked for during the war. Majer went to visit the Lawrence Mertz family at their farm near Wamego. Majer remembered that Richard Mertz was a small child who sat on Majer's lap when he worked at the Mertz farm during the war. Georg Stanglmeir was saddened to find that Ralph Stratton, a 67 year old bachelor, was living alone on the farm. Stanglmeir was so upset by this revelation that he broke into tears as soon as they left Stratton's farm. He believed that they had brightened one day of Stratton's life: "Yesterday he was very happy. It was like old times, family times."¹²⁶

Stanglmeir and Majer also visited the camps where they had been interned in Kansas. They visited the camp buildings at the entrance to Lake Wabaunsee. They also visited Fort Riley during Big Red One Week, and were able to see the annual division review. They enjoyed seeing Fort Riley again and often pointed out places they had worked. They visited the cemetery at Fort Riley to take pictures for the relatives of the deceased. A Fort Riley general insisted on meeting the former POWs, according to Hood. The POWs were reluctant to meet the general whom they feared would make boring and banal remarks. However, Hood gave into the general's pressure and introduced the ex-POWs to the general. Hood reported that the general was im-

pressed by the ex-POWs, but they weren't at all impressed with the general.¹²⁷

One former POW's son, Uli Dorn, visited the families his father had worked for. Uli was working at a German restaurant in New York City. He was interested in his father's experiences as a WWII POW, so he hitchhiked to Alma in 1979, carrying a letter his father had written in 1947 listing people he had worked for. When he arrived at the gas station, he met a woman who was the widow of Clarence "Buffalo" Frank, who had hauled POWs from Lake Wabaunsee to surrounding communities every day. He was given a ride to Clarence Gnadts's farm. The Gnadts were surprised to see Dorn because they hadn't heard from his father in about 30 years, and Uli had sent no notice that he might be coming. They welcomed Dorn into their home and took him to visit the families his father had worked for many years ago.¹²⁸

The German prisoner of war camp at Lake Wabaunsee was an overall great success. It helped farmers and the United States government and provided the POWs a safe and constructive confinement. The Eskridge Independent discussed the success of the camp:

The problem of using POWs to get work done has been solved far better than expected. The latitude of their use and the time they have been used has exceeded expectations. The number of farmers using them now is amazing. Very likely they will be continued in employment daily throughout the entire year.

While no farmer really likes to use them, many are thankful for their help, and find them an interesting experience. They are treated with a degree of tolerance and since our boys have been able to capture them, the task of caring for them and providing them with a useful occupation is a task we should not particularly shy away from or find abhorrent.¹²⁹

Wabaunsee County farmers had the labor they needed. An average of 60 to 75 farmers used the POWs at Lake Wabaunsee and more used them

during harvest time. POWs worked 2,507 days in agriculture in November 1944. The county agent reported that POWs worked 9,715 days in 1945.¹³⁰

The POWs camp was helpful to the war effort. There is an old saying: "An army moves on its stomach." The American Army and the civilian population was well supplied with food because American agriculture was able to produce abundant food. The POWs at Lake Wabaunsee helped farmers sustain or increase production of vital crops, and their use freed American men for military service. The POW camp was a financial success; the government received \$58,693.31 for the POWs' labor to help pay food, housing, clothing, and transportation costs.¹³¹

The Lake Wabaunsee camp provided the POWs adequate food, clothing, shelter, and recreational activities. POWs were treated humanely, which influenced many of their perceptions of the United States. Gustav Kolmel said his attitudes toward Americans improved after his experiences in Kansas. Although Ernst Kunzel worked for the American Army for three years in Germany, it was the earlier "good and fair treatment" from the Schwalm that made him think well of the United States.¹³²

Unlike the Russians and French whose cruelty to POWs engendered hatred of Germans, the Americans treated the Germans with decency and kindness. There are only a couple of recorded incidents of disciplinary action taken at the camp. Most of the POWs repaid their good treatment by model behavior and by providing hard work to local farmers. Former POWs have opened their homes and hearts to Americans they worked for. The POW camp at Lake Wabaunsee illustrated that gratitude is the usual response to decent and humane treatment.¹³³

ENDNOTES

- 1 Based on an incident discussed in an interview with Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Warren, Eskridge, Ks., 23 April 1984.
- 2 Arnold Krammer, Nazi Prisoners of War in America. (New York: Stein and Day, 1979), 2.
- 3 Krammer, 115.
- 4 Hermann Dorn, correspondence to author, 24 October 1984; "Fort Riley POW's Return as Tourists," Manhattan Mercury, 1 June 1980; Klaus Majer, correspondence to author, 19 February 1985. "German POW's Visit Farmer 'Host' Families," Wamego - Smoke Signal, c. 1 June 1980.
- 5 Werner Burow, correspondence to author, 26 November 1984; Gustav Kölmel, correspondence to author, 18 November 1984; Dorn correspondence; Majer, correspondence to author, 19 February 1985; Kölmel correspondence; Heinrich Wolgast, correspondence to author, 13 March 1985.
- 6 Majer correspondence; Kölmel correspondence.
- 7 Majer correspondence; Ernst Künzel, correspondence to author, 19 December 1984; Rev. E. G. Zimmermann, correspondence to author, 14 February 1985.
- 8 Burow correspondence; Franz Schieder, correspondence to author, 25 February 1985. Not all POWs at Lake Wabaunsee were initially interned at Concordia. For example, Josef Vesper recalled being interned at Fort Leonard Wood from July 16, 1943, to July 1, 1944, and at branch camp "Independence" at Clarinda, Iowa, from July 1, 1944, to August 20, 1944, and at Fort Riley from August 20, 1944, to September 13, 1944.
- 9 "War Prisoners Not Too Unhappy," Alma Enterprise, 5 March 1943; George Edgerton, interview with author, Eskridge, Ks., 14 April 1984.
- 10 Künzel correspondence, 19 December 1984; Majer correspondence; Kölmel correspondence; Künzel correspondence, 19 December 1984.
- 11 Majer, Schieder, Künzel, Gilg, and Dorn all discussed the Concordia incident in their correspondence.
- 12 "German Prisoners Filling Need of Kansas Farmers for Additional Manpower," Wichita Morning Eagle, 24 September 1944; Majer correspondence; Dorn correspondence.
- 13 Eskridge Independent, 23 March 1944.
- 14 "Wabaunsee County Agent Annual Extension Report - 1943," p. 6, Umberger Hall, Kansas State University. From Microfilm series T 861, National Archives and Records Service.
- 15 "Plan to Aid Farm Labor Problem Started in Eskridge," Independent, 17 June 1943; 1943 County Agent Reports.

- 16 "Can Get War Prisoners to Help on Farms", Independent, 17 June 1943.
- 17 "War Prisoner Meeting to be Held," Independent, 26 August 1943; "War Prisoners Working on Local Farms," Independent, 2 September 1943.
- 18 1943 County Agent Reports; Independent, 23 March 1944; "New War Prisoner Labor Set-Up," Independent, 23 September 1943.
- 19 1944 County Agent Reports; "Prisoner Labor May Be Available This Season," Alta Vista Journal, 2 March 1944; Independent, 23 March 1944; Journal, 2 March 1944; Independent, 23 March 1944.
- 20 Journal, 2 March 1944.
- 21 Edgerton interview; "9th Armored Division Leases Site at Lake Wabaunsee," Independent, 29 April 1944; "City Turns Down Prison Camp," Independent, 23 March 1944.
- 22 Independent, 23 March 1944.
- 23 Independent, 23 March 1944.
- 24 Independent, 23 March 1944.
- 25 Eskridge City Council minutes, 3 April 1944, Eskridge City Clerk, Eskridge, Ks.
- 26 Independent, 23 March 1944; Esther McKnight interview with author, Eskridge, Ks., 17 April 1984; Edgerton interview.
- 27 Independent, 6 April 1944.
- 28 "City Removes Bar to Prison Camp After Farmers State Need," Independent, 27 April 1944.
- 29 Eskridge City Council minutes, 21 April 1944.
- 30 Eskridge City Council minutes, 21 April 1944.
- 31 Eskridge City Council minutes, 21 April 1944.; "Prisoner Committee Organized," Independent, 11 May 1944.
- 32 1944 County Agent Reports, 80; Independent, 11 May 1944.
- 33 Independent, 11 May 1944.
- 34 "Still Guessing on POW Camp," Independent, 15 June 1944; "Still Wondering About Camp," Independent, 8 June 1944.
- 35 1944 County Agent Report, 81.
- 36 Independent, 15 June 1944; Mrs. Howard C. Myers, interview with author, Alma, Ks. 4 January 1985.

- 37 1944 County Agent Report, 81; "Fixing Camp for Prisoners," Independent, 29 June 1944; "POWs Are Being Put to Work," Independent, 6 July 1944.
- 38 "Putting POW's to Work," Independent, 13 July 1944.
- 39 "Fixing Camp for Prisoners," Independent, 29 June 1944.
- 40 Kansas City Star, 20 July 1944, Wabaunsee County Clippings, Volume II, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Ks.; Wichita Morning Eagle, Kansas Clippings, Wichita Public Library, Wichita, Ks.; Künzel correspondence, 30 August 1984; Col. Ed Hood, telephone conversation with author, 27 November 1984.
- 41 George Diehl, Jr., interview with author, Alta Vista, Ks., 11 March 1985.
- 42 Red Cross records for 19 March 1945; the records are in the possession of the German Red Cross, Munich, Germany.
- 43 McKnight interview; H. Dorn correspondence; Joseph Diehl, interview with author, Alma, Ks., 2 March 1985.
- 44 G. Diehl interview.
- 45 Künzel correspondence, 19 December 1984; Curtis J. Waugh, interview with author, Emporia, Ks., 26 April 1984; Lake Wabaunsee Sportsman Association History and Directory - 1971, (no publication data given) 41, Kansas State Historical Society, Topeka, Ks.; Otis H. Reed, correspondence to author, 26 November 1984.
- 46 Reed correspondence. The author makes no judgement as to the truth or falsehood of this story.
- 47 Künzel correspondence, 30 August 1984; Smoke Signal, c. 1 June, 1980.
- 48 H. Dorn correspondence; Edgerton interview; Warren interview.
- 49 Warren interview.
- 50 J. Diehl interview; Roger Schalm, interview with author, Alma, Ks., 23 April 1984; McKnight interview; Myrtle Thierer, interview with author, Alma, Ks., 23 April 1984; McKnight interview.
- 51 Schwalm interview.
- 52 Schwalm interview.
- 53 McKnight interview; G. Diehl interview; M. Thierer interview.
- 54 McKnight interview.
- 55 Edwin Ringel, telephone conversation with author, 26 September 1984; Künzel correspondence, 30 August 1984; G. Diehl interview.

56 **
Kunzel correspondence, 30 August 1984; G. Diehl interview; Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Gnad, interview with author, Alma, Ks., 15 July 1984; M. Thierer interview; Lothar Gilg, correspondence to author, 20 March 1985.

57 Kunzel correspondence, 30 August 1984.

58 "Corn on the Cob Not Fit Food for the Superior Race," Journal, 17 August 1944; McKnight interview; Ralph Stratton, telephone conversation with author, 17 April 1984; Gnad interview; Journal, 17 August 1944; Thierer interview; E. Ringel conversation.

59 Ringel conversation; Joyce Thierer, interview with author, Emporia, Ks., 27 September 1984.

60 Gnad interview; McKnight interview.

61 M. Thierer interview; Stratton conversation.

62 Charlotte Imthurn, telephone conversation with author, 5 September 1984; Viola Gideon, telephone conversation with author, 19 September 1984.

63 Edward H. Fresen, correspondence to author, 14 February 1985.

64 Heinrich Wolgast, correspondence; A. W. Wolgast, interview with author, Alta Vista, Ks., 4 April 1985.

65 McKnight interview; Warren interview.

66 McKnight interview.

67 Wichita Morning Eagle, 24 September 1944; Kunzel correspondence, 20 August 1984.

68 Edgerton interview; Myers interview.

69 "City Council Removes Bar to Prison Camp After Farmers State Need," Independent, 27 April 1944. Jim Busenbark, an auctioneer and former county commissioner, was one of the most well-known individuals in Wabaunsee County, according to the Alta Vista Journal.

70 "Letters to the Editor," Independent, 13 July 1944.

71 "News of our Men and Women in Uniform," Independent, 14 September 1944.

72 "Germans Help Harvest But Some Kansans Are Critical," Topeka Daily Capital, 1 October 1944, Kansas Clippings File, Wichita Public Library, Wichita, Ks.; McKnight interview; Myers interview.

73 McKnight interview; Topeka Daily Capital, 1 October 1944, Kansas Clippings File, Wichita Public Library, Wichita, Ks.; Wichita Morning Eagle, 24 September 1944; Kansas Clippings File, Wichita Public Library, Wichita, Ks.; H. R. Richter, interview with author, 7 January 1985, Alta Vista, Ks.

- 74 Warren interview.
- 75 M. Thierer interview; Imthurn interview.
- 76 Imthurn interview.
- 77 1944 County Agent Report, 81.
- 78 "More Prisoner Labor Available at Lake Wabaunsee," Journal, 27 July 1944; Myers interview.
- 79 Lt. Col. George G. Lewis and Capt. John Mewha, History of Prisoner of War Utilization by the United States Army -- 1776-1945. Washington, D.C.: Superintendent of Documents, 1955), 66.
- 80 McKnight interview.
- 81 J. Diehl interview.
- 82 1943 County Agent Report, 6.
- 83 J. Diehl interview.
- 84 Independent, 23 March 1944; "German Prisoners Filling Need of Kansas Farmers for Additional Manpower," Wichita Morning Eagle, 24 September 1944, Kansas Clippings File, Wichita Public Library, Wichita, Ks.; J. Diehl interview.
- 85 Glotzbach interview; Gnadst interview; Journal, 7 September 1944; Diehl interview; Kolmel correspondence; Künzel correspondence; "Prisoners in Big Demand," Independent, 21 September 1944.
- 86 "More Prisoner Labor Available at Lake Wabaunsee," Journal, 27 July 1944; "Insufficient Prisoner Labor," Independent, 5 October 1944.
- 87 "To Set Winter PW Wage," Independent, 5 October 1944; "Reduce Prisoner Labor Wages," Independent, 7 December 1944.
- 88 M. Thierer interview; McKnight interview; Imthurn conversation.
- 89 Kolmel correspondence; Majer correspondence.
- 90 McKnight interview; Ernie Hodgson, telephone conversation with author, 30 August 1984; M. Thierer interview; Cora Ringel, interview with author, 13 July 1984.
- 91 Stratton conversation; Steve Hund, telephone conversation with author, 6 September 1984; Mr. and Mrs. Vincent Glotzbach, interview with author, Paxico, Ks., 30 July 1984.
- 92 "More Prisoner Labor Available," Independent, 27 July 1944. "More Prisoners for Farm Labor," Independent, 14 September 1944; 1944 County Agent Report.
- 93 M. Thierer interview; Warren interview; Wolgast correspondence;

Schieder correspondence; Burow correspondence; Imthurn conversation.

94 Clarence Gnadt gave this recollection of a POW's death in a personal interview. Klaus Majer said that a POW had died while at Lake Wabaunsee, that his name was Wilfried Vögele, and that he was born at Pforzheim near Stuttgart. However, according to Majer, the POW was killed when two trucks hauling POWs collided, one of the two trucks driven by Joseph Diehl. Diehl said that two trucks had collided, but that he had driven neither truck. He also substantiated Gnadt's recollection of the event and added the location of the accident. Ernst Künzel said in a letter to the author dated 19 December 1984 that a POW had been killed building a silo. Künzel said that a representative of the silo company had talked to the POWs about the dangers involved in erecting a silo. He said that POWs were not compelled to work at silo building and many chose not to because of fear of heights.

I called Fort Riley, seeking information on the POWs who died during their stay at Lake Wabaunsee. After calling the General's secretary, it was suggested that Grave Registration might prove helpful. Alas, after several calls the only information that Grave Registration could provide is that some POWs' bodies were disinterred and shipped back to Germany for reburial, and that some POWs who were originally buried at the camp at Concordia were reburied at Fort Riley. Grave Registration suggested contacting the Post Library and Terry Van Meter, Fort Riley Historical Director. Neither of these leads turned up any information.

95 According to Klaus Majer, Vögele's last name is misspelled Voegal on the tombstone at Fort Riley. "Axis POWs Honored By Prayer, - Wreaths," Wichita Eagle, 15 November 1976.

96 Wichita Eagle, 15 November 1976.

97 Edgerton interview; Stratton conversation; J. Diehl interview.

98 Stratton conversation; Edgerton interview; Imthurn conversation; Warren interview.

99 Norma Lietz Steuwe, telephone conversation with author, 5 September 1984; Hund conversation. The murals on the Lietz farm house decayed and were painted over. A POW also did some paintings for Charlotte Imthurn. It is unknown whether or not this is the same POW mentioned by Hund.

100 Edgerton interview; Wichita Morning Eagle, 24 September 1944; Independent, 23 March 1944.

101 Topeka Daily Capital, 4 October 1944, Kansas Clippings File, Wichita Public Library, Wichita, Ks.; Nyle Miller, correspondence to author, 13 October 1984; Edgerton interview; Independent, 13 July 1944.

102 Lake Wabaunsee Sportsman Association History and Directory, 41; Dorn correspondence; Kölmel correspondence; Wolgast correspondence; H. Dorn correspondence; Künzel correspondence, 30 August 1984.

- 103 Lake Wabauensee Sportsman Association History and Directory, 41; McKnight interview; Krammer, 243, 255, 244; Edgerton interview.
- 104 Journal, 17 August 1944; McKnight interview.
- 105 Wolgast correspondence; H. Dorn correspondence.
- 106 Wolgast correspondence.
- 107 H. Dorn correspondence; Lothar Gilg correspondence.
- 108 Hans Greiner, correspondence to author, c. 20 March 1985. Kölmel correspondence; Gilg correspondence.
- 109 H. Dorn correspondence; C. Ringel interview.
- 110 Kölmel correspondence; Gnadl interview.
- 111 Schwalm interview; Stratton conversation.
- 112 Gilg correspondence; C. Ringel interview.
- 113 Correspondence from Werner Burow to Arnold Ringel.
- 114 Correspondence from Werner Burow to Arnold Ringel.
- 115 Ringel interview.
- 116 Ringel interview.
- 117 Ringel interview; Burow correspondence to Ringel.
- 118 Burow correspondence to Ringel.
- 119 Ringel interview; Burow correspondence to Ringel.
- 120 Kölmel correspondence; Dorn correspondence; Gilg correspondence; Viola Gideon, telephone conversation with author, 19 September 1984.
- 121 Ringel conversation; Glotzbach interview; Schwalm interview.
- 122 Glotzbach interview; Vesper correspondence.
- 123 McKnight interview.
- 124 Ed Hood, telephone conversation to author, 27 November 1984; "Vier Reporter und zwei Filstaler," Nwz Goppinger Kreisnachrichten, c. June 1980.
- 125 "'Good Memories'" Bring 2 Germans Back to Their WWII Prison Camp," Wichita Eagle-Beacon, 26 May 1980.
- 126 "German POWs visit former 'host families,'" Smoke Signal, c. 1 June 1980; Hood conversation.

¹²⁷"Fort Riley POWs return as tourists," Manhattan Mercury, 1 June 1980; Hood conversation.

¹²⁸Gnadt interview; Uli Dorn, correspondence to author, 22 October 1984.

¹²⁹Independent, 22 February 1945.

¹³⁰1945 County Agent Report; Prisoner of War Camp Labor Report, Records Group 389, Records of the Office of the Provost Marshal General, National Archives.

¹³¹1945 County Agent Report.

¹³²Kolmel correspondence; Künzel correspondence, 19 December 1984.

¹³³In July 1945 Thomas F. Mishou, Jr., reported that disciplinary action was meted out to three prisoners out of a total of 239. In August of 1945 disciplinary action was taken on one prisoner. This information was taken from the Prisoner of War Camp Labor Reports in the National Archives. The Red Cross reported on March 19, 1945 that Gerhard Hoehler had been confined for disciplinary reasons since January 17, 1945. The labor reports filed by the camp commander make no mention of disciplinary action at that time.

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wertes Fräulein Clark!

Wollte auf Ihr Schreiben antworten so gut ich kann. Es sind immerhin schon
drei Jahre her, und auf alle Einzelheiten kann ich mich nicht mehr erinnern.

Lüneburg, 13.7.05

Sonders die einzelnen Daten auch im Fragebogen, aber ich habe mir die größ-

Sehr geehrte Frau Clark,
ich habe Ihren Brief, der an meinen Mann adressiert war,
erhalten und gelesen. Leider kann mein Mann diesen Brief
nicht beantworten, da er am 20.2.01 verstorben ist.
Es tut mir leid, Sie bei Ihrer Arbeit nicht unterstützen zu
können. Mein Mann hätte Ihnen sicher gern geholfen.

Ich bin leider nicht in der Lage, Ihren Fragebogen voll-
ständig zu beantworten; einiges habe ich aus der Erinner-
ung eintragen. Mein Mann hat aus dieser Zeit nur wenig
erzählt. Jahre, ich bin der zweite von rechts oben die dritte von rechts

Ich weiß aber, daß er in der Gefangenschaft sehr viel
mit Herrn Mayo aus Göttingen zusammen war. Bitte wenden
Sie sich doch an ihn.

Ich habe Ihnen noch ein Bild mitgeschickt, das im Lager
aufgenommen worden sein muß (mein Mann ist der 4. von
links, obere Reihe). Wo genau und wann dieses Bild ent-
standen ist, weiß ich nicht.

Ich wünsche Ihnen noch viel Erfolg bei Ihrer Arbeit.

Es tut mir leid, das ich Ihnen damit nicht weiter helfen kann.

Mit freundlichem Gruß

Es grüßt Ihnen W. Burow, Myrtechen Beins Kuisen.

PS: Zum Bild-der Mann unten rechts war ein Wiener (Austria)
-der Mann mit Schlips war ein Posten, Bewacher.

Bestellen Sie bitte ein Fräulein Frau Cava Ringel, die herzlichst Grüße
von mir und meiner Familie, und alles Gute für die Zukunft.

Werles Fräulein Clark!

Möchte auf Ihr Schreiben antworten so gut ich kann. Es sind immerhin schon vierzig Jahre her, und auf alle Einzelheiten kann ich mich nicht mehr erinnern. Besonders die einzelnen Daten auch im Fragebogen, aber ich habe mir die grösste Mühe gegeben Ihre Fragen zu beantworten, hoffentlich können Sie was mit anfangen. Die Namen der drei Brüder Ringel sind mir noch in Erinnerung geblieben, die anderen weiss ich nicht mehr, es waren zu viele Stellen, wo ich gearbeitet habe. Ich habe weiter keine Bilder mehr die ich Ihnen schicken kann wo Sie was mit anfangen könnten. Ein Bild kann ich Ihnen nur schicken, vom Schulabgang meines ältesten Enkel. Er ist der dritte von links oben 14 Jahre, ich bin der zweite von rechts oben, die dritte von rechts ist meine Frau, das andere sind meine Kinder Schwiegerkinder und Enkel. Rechts oben ist der Schwiegervater meines jüngsten Sohnes. Mit den einzelnen Camps kann ich mich nur noch erinnern, das die letzten zwei Camps im Staate New York befanden, aber die einzelnen Daten von den einzelnen Camps wie lange ich dort war kann ich mich nicht mehr erinnern. Es tut mir leid, das ich Ihnen damit nicht weiter helfen kann.

Es grüsst Ihnen W. Burow und Familie

Bestellen Sie bitte an Frau Cora Ringel, die herzlichst Grüsse von mir und meiner Familie, und alles Gute für die Zukunft.

Dear Penny,

My name is Uli and I am the youngest⁶⁷ son of Mr. Hermann Dorn. While visiting him last week-end he showed me your letter and I helped him filling out your forms. I've always been interested in his experiences as p.o.w. in the states and thus don't mind at all doing this.

I am married to an american woman. Debbie grew up about 100 miles north of N.Y.C. and between 1979 and 1981 I spend one year at her parent's house. 1982 we married and since then live over here. Debbie is a L.P.N. and working at a nursing home and I myself recently started a nursing program for R.N. We plan on moving back to New York in about 4 years.

But let me tell you about my father's time as p.o.w. I did hitch-hike to Alma in 1979 visiting the Gnadt family. My father had corresponded with Mrs. Gnadt during the first years after the war. But the following 30 years the contact interrupted and when I one day stood at the front door of the Gnadt house with a letter from her to my dad in my hand they were just shocked!

They showed me around the area, the ~~places~~ families my father worked for, lake Habaussee

My father mostly has nice memories of those years. The relationship between Americans and prisoners became so friendly and open that they often forgot they were prisoners (although in some other states p.o.w.'s were treated not far as good).

My dad most likely would have stayed in the U.S. after ~~that~~ his release but they were all made to leave the country and he didn't have the money to return once he was back in Germany.

You are asking about a guy who ~~was~~ had an accident near the Gnadt ~~house~~ home. My father recalls that incident but doesn't know any details about it.

If you want any more information ~~about~~ write back to me. My address is
Uli Dorn
Planckstr. 23
7000 Stuttgart 1

I'm sure you will send back the enclosed photographs to my father. They are precious memories. I made notes on back. You can tell the difference between the 3 pictures from the beginning of their stay in Concordia and the one at Wabamsee where my dad was even allowed to have a dog!

Hope we were able to help you with your project

OTHAR GILG

6800 Mannheim 31

7332 EISLINGEN/FILS, 20. März 1985

Kronprinzstraße 57
Telefon (07161) 88119

München, 18. 11. 1984

Penny Clark
Social Science Office
Emporia State University
Emporia, KS 66801 U.S.A.

Ihr Schreiben vom 23. Okt. 1984.
erreichte mich
Post erst am 15. 11. 84.

Ich bin ich bereit, Ihrem Wunsche nachzukommen und
Ihnen die Fragebogen aus. 2 1/2 Jahre Gefangen-
schaft in Amerika kann man aber in so kurzen Sätzen

Sehr geehrtes Fräulein Penny Clark,
Information
Interessiert sein, komme ich Ihrem Wunsche gerne nach.

Ihr Schreiben habe ich erhalten und habe mich sehr darüber ge-
freut, dass es in Amerika junge Menschen gibt, die sich für
unser Schicksal interessieren. Ich möchte mich jedoch an erster
Stelle entschuldigen, dass ich jetzt erst antworte. Es war
mir leider nicht möglich aus geschäftlichen Gründen dies früher
zu tun. und verbleibe mit den besten Wünschen

Ich hoffe, dass das Schreiben noch rechtzeitig ankommt, damit
Sie es mit den anderen Unterlagen verarbeiten können.

Ich habe mir erlaubt zu Ihrem Fragebogen noch einen Zusatzbogen
auszufertigen um Ihnen so gut wie möglich zu antworten. Selbst-
verständlich stehe ich Ihnen zu weiteren Fragen gerne zur Verfügung

Ich habe noch einige Bilder sowohl von Concordia als auch von
Camp Funston und Wabaunsee, in der Hauptsache sind es Gruppenbilder
Die von Wabaunsee werde ich reproduzieren lassen und Ihnen nach-
schicken. Beim Betrachten der Bilder vergessen Sie bitte nicht
dabei, dass inzwischen 40 Jahre vergangen sind.

Ich wünsche Ihnen für Ihr Studium und besonders für Ihre Promotion
alles erdenklich Gute. Es würde mich freuen, wenn mein kleiner
Beitrag etwas dazu beigetragen hätte.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Lothar Gilg

6800 Mannheim 31

Mannheim, 18. 11. 1984

Sehr geehrtes Fräulein Clark!

Schönen Dank für Ihr Schreiben vom 23. Okt. 1984.
Da sich mein Wohnsitz geändert hat, erreichte mich
die Post erst am 15.11.84.

Gerne bin ich bereit, Ihrem Wunsche nachzukommen und
fülle Ihnen die Fragebogen aus. 2 1/2 Jahre Gefangen-
schaft in Amerika kann man aber in so kurzen Sätzen
nicht schildern. Sollten Sie an mehr Information
interessiert sein, komme ich Ihrem Wunsche gerne nach.

Zu meiner Person: Mit nahezu 23 Jahren kam ich in Afrika
in Gefangenschaft. Heute bin ich 64 Jahre alt, habe Familie
und ein Zweifamilienhaus.

Ich hoffe, Ihnen mit meinen kurzen Ausführungen geholfen
zu haben und verbleibe mit den besten Wünschen

Ihr Gustav Kölmel

Anlage
Bilder wie gewünscht



22 11/84

es Fräulein Clark
 re Post mit den g
 Weihnachtsfest
 wir erhalten. Beste
 mich, dass ich
 würde ich mit
 en, natürlich un
 ten. Wenn ja,
 ndlich n. würden
 üben, vielleicht es
 lichen beilegen. Es
 en. Mannheim ist
 dt n. Heidelberg
 hier. Ihnen n. Ihre
 te unsicher d, mit freundlichen
 Grüssen Ihre Fam. G. Köhne



Ein
 frohes
 Weihnachtsfest
 und ein
 gutes
 Neues Jahr



Die gute Karte

22-H1336

liebt Ihnen, Ihre Familie Gustav Köhnel!
Lieber Fräulein Clark!

Ihre Post mit den guten Wünschen für
Weihnachtsfest u. für's neue Jahr ha=
wir erhalten. Besten Dank dafür. Es
t' mich, dass ich Ihnen helfen konnte.
ne würde ich mit Ihnen in Kontakt
leben; natürlich nur, wenn Sie es auch
achten. Wenn ja, --- wären Sie so
freundlich u. würden etwas von Sich
schreiben, vielleicht auch ein kleines
Bildchen beilegen. Es würde mich sehr
freuen. Mannheim ist auch Universität=
stadt u. Heidelberg liegt nur 16 km
von hier. Ihnen u. Ihren Lieben alles
gute wünschend, mit freundlichen
Grüssen Ihre Fam. G. Köhnel

Mannheim 30. V. 85.

Liebes Fräulein Penny!

Vor mir liegt Ihr "grosser Brief" vom
 1ten Monat. Besten Dank dafür, ich habe
 mich sehr darüber gefreut. Ihrer schönen
 Schrift nach und Ihre Art, habe ich vermutet,
 dass Sie deutsch können! Leichter wäre das
 in unserem Schriftwechsel schon. Man wissen
 ja, wo Mannheim liegt. Wenn Sie mal
 mit einem Studenten-Austausch oder
 andern Reise nach Deutschland kommen
 können, so lade ich Sie schon jetzt recht
 herzlich zu uns ein.

Und nun zu Ihrer Skizze: Wir kamen
 vom Lager Concordia nach Fort Reley.
 Hier wurden wir in verschiedene Seitenlager
 aufgeteilt. Einige Kameraden und ich ka-
 men in das Seitenlager Eskridge, nicht all-
 zuweit von der Stadt Alma. Hier war ein
 grosser See. ob er allerdings Wabann-
 See hiess, weiss ich nicht? Da ich nicht mehr
 wusste wie der Name heisst, den Sie H. Grahl
 nannten, habe ich in Österreich einen Kamera-
 den angerufen. Er sagte mir es sei Feldw.
 Mayer unser Küchenchef. Leider weiss ich
 nur noch wenige Namen. Die ich kenne, kren-

Freizeit vom 2.7. - 16.7. zum Urlaub,
des Mädels.

Zu Ihrer Amerik. Geschichte ist mir
folgendes eingefallen: Als wir 1943
ersten Kontakt mit der amerikanischen
Völkerung hatten, liefen vor uns alle
oder weinend und schreiend davon.
Wir wussten nicht warum? Dann er-
fahren wir dass es in der amerikanischen
Propaganda hiess: wir Deutsche wären alle
Zwis und die hätten doppelte Gebisse,
die würden die Kinder beiessen.
Väter hatten uns die Kinder sehr gerne,
und nicht nur die Kinder!

In der Hoffnung Ihnen geholfen
zu haben verbleibe ich mit
den besten Grüssen

Ihr Gustav Köhnel

Unbekannter Weise Grüsse an
die Dame aus
Kaiserslautern.

G. K.

Sehr geehrter Herr Sincerely,
Penny Clark

Ich habe Ihren Brief kürzlich erhalten u.
möchte den auch gleich beantworten. Ja ich war
in dem Seitenlager - Wabauensee. Unter dem Lagerkom-
mandanten Maj. Mischko ein wunderbaren Offizier
es versteht die Deutschen PW so zuführen als hätte
er eine Kompanie US Soldaten. Ehrlich durch u.
durch Soldat korrekt was er versprochen gegen über uns
ist immer gehalten. Als wir in dem Lager ankamen
zum Apet antreten müßten sagte Ehrlich uns. Ihr
ist immer noch Deutsche - Soldaten u. Ich verlange
von Euch den gehorsam u. die Ordnung wie Ihr sie
in der Deutschen Armee habt so werden wir gut
miteinander auskommen. Das haben wir getan
wir haben in Ihm ein Vorbild. Ich denke heute noch oft
an den Bettenbau den wir in dem Zimmer hingeliegt
haben wahr markmarkt in meiner Kompanie in
Deutschland mich so gut als in Wabauensee. Der
Major hatte auch fast keine Schwierigkeiten mit den
Kommandos die Ihr zusammenstellte die auf Farmen
s. Seiten,

8031 Steinebach/Wörthsee

Am Steinberg 25

Telefon 0 81 53/78 27

Ich selbst hatte das große Glück zur Familie
Schwalm zugehört zu werden. Da ich mich ja auch
der Landwirtschaft auskennen konnte ist auch
eine große Hilfe für Herrn Schwalm u. Seine wunder-
volle Familie sein. Ich wurde in der Familie nie
als PW gesehen sondern immer als wäre ich
ein Mitglied in dieser großen Familie. Wenn mich
Herr Schwalm gegenüber anderen Leuten vorstellte
sagte er immer das ist mein Deutscher-Junge.
Ich selbst habe auch mein Bestes gegeben. Ich
immer mich noch an meinen 21. Geburtstag da das
am 6. 1. ist und immer ein katholischer Feiertag ist
sagte ich Herrn Schwalm an dem Tag arbeite ich
nicht ihr sagte mir aber Ernst ich brauch dich
so habe ich mich entschlossen zu arbeiten aber
wie steht zu arbeiten hatte mir die Familie
Schwalm einen Geburtstags Tisch gemacht u.
ich durfte meinen 21. Jährigen in mitten der Familie
sitzen mit Herrn Schwalm u. Seiner Frau. Dorisi - Falini -
die anderen Namen habe ich leider

Dear Mr. Sincerely
Penny Clark

Sie wollten wissen was mir nicht so gut
an Wahaunsee gefallen hat. Als der Krieg
ende war u. Deutschland den Krieg verloren
hatte gab man uns Salzheringe zum
Frühstück mit der aussrede ja wir müssen die
Lebensmittel nach Deutschland schicken. Darauf
sagte Herr Major Mischke sofort zu die Farmer
sollten sie sollten uns Essen geben aber
nach 4 oder 5 Tagen war das wieder vorbei.
Sie was Herr Schwaben getan hat er
gab mir die Schrotflinte mit auf die Weide
da wo du einen Grasbruch hast sowie ein eingang
der schiess du rein u. 1 Kartuchel fiel Tot heraus
ich hatte ich am dem Tag 10 Stk. die ich mit in
das Lager brachte für immer Lagerküche. Aber im
munde wahr alles sehr schön es wahr ein abschnitt
in meinen Leben. Ich mücht noch kurz erdenen
wahr als Deutscher Soldat im Afrika Kor unter
Feldmarschal Rommel u. Oberst Woltz.

mit besten Grüßen
Penny Clark

Sehr geehrte Frau Clark,

Über den Unfall zur Frage 1 weis ich persönlich nur, daß es bei einem Hochsilo passiert ist.

Ich wuste es war gefährlich aber ich und zwei andere Gefangene haben beim Herrn Schwalm auch das Hochsilo gebaut. Es war auch ein Spezialist von der Firma dabei die das Silo lieferten. Es war auch jedem freigestellt ob er in dieser Höhe arbeiten wollte, wenn man nicht schwindelfrei war brauchte man diese Arbeit nicht machen.

Zur Frage 2 Arbeit in Topeka

Ja es waren Arbeitskomandos in einer Autofabrik in Topeka. Die haben soviel ich erinnern kann Motoren zusammengebaut und verschiedene Arbeiten gemacht. Das waren immer die gleichen Männer.

Ich hoffe das ich Ihnen weiterhelfen kann

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Ernst Künzel

About the accident you inquired about -- I only know it happened on a silo. I know it was dangerous, but I a two other POWs had already built a silo for Mr. Schwalm. A specialist from the silo company had come out. It was our own free choice to do this work; anyone with fear of heights could decline to do it.

Your second question -- yes, there were work details in Topeka, in an auto factory. As I remember, they assembled automobile engines & similar work. The same men always went there.

I hope I may continue to be of help.

Dear penny

2.1.85

79

Thanks for your letter, I received mid-of December.
Christmas and New Year delayed the answer. Excuse me,
please.

I will give you a first collection of some different
stuff I could catch in a hurry.

Your questionnaire I will answer later. Is that ok?

Thanks for your understanding.

Klaus Mayo.

P.S. I need a new envelope.

Addresses of POW's interned at Lake Wabauusee, KS.

- | | 1. Name | 2. Name | |
|----|--------------|---------|---|
| 1) | Beushausen | Heinz | Bardowiker Wasserweg 70
D - 2120 Lüneburg |
| 2) | Greiner | Hans | Schillerstr. 8
D - 7441 Kohlberg |
| 3) | Gilg | Lothar | Kronprinzstr. 57
D. 7332 Eislingen |
| 4) | Stangelmaier | Georg | Badstr. 66
D 7 - 7320 Göppingen |

1) Nora Herrmann Lindensfr. 9a February 19, 1985
Platanenweg 47
D-7340 Geislingen/Steige A-7262 Althengstett
GERMANY

2) Wolgast, Hein Bahnhofstr. 420
D-3103 Bergen Kr. Celle

Dear Penny,

3) Schieder, Frau Staudlach 56
I am not very good at English, please understand me.

Enclosed you will find the address of my friend's brother. I made it right.
A-? Post Hartberg / Steiermark

~~A-?~~ Österreich (Austria)

As I know only a few POW from this area, he was held at Fort Riley. His name is Wilfried Wögele (on the telephone he is named Wogall, I guess). He was, as I know born in Pforzheim near Stuttgart. He died in a road accident between Alms and the camp. Two trucks collided. I believe one driver was Joe Biehl, living at Alms, Ka.

Ed Hood told you from our meetings. This is correct. What's the name and address of your friend's brother, so I can contact him, if we have another meeting.

So long

Maria

Klaus Majer
Platanenweg 47
D-7340 Geislingen/Steige
GERMANY

February 19, 1985

20. - B
Europa:

~~An 30. November 1945 wurde die Arbeit im Seitenlager
Wabaunsee eingestellt und nur Jäger aufgelöst. Das ist
auch eine Zeit, vor der ich sehr wenig berichten kann.
Am 01. Dezember 1945 fuhren wir mit einem Lastauto weg.
Ich kann nicht sagen wohin, in irgend ein Lager. Nur begann
noch einmal eine ruhige Phase in unserem Leben. Als wir
im Lager ankamen war ein Transparent über dem Eingang mit
der Aufschrift "Fürsicht ist die Mutter der Weisheit".~~

Dear Penny,
my English is not very good. Hope, You can understand me.

Enclosed you will find the filled out questionnaire. Hope, I made it right.

As I know only one POW from Lake Wabaunsee, is buried at Fort Riley. His name is Wilfried Vögele (on the tombstone he is named Voegali, I guess). He was, as I know born in Pforzheim near Stuttgart. He died in a road accident between Alma and the camp. Two trucks collided. I believe one driver was Joe Diehl, living at Alma, Ks.

Ed Hood told You from our meetings. This is correct. Whats the name and adress of Your friends brother, so I can contact him, if we have another meeting.

So long

Klaus

Edith Cill

[Faint handwritten notes and bleed-through from the reverse side of the page, including names like "Edith Cill" and "Klaus".]

20. Beschreibung Ihrer Freilassung und der Rücktransportierung nach Europa:

Am 30. November 1945 wurde die Arbeit im Seitenlager Wabaunsee eingestellt und das Lager aufgelöst. Das ist nun eine Zeit, von der ich sehr wenig berichten kann. Am 01. Dezember 1945 fuhren wir mit einem Lastauto weg, ich kann nicht sagen wohin, in irgend ein Lager. Nun begann noch einmal eine schlimme Phase in unserem Leben. Als wir im Lager ankamen war ein Transparent über dem Eingang mit der Aufschrift "Vorsicht ist die Mutter der Weisheit". Wir wurden alle nach dem ABC verteilt. Jeder war nun für sich alleine. Dann wurden wir sortiert! Jeder mußte auf die Schreibstube, hier wurde nach verschiedenen Regeln gearbeitet. Man sagte! "Spitze mir bitte meinen Stift" Ein Gefangener durfte nichts besitzen, wehe wenn einer sein Taschenmesser heraus nahm, um ~~xxxxxxx~~ den Stift zu spitzen. Dann wurden die Gefangenen entlassen. Immer gingen Transporte ab, aber ich war nicht dabei. Als das Lager ziemlich leer war, mußten wir einen Lehrgang zur Demokratie mitmachen. ~~XX~~ Später stellte sich heraus, daß diejenigen, die entlassen wurden, ihre Heimat gar nicht sahen, sie kamen nach England und Frankreich ins Kohlenbergwerk. Ich weiß von einem Kameraden, daß die ~~XX~~ Franzosen gräßlich waren. Wir kamen noch in zwei oder drei Lager, zuletzt in ein Lager in der Nähe von Dover. Dort sagte uns ein amerikanischer Offizier, daß wir die ersten sind, die heim kommen. Am 14. März 1946 sagte er in 4 Wochen seid ihr zu Hause. Am 14. April 1946 traf ich in meinem Heimatort ein, der Ort war zu 60% zerstört.

Handwritten note: ... nach 6 Wochen ... als frei

Handwritten letter:
 Lieber Jhr. Penny!
 Heute geht auch Ihr Wunsch, in Erfüllung. Sie werden Ihre Hoffnung schon aufgegeben haben. Es ist nicht so, ein kleiner ein Werkstoff einzigen hinterlassen ist es mir mir zu werden. Ich weiß nicht ob es so richtig ist. Sollten Sie noch einen Wunsch haben, Bitte schreiben Sie es mir. Ihre Aufmerksamkeit entgegen sehe mich als Ihr Fritz C. H. mit den besten Grüßen in Wünschen! Größten Familie Ringel!!

20. Beschreibung Ihrer Freilassung und der Rücktransportierung nach Europa:

Anfang 1946 Rücktransport von Fort-Riley nach Fort Eustis (Virginia). Dort ca 6 Wochen Schließung zur Heimkehr.

März 1946 Entlassungslager bei New York für ca 14 Tage.

Eingeschifft vom Hafen New York mit großem Truppentransporter nach Le Havre - Frankreich, (ca. 11 Tage Dauer der Schiffsreise) ins nahegelegene und berückelte Lager Belfec mit französischer Bewachung. (Keine ärztliche Behandlung und Erinnerung von dort.) April - Mai 1946

GI'S beförderten uns in Viehwagen und fuhren mit der Eisenbahn von Le Havre nach Bad Aibling (Bavaria)

Bei München ins amerikanische Entlassungslager dort ca. 6 Wochen. Dann per Eisenbahn nach Münster

(Norddeutschland) zur Übernahme durch britisches Militär. Im Juli 1946. Nach 6 Wochen im dortigen Lager endgültige Entlassung im Sept. 1946 als freier Mensch.

Persönlich! Meine liebe Peung! (So darf ich wohl sagen?)

Diesen Fragebogen schrieb meine Tochter nach meinem Diktat und ich hoffe, Du kannst es gut lesen. Solltest Du noch irgend Fragen haben, oder Du hast irgend etwas nicht verstanden, dann halte bei mir Rückfrage. Ich bin jeder Zeit bereit Frischbrot zu geben. Mein Freund und alter Kamerad Klaus Majer war im letzten Jahr dort in Kansas, konnten aber über die Reise nach Kansas

Wohne. Ja, liebe Penny, der Kriegsgefangene von Wabamsee,
 der bin ich und ich denke oft und sehr gerne an Pasico, Ilma
 und Belone. An die netten Leute, die gute Behandlung der
 Farmer mir gegenüber. Einige Namen sind mir leider entfallen,
 bei denen ich gearbeitet habe, aber in guter Erinnerung habe ich
 sie noch. Es sind ja auch schon 40 Jahre her.

Am Kansas-River unter Leitung eines Ingenieur habe ich
 bei Uferbefestigungen gearbeitet, dieser nette Herr brachte mich
 nach William Wolgast in Ilma und so konnte ich bei
 diesem Gespräch herausfinden, daß wir mit den Großeltern
 aus einem Ort - Templin stammen. Dieser Ort liegt in Ost-
 deutschland unter russischer Besetzung und wir können leider dort
 nicht hin. Die Familien Wolgast - George und Selma Krefke, Louis
 Arthur Wolgast - Walter Wolgast, Paul Zekker sowie auch die
 Familien Paul Silwanke - Victor + Mildred Silwanke mit den
 Kindern Mary Ann und Shirley. John Reimers - Minn - Trudy -
 Henry Waldmann - Bill - Bregmeyer - Ernest Geisler - Paul + Mabel Fowler
 Mrs. Jacob Hall - Ray Pitney u. s. w. Alles liebe Menschen, die uns hier
 in der schlechten Zeit bei großer Not nach dem Kriege mit vielen
 Paketen mit Lebensmitteln und Bekleidung sehr geholfen haben
 wir sind heute noch allen dankbar vom ganzen Herzen!
 Haben einige Fotos von dort, schicke sie mir bitte wieder zurück.

Nun, meine liebe Penny, für heute alles und ich hoffe, du kommst
 mit diesen Zeilen etwas aufzuheben. Sei von mir und meiner Familie
 recht herzlich gegrüßt und auch an Kansas herzliche Grüße
 von Mein Großvater.

Alles Liebe!
 Albin Ojima!

UNION GENERALE
108 Copernic
PARIS CEDEX 14
(01-21) 553 48 92

PARIS, Le 11 Décembre 1984

EVIDENCE
Union de Stalingrad
D. S. E. L. E. F. S.
(01-32-2) 511.38.90
(01-32-84) 45.54.44 et 47

Miss Penny CLARK
Emporia State University
1700 COMMERCIAL
EMPORIA, KANSAS 66801

UNION GENERALE
C.B. n° 2742

Madame

Voire lettre du 15 Novembre adressée à M. Louis
BLANDIN, aujourdhui décédé, vient de me parvenir.

APPENDIX B:

LETTERS CONCERNING POWS

Pour vous aider dans vos recherches sur les
prisonniers de guerre allemands qui étaient détenus dans des
camps de guerre de l'Etat de Kansas au cours de la deuxième
guerre mondiale, je vous conseille de vous adresser au Président
de notre Fédération Allemande dont vous trouverez l'adresse ci
dessous :

M. Werner KJESLING
Verband der Heimkehrer
53 BONN BAD GODESBERG
KONSTANTINE STRASSE 17
R.F.A.

En souhaitant un résultat favorable à votre
démarche, et une grande réussite pour l'achèvement de vos travaux.

Je vous prie de croire, Madame, à l'expression de
mes salutations les meilleures.



Jacques GOUJAT
Secrétaire Général

FÉDÉRATION INTERNATIONALE DES ANCIENS PRISONNIERS DE GUERRE

REGISTRATION GÉNÉRALE
 rue Copernic
 2 PARIS CEDEX 16
 (16-1) 553.48.92

PARIS, le 11 Décembre 1984

RÉSIDENCE :
 avenue de Stalingrad
 U X E L L E S
 (19-32-2) 511.38.80
 (19-32-84) 45.54.44 et 45

Miss Penny CLARK
 Emporia State University
 1200 COMMERCIAL
 EMPORIA, KANSAS 66801

REGISTRATION GÉNÉRALE
 C.G. n° 2742

Ref. III Kgf.D 360	153 27.2.1985	27.2.1985	14.3.1985
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Madame,

Votre lettre du 15 Novembre adressée à M. Louis
 BEAUDOIN, aujourd'hui décédé, vient de me parvenir.

Je vous recommande de quatre allemands qui étaient détenus dans des
 camps de guerre de l'Etat de l'Allemagne pendant la
 guerre mondiale, je vous conseille de vous adresser au président
 de notre Fédération Allemande dont vous trouverez l'adresse ci
 dessous :

M. Werner KIESSLING
 Verband der Heimkehrer
 53 BONN BAD GODESBERG
 KONSTANTINE STRASSE 17
 R.F.A.

En souhaitant un résultat favorable à votre
 démarche, et une grande réussite pour l'achèvement de vos travaux,

Je vous prie de croire, Madame, à l'expression de
 mes salutations les meilleures.



Jacques GOUJAT
 Secrétaire Général

Deutsche Dienststelle

für die Benachrichtigung der nächsten Angehörigen
von Gefallenen der ehemaligen deutschen Wehrmacht

Deutsche Dienststelle (WAST), Eichborndamm 187, D-1000 Berlin 51

Frau
Penny Clark
c/o Social Science Office
Emporia State University
Emporia, KS 66801
USA

Geschäftszeichen: Ref. III RL/Kgf.D 360	Fernruf: (030) 4 19 04 ... Intern: 9859 ... Telex: 183 798 Sen d	153	Ihr Schreiben vom / Aktenzeichen: 27.2.1985	Datum 14.3.1985
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Sehr geehrte Frau Clark!


Auf Ihre Anfrage vom 27.2.1985 müssen wir Ihnen leider mitteilen, daß hier keine Unterlagen über das Kriegsgefangenen-Lager Lake Wabaunsee, Kansas, ermittelt werden konnten.

Auch in den uns von den amerikanischen Behörden übergebenen Lagerverzeichnissen ist dieses Lager nicht aufgeführt. Wir bedauern, Ihnen daher die gewünschte Auskunft nicht geben zu können.

Zu Ihrer Information bemerken wir noch, daß die hier vorhandenen Kriegsgefangenenunterlagen nach Namen alphabetisch geordnet sind. Sollten Ihnen die Personalien (Vor- und Zunamen, Geburtsdatum- und ort) oder die Gefangenenummer von ehemaligen Kriegsgefangenen aus dem Lager Lake Wabaunsee bekannt sein, wären weitere Nachforschungen von uns möglich.

Mit freundlichem Gruß

Im Auftrag



Thews



DEUTSCHES ROTES KREUZ

GENERALSEKRETARIAT

SUCHDIENST MÜNCHEN

ZENTRALE AUSKUNFTS- UND DOKUMENTATIONSSTELLE

DK-SUCHDIENST INFANTERIESTRASSE 7A 8000 MÜNCHEN 40

DIREKTION

Emporia State University
Mrs. Penny Clark
1200 Commercial

Emporia, Kansas 66801
USA

UNSER ZEICHEN:

TAG:

dir-II-scha-dok

2.4.1985

Betr.: Kriegsgefangenenlager in Kansas

Sehr geehrte Frau Clark,

ich bestätige den Eingang Ihres Schreibens vom 27. 2. 1985 und sende Ihnen beiliegend die in unserem Archiv vorliegenden Berichte über das Lager Eskridge sowie das Camp Riley.

Hinweisen möchte ich Sie auch auf das 22-bändige Werk "Zur Geschichte der deutschen Kriegsgefangenen", herausgegeben von E. Maschke, das Ihnen aber sicherlich bekannt sein dürfte; hier finden Sie weitere Informationen, so z. B. Standortverzeichnisse.

Für Rückfragen gerne zur Verfügung stehend, verbleibe ich

mit freundlichen Grüßen,

Emanuel Wittek
Direktor

Anlagen

Redaktion
- Chefredakteur -

Mrs.
Penny Clark
Division of Social Science
Emporia State University
Emporia, Kansas 66801 USA

Bad Godesberg

Sehr geehrte Frau Clark,

Telefon 02 28 / 36 40 87

Konstantinstr. 17, 5300 Bonn 2

Ihr Schreiben vom 3. Dezember 1984 an den Präsidenten des Verbandes der Heimkehrer, Kriegsgefangenen und Ver- mißtenangehörigen Deutschlands, Herrn Dr. Wolfgang Imle, ist uns von ihm mit der Bitte übergeben worden, Ihnen weiterzuhelfen. Ihre Suche nach ehemaligen deutschen Kriegsgefangenen, die in Kansas - insbesondere aber in dem Kriegsgefangenenlager "Lake Wabaunsee" - interniert waren, kann von hieraus nur über eine Anzeige in unserer Verbandszeitung "Der Heimkehrer" Erfolg haben. Leider existiert keine Liste der in den USA oder in anderen Ländern internierten Kriegsgefangenen, so daß wir nur auf diesem Wege zu solchen Anschriften gelangen könnten.

Falls Sie sich also, sehr geehrte Frau Clark, noch etwas gedulden können, werden wir in der Januar-Ausgabe unserer Zeitung - die am 15. Januar erscheint - eine Anzeige nach den von Ihnen gesuchten ehemaligen Kriegsgefangenen einsetzen und sind sicher, daß sich daraufhin dieser gefragte Personenkreis bei Ihnen direkt melden wird.

Im übrigen dürfen wir Ihnen mitteilen, daß diese Anzeige mit keinerlei Kosten für Sie verbunden ist, wir Ihnen vielmehr gerne bei Ihrer wissenschaftlichen Untersuchung helfen wollen.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Wolfgang Imle
Schauen



Verband der Heimkehrer, Kriegsgefangenen und Vermißtenangehörigen Deutschlands e.V.

Bad Godesberg

Social Science Office
Emporia State University
z.Hd. Herrn Clark
1200 Commercial
Emporia Kansas 66801
U.S.A.

Hauptgeschäftsstelle
Rechtsabteilung

Telefon 02 28 / 36 40 97

Konstantinstr. 17, 5300 Bonn 2

Ziichen: Sta/La - I - R -

Betr.: Ihr Schreiben vom 24.1.1985

Bezug:

den 22.3.1985

Sehr geehrter Herr Clark,

Herr Kießling bedankt sich für Ihr Schreiben und hat mich gebeten, Ihnen zu antworten.

Der Verband der Heimkehrer besitzt leider kein Material über die deutschen Kriegsgefangenenlager in den U.S.A.

Ich kann Ihnen nur einige Hinweise geben, die Ihnen eventuell weiter helfen.

Es existiert eine Bandreihe zur Geschichte der Deutschen Kriegsgefangenen des Zweiten Weltkrieges. Im Band X/1 werden die Kriegsgefangenenlager in den USA behandelt. Der Name Eskridge wird auch dabei erwähnt. Dieses Buch läßt sich eventuell auch in amerikanischen Bibliotheken finden. Institutionen, die sich mit deutschen Kriegsgefangenenlagern in den U.S. A. beschäftigt haben und Ihnen möglicherweise auch Material zusenden können, sind das Deutsche Rote Kreuz, Infanteriestr. 73, 8000 München 13.

Ich sende eine Fotokopie Ihres Schreibens dorthin mit der Bitte, sich mit Ihnen in Verbindung zu setzen.

Eine andere Institution ist die Young Men's Christian Association. Ich hoffe, Ihnen damit etwas geholfen zu haben.

Mit freundlichen Grüßen

Katharina Staats
Katharina Staats



AN BORD DER FREDERICK

Erste freie, legale, demokratische, deutsche PW-Berichterstattung
edited and produced by returning prisoners of war for prisoners of war

Nummer, vom 31.3.46

Die Nachrichten der 63 FREDERICK meldete MAREKOWSKA: In der
 letzten und einzigen Zone Deutschlands und Österreichs werden immer noch
 immer eine gut organisierte Bewegung zur Wiederherstellung
 nicht existenz verhaftet. Sie soll bereits vor Mai 1945, vorbereitet
 sein, um die britische, die in der Vorbereitung ihrer Arbeit unterbrochen ist.
 Die britische Truppe ist zu dem Zweck der Kontrolle von Darwin, östlich
 der Gebirgsregion, welche die Briten im Jahre 1945 an der Küste, zum
 Beispiel die Besatzung der Inseln Arden, scheint fast gänzlich verloren
 zu sein. Die britische offizielle Presse wird berichten, dass Amerika und
 seine Prinzipien der Gleichberechtigung unter den Nationen und dem Geist der
 Union des Londoner Rates verstoßen. Indem sie die Behandlung der russischen
 Frage zu einer Zeit verfolgen, wo britische Truppen in Griechenland,
 in Indonesien, der Levante, auf dem Mittel und Palästina stehen und Amerika
 in China, Japan und anderen stationiert hat.

DIE KUPFER STURBEI

... Ich habe, wie ich schon sagte, und das neben dem Tisch,
 ein schweißes Kissen, das Klavier Stühle, die Tische stückchen, und
 einen Koffer, es kleine, einfache Sprache, wie es bei solchen
 kleinen Kunstwerken der Fall zu sein pflegt. Als ich noch drei
 ein paar Beschäftigten empfing, versuchte, ob nicht vielleicht ein
 die Kunst spricht auf, fragte sie unruhig sprach: "Warum?"
 Ich bin die Kunst, die nicht sprach haben". "Gibst" gleichzeitig,
 und ich habe die Kunst, die nicht sprach haben". "Gibst" gleichzeitig,
 und ich habe die Kunst, die nicht sprach haben". "Gibst" gleichzeitig,

APPENDIX C:

NEWSPAPER OF RETURNING POWS ON THE USS FREDERICK



... Ich habe, wie ich schon sagte, und das neben dem Tisch,
 ein schweißes Kissen, das Klavier Stühle, die Tische stückchen, und
 einen Koffer, es kleine, einfache Sprache, wie es bei solchen
 kleinen Kunstwerken der Fall zu sein pflegt. Als ich noch drei
 ein paar Beschäftigten empfing, versuchte, ob nicht vielleicht ein
 die Kunst spricht auf, fragte sie unruhig sprach: "Warum?"
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 und ich habe die Kunst, die nicht sprach haben". "Gibst" gleichzeitig,
 und ich habe die Kunst, die nicht sprach haben". "Gibst" gleichzeitig,

DIE KUPFER STURBEI

... Ich habe, wie ich schon sagte, und das neben dem Tisch,
 ein schweißes Kissen, das Klavier Stühle, die Tische stückchen, und
 einen Koffer, es kleine, einfache Sprache, wie es bei solchen
 kleinen Kunstwerken der Fall zu sein pflegt. Als ich noch drei
 ein paar Beschäftigten empfing, versuchte, ob nicht vielleicht ein
 die Kunst spricht auf, fragte sie unruhig sprach: "Warum?"
 Ich bin die Kunst, die nicht sprach haben". "Gibst" gleichzeitig,
 und ich habe die Kunst, die nicht sprach haben". "Gibst" gleichzeitig,
 und ich habe die Kunst, die nicht sprach haben". "Gibst" gleichzeitig,



FREDERICK

Erste freie, legale, demokratische, deutsche PW-Bordzeitung
Originally edited and produced by returning Prisoners of War for Prisoners of War

Sonntag, den 31.3.46

BERICHTEN: Die Funkstelle der SS FREDERICK meldet: FRANKFURT a.M.: In der westlichen und östlichen Zone Deutschlands und Österreichs wurden 1000 Häftlinge einer gut organisierten Untergrundbewegung zur Wiederaufrichtung des Nationalsozialismus verhaftet. Sie soll bereits vor Mai 1945 gearbeitet haben und zu viele Angehörige, dass mit dieser Verhaftung ihre Arbeit unterbrochen ist.

RUSSLAND: Schwedische Truppen sollen am Sonntagabend von Kuzvin östlich über die Gebirgspässe, welche nach dem Hafen Pablowi am Kasp. Meer führen. Kuzvin, das ehemalige Hauptquartier der Roten Armee, scheint fast gänzlich geräumt zu sein. MOSKAU: Russische offizielle Kreise sind der Ansicht, dass Amerika und England das Prinzip der Gleichberechtigung unter den Nationen und den Geist der Charta von Londoner Rates verlor, indem sie die Behandlung der russischen Frage zu einer Zeit forcierten, wo britische Truppen in Griechenland, Ägypten, Indonesien, der Levante, der Irak und Palästina stehen und Amerika Truppen in China, Island und anderswo stationiert hat.

DIE DUNTE STUNDE!

Das begann so. Sie uobten, uobten ununterbrochen, und das neben dem Tisch, auf dem ich schreiben sollte. Das Klavier drohte, die Töne stechnten, und meine Nerven machten so kleine, reizende Sprünge, wie es bei solchen Stundenlangen Kunstgenossen der Fall zu sein pflegt. Als ich nach dreißig Minuten einmal bescheiden anzufragen versuchte, ob nicht vielleicht eine kleine Pause angebracht sei, fragten sie erstaunt zurück: "Warum?"

"Ich sagte ich ~~ihm~~ ~~konnte~~ ~~nicht~~ ~~abwarten~~ ~~uoben~~". "Uoben" antworteten sie, "wir haben doch gerade erst angefangen". Da gab ich es auf. Das war das Vorspiel. Von diesem Spiel ist nicht mehr viel zu sagen. Ein Amerikaner soll anschließend Kunstschwerhörig genussert haben, in Wettkampf zwischen Klavier und Akkordion hatte der Klavierspieler mit 752 Anschlägen in der Minute gegenüber dem Akkordionspieler mit 556 Anschlägen einwandfrei vorn gelegen. Doch in Zenith, der Heimatstadt des amerikanischen Urbürgers Dabitt, soll es eine Stonotypistin geben, die es noch schneller kann. Trotzdem - der Veas und der Spatscheck - es ist schon was dran. Und dann die Töne der Preisträger. Wie die das hohe herausbrachten. Ich glaube, es waren Doyere, Gruenfeld und Kern. Obwohl der kleine Ansager Schroeder meinte, in Deutschland seien alle Linden bis "Unter den Linden" zum Teufel gegangen, stand ich mit Holzpfel's weicher Stimme geradezu unter einer Linden-Fatanorgana. Und dann Konstantinow von der Berliner Staatsoper, der die Leitung des Abends hatte. Nur, was kann aus Berlin Schlechtes kommen. Bei dem Handwerk. Aber ich will aufhören. Sonst fange ich an zu loben. Und dann wird es ernst. Und Ernst ist köstlich. Und köstlich war der unvermeidliche Lulu (Lehwaser), der Hans Meier aus der Taufe hob, und viel herumsoarte. Und das wollen wir doch nicht. Oder haben wir das hier in Tintenfisch schon zu viel getan? Ich glaube, ja!

DER HUMMER.

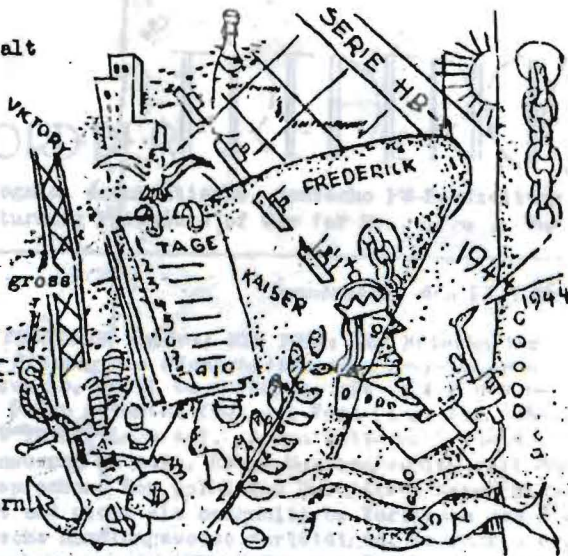


Knopt'n Puvogel, recht mit dem Schiffshund, einen kleinen weißen Spitz, ueber den Hamburger Fischmarkt. Während er sich unterhält, steuert der Hund in den Fischkörben. Ploetzlich jault der Kooter auf. Ein riesiger Hummer, mindestens 8 Kilo schwer, hat seine Scheren in das Hinterteil des Hundes geschlagen. Die verpeinigte Kreatur fluechtet spornstreichs in Richtung Schiff. Aengstlich ruft die Fischfrau, die ihren Harner entschwinden sieht: "Mau to, Knopt'n, flouten Se doch oben Kooter troech!" Und vorgewort grinet Puvogel: "Ick schiet Di wat. Flout Du doch Zion Hummer!"

REDAKTIONELLE NOTIZ: Um der steigenden Nachfrage, die trotz sogenannter und leider bekannt gewordener "Abrechnungsbesprache" standig waechst, zu begegnen, ist die Auflage des "Stankfisches" auf 1000 Exemplare erhoeht worden. Wer trotzdem immer noch dieses Flaettchen ernst nimmt, kann nicht erwarten, von uns ernst genommen zu werden.

FREDERICK

ist nicht jung, sie ist nicht alt
 ist bei Gott nicht kaiserlich
 hat die uebliche Gestalt
 auch das Victory-Gesicht
 ist nur ein Zehn-Tage-Kind
 in einem Dollarbett
 wie die Sorienkinder sind
 sie auch so ganz nett
 Kaiser, der ihr Vater war
 ist in Schweiß und Schweiß gross
 selbst traagt Glatzton ohne Haar
 war der Schiffe Los
 Frederick heisst Friederich
 das ist wie Johann
 gehen niemals auf den Strich
 kommen gut voran
 dicorn hinten, dicorn vorn
 haben ihren Ursch
 manchmal bricht der Gootter Zorn
 einfach mitten durch.



BORDEREIGNISSE.

VORDERMANN: Beim Fruehstueck stand er vor mir. Ungeduldig trat er von einem Bein auf das andere. Er erwartete etwas. Vielleicht weil Sonntag war? - Er ist ein Fleischausgeber. Kurze Kniobouge, rascher Blick nach oben, enttauschtes Gesicht. Aha, den kennt er nicht. Dann die Milchsuppe. Kurze Kniobouge, rascher Blick nach oben, enttauschtes Gesicht! Wieder Fohlanzoige. Nur Normalschlag. - Fleischausgabe, letzte Hoffnung. Kniobouge, rascher Blick, und.... sonniges Laecheln. - Schwängliche Freude (etwa Muttis Laecheln, wenn sie ihn zum ersten Mal wieder sieht). "Arthur" ruft er, "altes Haus, einen wunderschönen Guten Morgen!" Arthur nickt bloss. Drei Scheiben normal. Bestürzung, gradezu Erschütterung, Scherlaufft die Zunge. Die Sonne geht unter. Und im Tone tiefster Verachtung verurteilt er: "Der Arthur ist auch kein Kamerad mehr!"

BORGESPRAECHE

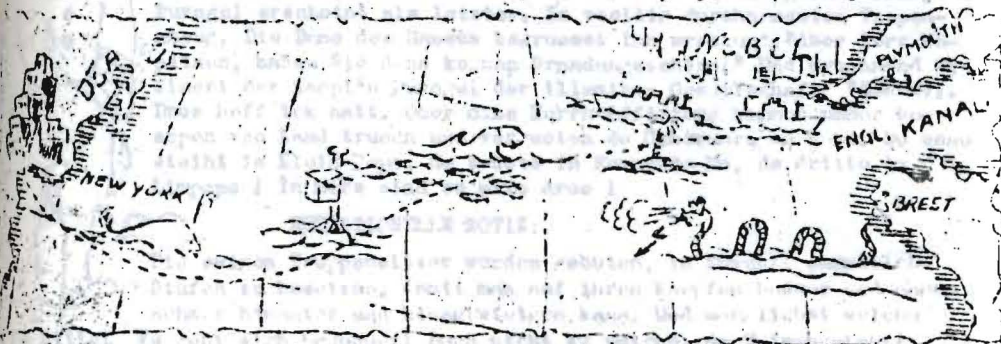
ROEGER: Vor der Karte in Speisesaal rechts zwei am Schiffskurs herum. "Wir haben also zuerst nordlichen Kurs genommen, verstehst Du? An der Neu-England-Küste hoch, unter Groenland vorbei, und dann in Bogen auf Irland zu." "Ach so, auf Irland zu, aber warum eigentlich der Bogen?" "Na, Mensch, denk' doch mal nach, die Erde ist doch 'ne Kugel. Auf 'ner Kugel ist doch 'n Bogen die kuerzeste Strecke." "So, meinst Du? Aber, wenn wir auf Irland losfahren, das kann doch nicht die kuerzeste Weg nach Frankreich sein." "Das ist doch bloss der Kurs, Du Dussel. Zwischen Irland und England kann man ja durchfahren, da ist doch Wasser. Und dann kommen wir unten wieder raus, und da gleich links ist doch Frankreich."

TIEFENFISCHE MELDIET: Ueber das Meeresleuchten bestehen verschiedene Theorien. In wissenschaftlichen Kreisen neigt man neuerdings zu der Ansicht Prof. Dr. Dr. Maximilian Grundliche. Nach dieser handelt es sich um phosphoreszierende und fluoreszierende Schuppen, welche die Laternenfische aus der Familie der Zitterrochen in Kampf mit Saugfischen verlieren. Geraten diese Wassergluhwaermchen dann durch Bug- oder Schraubwasser in Bewegung, leuchten sie im Mond- oder Sternlicht hell auf.

Der Dreischornsteindampfer, der uns heute frueh in 5 am Backbord passierte, war die "Queen Mary".

FILMVORFUEHRUNGEN: 31.3.46. "MAISIE GOES TO RENO", 1.4.46. "G.I. MOVIE"

Standort der SS FREDERICK VICTORY heute 1200 Uhr 49° 30' N / 11° 50' W



Zurueckgelegt am 3003, noch zu fahrende am 500, Windstaerke 2-3, mittlgeschw. 15.



AN BORD DER FREDERICK

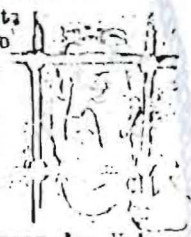
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daily edited and produced by returning Prisoners of War for Prisoners of War

Donnerstag, den 23. 3. 46

WICHTIGES: Die Funkstelle der SS FREDERICK meldet: NEW YORK: Der Betrachter verfolgt Union verliess heute die Sitzung des Sicherheitsrates, nachdem man beschied, die iranische Frage bis zum 10. April zu vertagen, mit 9 Stimmen einstimmig worden war; Nur Russland und Polen stimmten fuer den Vorschlag, den Betrachter kündigt an, dass er nicht in der Lage sei, an den weiteren Verhandlungen teilzunehmen oder auch nur anwesend zu sein. Seine Handlungsweise soll den Briten Anweisungen aus Moskau entsprechen; Der polnische Delegierte bezeichnet diese Massnahme als eine Abwesenheit und nicht als andmuetiges Verlassen des Sicherheitsrates. Waehrend er die russische Handlungsweise verteidigte, erklärte er, dass Polen den Sitzungen weiter beiwohnen wuerde. NEW YORK: Der Staatssekretar sagte heute, dass die UNO in den Kinderschuhen als Opfer ihrer Unfaehigkeit zerbrueche, wenn sie sich weigerte, die Klagen der kleinen Nationen anzuhoe-
MURKBERG: Ein Beamter des fruheren Auswaertigen Amtes erklarte heute die Kriege fuer Ribbentrop, der fruherer Ausserminister sei durch den Fuehrer benutzt und dadurch zu seinem willeiplosen Werkzeug gemacht worden. WASHINGTON: Ein Millersport sagte, die Knappheit an Bekleidungsstuecken wuerde erst in 9 Monaten behoben sein. Daraufhin erklarte ein Senator protestierend, dass das amerikanische Volk nicht noch so lange nackend herumlaufen koenne.

GARDINENPREDIGT.

Am Abend wurde bekanntgegeben, dass die Nachzügler nichts mehr zu sagen haben. In einer Ecke erhob sich daraufhin eine Debatte, warum denn die "Früh-
 linge" kein Essen mehr bekommen sollten. Das Geschichtchen ziert zweierlei: 30
 und Futterangebot, beides ist betrefflich, aber nicht berechtigt.
 gut fuer fünf Jahren Krieg und Gefangenenschaft sind wir sicher alle
 wurde geworden. Viele kleine, auessere Empfindsamkeiten muss-
 gegeben werden, nur eine grosse Empfindlichkeit nicht; die
 angenekraft des Herzens und der Sinne. Traegheit des Herzens ist
 diese Unempfindlichkeit, die sichtbar alles leicht macht. Uns
 aber macht sie unbrauchbar wie einen blinden Spiegel. Und
 der Futterwert ist es ebenso. Ein Dichter der Zeit nach 1918
 "erst kommt das Fressen, dann kommt die Moral!" Trotzdem,
 nicht mit Anstand hungern kann, wird in der seit einem Jahr hungernden Hei-
 nicht nur eine traurige Figur machen, sondern entweder zum Wegelagerer wer-
 oder verkennen. Schieber und Erfolgsjaeger gibt es immer in Notzeiten, sie
 "auf Draht" und werden immer satt, nur sobald die Verhaeltnisse sich bessern,
 schluchtern sich ihre Chancen. Man sah sie in solchen Zeiten gelegentlich
 der Schwedischen Gardinen verschwinden.



DIE INSEL KLEIN-POPO.

In Afrika gibt es wenig Haefen. Die Schiffe laden und loeschen
 auf Roodo mit Brandungsbooten. In Brandungsboot wird man nass.
 Dagegen helfen grosse Brandungsschirme - Kapt'n Puvogel liegt
 mit seinem Schiff an der Goldkueste auf Roodo. Konsul Rickmers
 sendet eine Einladung zur Soiree. Das diplomatische Korps, die
 Grosskaufleute, die einflussreichen Pflanzler sind geladen. Kapt'n
 Puvogel erscheint als letzter. In voellig durchnassen Tropen-
 anzug. Die Dame des Hauses begruesst ihn erstaunt: "Aber Herr Ka-
 pitaen, haben Sie denn keinen Brandungsschirm?" Und drohend er-
 klaert der Kapt'n Puvogel der illustren Gesellschaft: "Ehne!!
 Dree heff dick hatt. Ober mine Herrn Offiziere kolmen ummer be-
 sopen von Land trauch und ver,seeten de Schirmers an Land. De oone
 steiht in Klein-Popo, de tweete in Fernando-Po, de dritto in
 Limpopo! In Mers sind so alle dree!"

IKONTAKTIONELLE NOTIZ:

Die ewigen Treppensitzer werden gebeten, in Zukunft oeaentliche
 Stufen zu besetzen, damit man auf ihren Koeppen besser und unge-
 nehmer hinunter- und hinaufsteigen kann. Und moeglichst welche
 fa mittel. Es geht sich bequemer! Rech nicht zu welche, da Rutschgefahr!

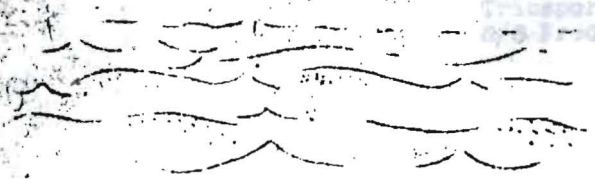


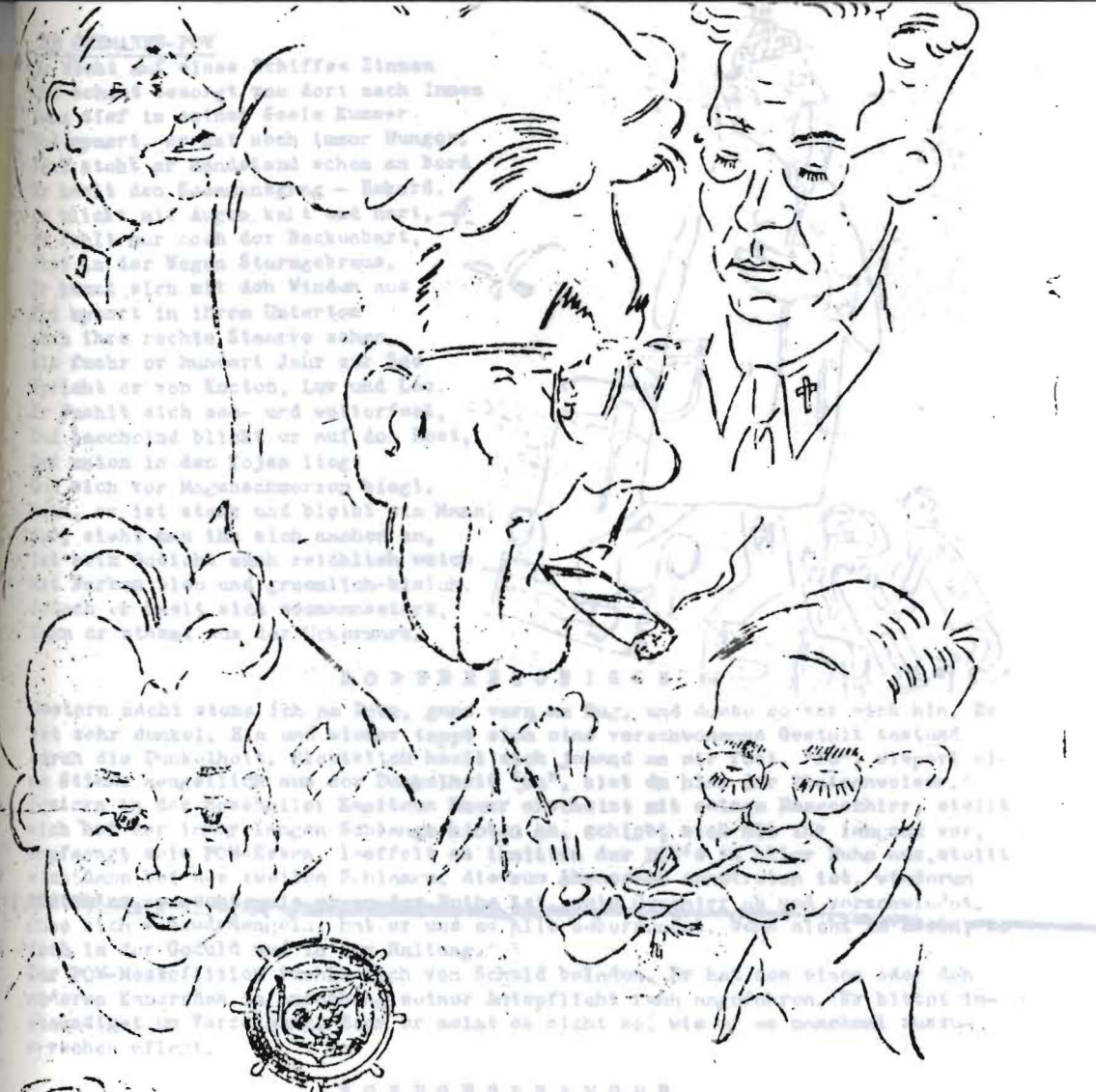


Captain Everett Newcomb
Master S/S Frederick Victory

All ship Officers appreciate the good behavior of the Prisoners of War and feel that you have conducted yourselves in a proper manner and wish you all good fortune.

If a man can write a better story, preach a better sermon or build a better mousetrap than his neighbor, even though he builds his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten path to his door.





FROM: Transport Commander

TO : All POW's

You now are nearing the end of your sea voyage and will soon enter on the last lap of your journey overland to your homes. To you I say in all sincerity that I am happy to have been your Commanding Officer on this voyage. Your conduct has been excellent. Your cooperation has been splendid, and for this I am truly grateful. For the future I wish all of you success in your efforts and the best of luck. Auf Wiedersehen und Gott segne Sie.

WILLIAM H. BAUER
 Captain T.C.
 Transport Commander
 S/S Frederick Victory

Er steht auf eines Schiffes Zinnen
 Und schaut besorgt von dort nach Innen
 Ganz tief in seiner Seele Kummer
 Und spürt, er hat noch immer Hunger.
 Fast steht er Handstand schon an Bord
 Er haelt den Seemannsgang - Rekord.
 Er blickt mit Augen kalt und hart,
 Es fehlt nur noch der Backenbart,
 Fest in der Wagon Sturmgobras.
 Er kennt sich mit den Winden aus
 Und spürt in ihrem Unterton
 Auch ihre rechte Staerke schon.
 Als fuehr er hundert Jahr zur See
 Spricht er von Knoten, Luv und Lee.
 Er fuhlt sich soo- und wetterfest,
 Und lauehelnd blickt er auf den Rost,
 Der unten in den Kojen liegt
 Und sich vor Magenschmerzen biegt.
 Nein, er ist stark und bleibt ein Mann.
 Nur, sieht man ihn sich naeher an,
 Ist sein Gesicht auch reichlich weich
 Mit Farben blau und gruendlich-bleich.
 Jedoch er haelt sich seemannsstark,
 Denn er stammt aus der Uckermark.



BORDEREIGNISSE

Gestern nacht stehe ich an Deck, ganz vorn am Bug, und doese so vor mich hin. Es ist sehr dunkel. Hin und wieder tappt sich eine verschwommene Gestalt tastend durch die Dunkelheit. Plotzlich haelt sich jemand an mir fest. "Du", wispert eine Stimme aengstlich aus der Dunkelheit "Du", bist du hier der Platzanweiser." Gestern in der Messhalle: Kapitaa Bauer erscheint mit seinem Essegeschirr, stellt sich bei der inneren Lengen Schlaenge hinten an, schiibt sich mit ihr langsam vor, empfaengt sein POW-Essen, laeffelt es limiten der POW's in aller Ruhe aus, stellt sich dann bei der zweiten Schlaenge, die zum Abwaschen angetreten ist, wiederum hinten an, ~~synschtrunke, eren der Reihe ist, sein Geschirr ab und verschwindet.~~ Ohne sich vorzudruecken, hat er uns so alle ueberrundet. Wenn nicht im Beson,
 doch in der Geduld und in der Haltung.

Der POW-Messeffizier fuehlt sich von Schuld beladen. Er hat den einen oder den anderen Kameradan in Ausuebung seiner Antspflicht rauh angefahren. Er bittet instaeandigt um Verzeihung, dann er meint es nicht so, wie er es manchmal auszurechnen pflegt.

BORDGESPRACHE

In der Messhall stehen zwei Mann vor der Karte und besprechen den Kurs des Schiffes. "Haett ich nie gedacht, son gresenen Bogen bloss wegen der Heringeschwaerme. Die muss man doch vernichten koennen?". Meint der andere: Ja, weist du, gehen taet das sehen, aber die Schiffgeschuetze sind ja abmontiert."

DER TINTENFISCH MELDET:

Zur Bereicherung der Kost sollen einige Tons Heringe an Bord genommen werden. Dazu werden etwa funfzig geschickte Leute gebraucht. Oelzeug, Seestiefel, Saedwesten und Schaufeln werden von der Schiffaleitung gestellt. Auch Nichtschwimmer koennen sich melden, da man beim Einschaufeln bequem auf den Heringeschwaermon stehen kann. Meldung bis Freitag 12'00 Uhr beim Spokosman.

Filmvorfuhrungen: 28.3.46. "FALLEN ANGEL", 29.3.46. "SHE WENT TO THE RACES"

Standort der SS FREDERICK VICTORY heute 1200 Uhr 450 33' N/390 17' W



Zurueckgelegt am 1843, noch zu fahrende am 1682, Windstaerke 5-6, mtlggeschw. 17,58

INDIVIDUAL CLOTHING AND EQUIPMENT RECORD	DATE	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q5	Q6	Q7	Q8	Q9	Q10
	E.N.										
	O.										
	SIZE	ISSUED					TURNED IN				
Waist Web	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Wool Knit	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
or Mackinaw	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolers, Cotton Shorts	2	36	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolers, Wool	2	36	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolers, Leather Heavy	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolers, Wool, OD	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolkerchief, Cotton	2	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Field or Blue Denim	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolket, Blue Denim	2	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolgins, Canvas Dismounted	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolcoast, Wool OD	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolshoes, Artic	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolcoast, Dismounted	1	med.	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolart, Cotton, Khaki	2	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolart, Wool OD		/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolas, Service	2	9 1/2 E	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolas, Cotton, Tan	2	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolocks, Wool Light	2	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolusers, Blue Denim	2	36	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolusers, Cotton, Khaki	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolusers, Wool OD	2	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolershirts, Cotton	2	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolershirts, Wool	2	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolr, Barrack	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolnet, Wool OD	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolsh, Shaving	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolsh, Tooth	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Wooln, Nest	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolnb	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolnforter, Cotton Filled	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolp	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolrazor, Safety	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Wooloun	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolowel, Bath	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolot, Steel	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolover, Mattress	2	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woolatress, Cotton	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woollowcases	2	2	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/
Woollow, Feather	1	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/	/

REGISTER 99

7-20-1944

VACCINE

TOROID

VACCINE

VACCINES

LAST NAME		FIRST NAME		ARMY SERIAL NO.
Major, Klaus		7-WG-14544		
GRADE	COMPANY	REGT. OR STAFF CORPS	AGE	RACE

SMALLPOX VACCINE

DATE	TYPE OF REACTION	MED. OFFICER
8/17/43	immune	CKM
JAN 16 1946	immune	CKM

TRIPLE TYPHOID VACCINE

DATES OF ADMINISTRATION				MED. OFFICER
SERIES	1ST DOSE	2D DOSE	3D DOSE	
1st	8/17/43	8/24/43	8/31/43	CKM
2d	8-26-44	store dose	cc	
3d	JAN 16 1946			CKM

TETANUS TOXOID

INITIAL VACCINATION			STIMULATING DOSES		
	DATE	MED. OFF.		DATE	MED. OFF.
1st dose	11/29/43	CKM		6 1945	CKM
2d dose	4/19/44	CKM			
3d dose	1/22/44	CKM			

YELLOW FEVER VACCINE

DATE	LOT No.	AMOUNT	MED. OFF.

OTHER VACCINES

TYPE OF VACCINE	DATE	MFR'S. LOT NO.	AMOUNT	MED. OFF.
Infl. A13	8-15-45	2031-35 D	1cc	CKM
Typhoid	JAN 29 1946		1cc	CKM
	JAN 29 1946		1cc	CKM

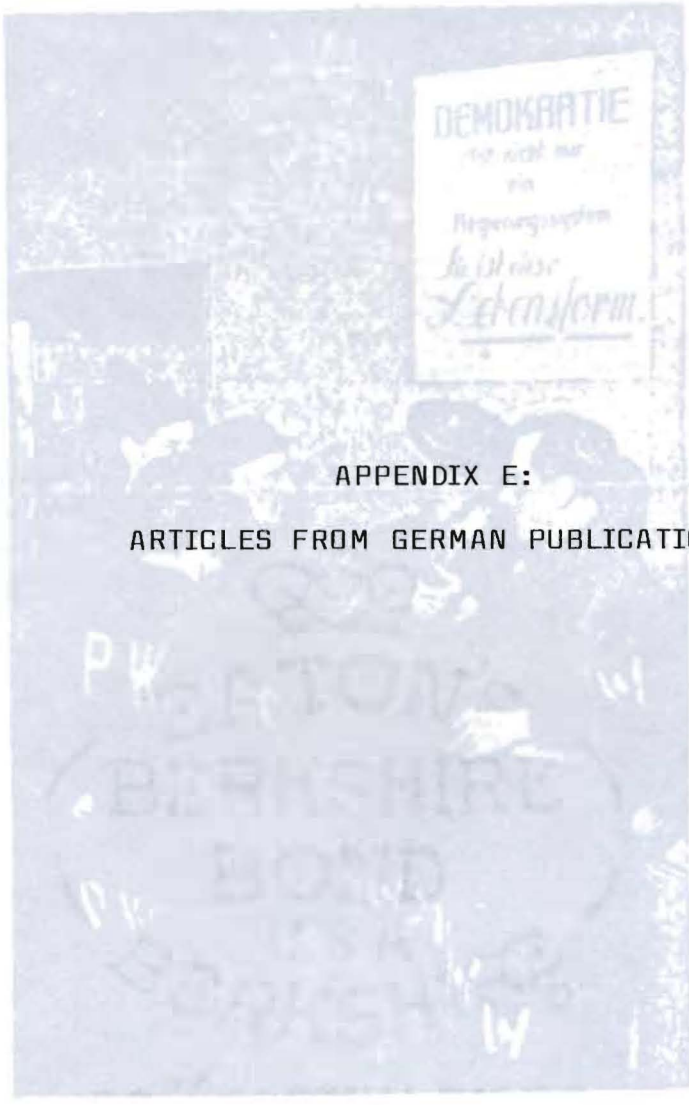
C. I. MANGAVELLI, Major, M. C.,
U.S. Army.

Während über die amerikanischen Schulungslager für deutsche Kriegsgefangene in Ft. Keamey, Ft. Getty und Ft. Wetherill der deutschen Öffentlichkeit durch die Leibesgenossenschaft schon ausführlich berichtet worden ist, muß der Name Fort Eustis bisher mehr oder weniger unbekannt. Diese Lücke auszufüllen beabsichtigt der folgende Artikel, dessen Verfasser während der zwölf in Fort Eustis abgehaltenen Lehrgänge als Diskussionsleiter tätig war.

1948: Die Kurse der Ver-
 Ft. Getty und der Fort
 Wetherill stießen kurz vor
 Eine Weiterführung ist
 genommen. Und doch
 Beteiligten auf Grund der
 darüber im Klaren,
 begonnene politische Er-
 unter den deutschen
 in U. S. A. auf
 werden
 einer Erkennt-
 nist ein neuer
 Das, was in
 Wetherill in klei-
 durch zwei
 Kurse geleitet
 ist allergrößt-
 und in viel brei-
 anderer Stelle
 werden. Leugnen
 eine Projekt Ge-
 weiß, daß es
 wird und Erfolg
 von der Qua-
 leitenden An-
 gen. Unter-
 die Zusammen-
 Lehrplaner wert
 und eine guten
 stundenlangen
 zwischen amer-
 Militärs und
 Kriegsgefangenen,
 die sehr demokra-
 tische freien Ge-
 spräche gebrau-
 ten. Ich erschieß-
 Die Kurse sel-
 (11) Tage dauern,
 Diskussionen und
 ange umfassen
 1939 deutschen
 waren zugänglich
 ten. In den Ver-
 eine sowohl amer-
 Verhältnisse und
 wie deutsche
 und internationale
 wandels, um den
 Vergleichsmög-
 geben, die zum
 über die Lage
 des Volkes autar-
 Verständnis für
 Fragen der Welt-
 zu erwecken. Die
 umleitung liegt
 inden von Herrn Henry W.
 dessen Vorlesungen über
 schichte in Keamey und
 in den dortigen Lehrgängen
 so starken Widerspruch
 Das Lager heißt Fort
 Eustis.

in allererste Linie diejenigen berück-
 sichtigt werden, die es auf Grund ihrer
 unzureichenden militärischen und politischen
 Vorbereitung verdient haben, daß sich
 ihnen das Tier in die Freiheit wieder öff-
 net. So wird in Ft. Keamey ein Stab von
 alliierten PW's zusammengebracht,
 um die Auswertung der alliierten
 Fragebogen unter Aufsicht ameri-
 kanischer Offiziere durchzuführen. In

ab jedem Vortrag werden kleine Diskus-
 sionsgruppen von je 10 bis 100 Mann ge-
 bildet, die in besonderen Schulräumen
 unter Aufsicht eines amerikanischen
 oder deutschen Diskussionsleiters über
 das in den Vorträgen Gehörte frei disku-
 tieren sollen. Schwer ist es besonders am
 ersten Tag. Viele hatten sich ja bisher
 über politische Probleme gar keine Ge-
 danken gemacht. Manah einer war sehr
 inkonkret mitteilend, weil
 er in dem ganzen Unterrichts-
 men den Versuch einer pro-
 pagandistischen „Umwin-
 lung“ sah, und wieder an-
 dere konnten sich schwer da-
 ran gewöhnen, daß es über-
 haupt so etwas wie eine völ-
 lige freie Aussprache gibt. Die
 ersten suchten sich nicht selten
 hinter ihren „Erfahrungen“
 zu verstecken, die jungen
 wußten wenig und zählten
 daher kaum an den Diskus-
 sionen teil, ein Fehlschritt, etwas
 „Paludes“ zu sagen. Hat
 doch, wenn es der Diskus-
 sionsleiter verstand, die
 unfaßliche Natur der Fragen,
 des Mißtrauens und die Be-
 dingungen zu durchleuchten, so
 gab es schon am zweiten oder
 dritten Tage heftige und er-
 regte Auseinandersetzungen,
 an denen jeder große Freude
 hatte. Neben den Vorträgen
 fand noch ein umfangreiches
 Filmprogramm, das solche
 Filme wie „Abraham Lin-
 coln“, „Amerikanische Re-
 sistenz“, „Das stehete Kreuz“
 und andere umfaßt. In all-
 sorgepflichtigen Besprechungen
 werden persönliche Probleme
 behandelt, in denen den Teil-
 nehmern so weit wie möglich
 Auskunft auf Fragen erteilt
 wird, die sie gern beantwor-
 tet haben möchten. Auch die
 Abende wurden ausgefüllt.
 Eine Bibliothek, Schallplatt-
 tenkonzerte und Vorkursen-
 gen von Spielfilmen sorgen
 für die notwendige Entspan-
 nung, und in der gut ange-
 statteten Kantine hat jeder
 die Möglichkeit, sich für 10
 Dollar mit Waren einzudeck-



APPENDIX E:
 ARTICLES FROM GERMAN PUBLICATIONS

wenigen Wochen sind die über 20000
 Kriegsgefangenen ausgewählt, die durch
 Fort Eustis gehen werden. Am 21. De-
 zember endet der gesamte amerikani-
 sche und deutsche Schulungs- und
 Fort Eustis über und nimmt noch in derselben
 Nacht die an Ort und Stelle erforderlichen
 Vorarbeiten auf.
 4. Januar bis 4. April 1948: Der
 Lehrbetrieb hat insgesamt 1000 Mann
 werden einmal am Vormittag und ein-
 mal am Nachmittag zum Vortrag im
 großen Lagerkantine zusammengeführt.
 Die Vorträge werden allmählich

den am 4. April 1948 wurden die Lehr-
 gänge in Fort Eustis beschlossen. Inge-
 samt 20000 deutsche Kriegsgefangene
 haben in 13 Kursen an ihnen teilgenommen.
 Können wir schon heute den Erfolg beur-
 teilen? Wahrscheinlich nicht, in der kür-
 zen Zeit von sechs Tagen ist eine aus-
 gezeichnete Fallstudie von neuen Eindrücken
 vermittelt, und die Teilnehmer zum Denken
 angeregt und bei ihr politischem Interesse
 geweckt worden. Jeder von ihnen hat das
 freiwillig bestätigt, ist das aber nicht
 schon ein großer Erfolg?

RT EUSTIS - ein Experiment der Demokratie

Während über die amerikanischen Schulungslager für deutsche Kriegsgefangene in Ft. Kearney, Ft. Getty und Ft. Wetherill der deutschen Öffentlichkeit durch die Lehrgangsteilnehmer schon ausführlich berichtet worden ist, blieb der Name Fort Eustis bisher mehr oder weniger unbekannt. Diese Lücke auszufüllen beabsichtigt der folgende Artikel, dessen Verfasser während der zwölf im Fort Eustis abgehaltenen Lehrgänge als Diskussionsleiter tätig war.

Der 1945: Die Kurse der Ver-
schule Ft. Getty und der Poli-
Ft. Wetherill stehen kurz vor
schluß. Eine Weiterführung ist
Aussicht genommen. Und doch
alle Beteiligten auf Grund der
Erfolge darüber im Klaren,
einmal begonnene politische Er-
arbeit unter den deutschen
Kriegsgefangenen in U. S. A. auf keinen
eingestellt werden
Aus dieser Erkennt-
nis gelangt ein neuer
Reife: Das, was in
und Wetherill in klei-
nstab durch zwei-
Kurse geleitet
soll nun in allergröß-
tange und in viel kür-
zeit an anderer Stelle
abgehalten werden. Langsam
das neue Projekt Ge-
n. Jeder weiß, daß ex-
portiert wird und Erfolg
über Erfolg von der Qua-
re vorbereitenden Ar-
abhängen. Unteraus-
für die Zusammen-
des Lehrplanes wer-
bildet, und eine ganze
von stundenlangen
renzen zwischen ame-
ikanischen Offizieren und
deutschen Kriegsgefangenen,
durch eine echt demokra-
tische Atmosphäre freien Ge-
mütsaustausches gekenn-
zeichnet waren, führt schließ-
lich zum Ziel. Die Kurse sol-
len sechs (!) Tage dauern,
Tage, Diskussionen und
Vorführungen umfassen
jedemal 2000 deutschen
Kriegsgefangenen zugänglich
gemacht werden. In den Vor-
beratungen will man sowohl ame-
rikanische Verhältnisse und
Sitten wie deutsche
Verhältnisse und internationale
Sitten behandeln, um den
deutschen Kriegsgefangenen
Vergleichsmög-
lichkeiten zu geben, sie zum
Nachdenken über die Lage
des eigenen Volkes anzure-
gen und ihr Verständnis für
die großen Fragen der Welt-
situation zu erwecken. Die
gesamtleitung liegt

in allererster Linie diejenigen berück-
sichtigt werden, die es auf Grund ihrer
anständigen Haltung und politischen
Vergangenheit verdient haben, daß sich
ihnen das Tor in die Freiheit wieder öff-
net. So wird in Ft. Kearney ein Stab von
altbewährten PW's zusammengezogen,
um die Auswertung der allgegenwärtigen
Fragebogen unter Aufsicht ameri-
kanischer Offiziere durchzuführen. In

an jeden Vortrag werden kleine Diskus-
sionsgruppen von je 50 bis 100 Mann ge-
bildet, die in besonderen Schulräumen
unter Anwesenheit eines amerikanischen
oder deutschen Diskussionsleiters über
das in den Vorträgen Gehörte frei disku-
tieren sollen. Schwer ist es besonders am
ersten Tag. Viele hatten sich ja bisher
über politische Probleme gar keine Ge-
danken gemacht. Manch einer war rein

instinktiv mißtrauisch, weil
er in dem ganzen Unterneh-
men den Versuch einer pro-
pagandistischen „Umschu-
lung“ sah, und wieder an-
dere konnten sich schwer da-
ran gewöhnen, daß es über-
haupt so etwas wie eine völ-
lig freie Aussprache gab. Die
alten suchten sich nicht selten
hinter ihren „Erfahrungen“
zu verschansen, die Jungen
wußten wenig und nahmen
daher kaum an den Diskus-
sionen teil, aus Furcht, etwas
„Falsches“ zu sagen. Und
doch, wenn es der Diskus-
sionsleiter verstand, diese
anfängliche Mauer der Furcht,
des Mißtrauens und der Resi-
gnation zu durchbrechen, so
gab es schon am zweiten oder
dritten Tage heftige und er-
regte Auseinandersetzungen,
an denen jeder große Freude
hatte. Neben den Vorträgen
läuft noch ein umfangreiches
Filmprogramm, das solche
Filme wie „Abraham Lin-
coln“, „Amerikanische Ro-
manze“, „Das siebte Kreuz“
und andere umfaßt. In all-
morgendlichen Besprechungen
werden persönliche Probleme
behandelt, in denen den Teil-
nehmern so weit wie möglich
Auskunft auf Fragen erteilt
wird, die sie gern beantwor-
tet haben möchten. Auch die
Abende werden ausgefüllt.
Eine Bibliothek, Schallplat-
tenkonzerte und Vorführun-
gen von Spielfilmen sorgen
für die notwendige Entspan-
nung, und in der gut ausge-
statteten Kantine hat jeder
die Möglichkeit, sich für 10



wenigen Wochen sind die über 20 000
Kriegsgefangenen ausgewählt, die durch
Fort Eustis gehen werden. Am 31. De-
zember siedelt der gesamte amerikani-
sche und deutsche Schulstab nach Fort
Eustis über und nimmt noch in derselben
Nacht die an Ort und Stelle erforderlichen
Vorarbeiten auf.

4. Januar bis 4. April 1946: Der
Lehrbetrieb hat begonnen. Je 1000 Mann
werden einmal am Vormittag und ein-
mal am Nachmittag zum Vortrag im
großen Lagertheater zusammengelassen.
In den sechs Tagen werden elf verschiede-

nen. Am 4. April 1946 wurden die Lehr-
gänge in Fort Eustis beschloßen. In-
gesamt 24 000 deutsche Kriegsgefangene
haben in 12 Kursen an ihnen teilgenommen.
Können wir schon heute den Erfolg beur-
teilen? Wahrscheinlich nicht. In der kur-
zen Zeit von sechs Tagen ist eine unge-
heure Fülle von neuen Eindrücken ver-
mittelt, sind die Teilnehmer zum Denken
angeregt und ist ihr politisches Interesse
geweckt worden. Jeder von ihnen hat das
freiwillig bestätigt. Ist das aber nicht
schon ein großer Erfolg?

POW kehrten nach Kansas zurück

Vier Reporter und zwei Filstäler

Es begann mit Weinkauf eines amerikanischen Obersten

Gleich vier amerikanische Reporter stürzten sich auf zwei Filstäler - in Fort Riley in Kansas. Wie ist so etwas möglich? Klaus Mayer aus Geislingen und Georg Stanglmaier aus Göppolingen-Bezgenriedt dienten im zweiten Weltkrieg als neunzehnjährige Soldaten im Afrikakorps Rommels, in Tunesien. Am 9. Mai 1943 wurden sie von Angehörigen der amerikanischen „Hölle auf Räder“-Division gefangen genommen. Drei Jahre lang arbeiteten sie dann als Kriegsgefangene auf Farmen und dort machten sie jetzt rund 30 Jahre später einen Besuch.

Doch die Geschichte der Rückkehr nach Amerika begann in Göppingen. Colonel I.R. Ed Hood aus Westmorland kam 1977 im Verlauf einer Reforger-Übung mit der ersten Brigade nach Göppingen. Und vor der Rückkehr in die Vereinigten Staaten wollte er bei Wein- und Biergroßhändler Georg Stanglmaier noch Wein einkaufen. Wenngleich jetzt drei Jahrzehnte ohne Übung waren die Sprachkenntnisse G. Stanglmaiers doch noch so, daß er sich mit seinem amerikanischen Kunden auf Englisch verständigen konnte. Mehr noch: Dem US-Offizier fiel der Slang des Bezgenriedter Geschäftsmanns auf und so fragte er denn zu seinem Englisch, wie es vor allem in Kansas gesprochen wird, gekommen sei. So erfuhr Colonel Hood die

Geschichte des POW (Prisoner of War) Georg Stanglmaier und daraus resultierte die herzliche Einladung zu einem Besuch in Fort Riley, wo einst das Haupt-Gefangenenlager für diese Region war, falls der Weg des Göppingers ihn einmal in die USA führen sollte.

Vor kurzem war es soweit: Mit ihren Ehefrauen reisten der Bezgenriedter Wein- und Biergroßhändler und Klaus Mayer, der in Geislingen bei der WMF arbeitet, nach Amerika, um auch den Kontakt mit jener Farmersfamilie zu erneuern, für die sie während ihrer Kriegsgefangenschaft gearbeitet hatten. G. Stanglmaier: „Wir wollten unseren Ehefrauen zeigen, wo wir drei Jahre unseres Lebens verbracht haben“. Obwohl die beiden Filstäler mit Farmer Richard Mertz in Wa-

meo und Ralph Stratton in Eskridge immer brieflich Kontakt gehalten hatten, gab es viel zu erzählen. Die beiden früheren POW besichtigten auch die noch vorhandenen Gebäude des Kriegsgefangenenlagers am Eingang zum Lake Wabauensee. Im Wachgebäude befindet sich jetzt ein Restaurant. Die beiden Männer hatten außerdem Gelegenheit, in Fort Riley eine Parade der 1. US-Infanterie-Division zu beobachten und wurden im Anschluß an sie auch vom Standort Kommandeur, dem Zwei-Sterne General Kaplan, empfangen, der gute Kenntnisse von Göppingen verriet, weil er dort erst im April war, dem europäischen Hauptquartier dieser Division.

Seit Anfang der Woche sind Klaus Mayer und Georg Stanglmaier zurück. Sie haben in den fünf Wochen ihres Amerika-Aufenthaltes selbstverständlich nicht nur die Stätten ihrer Erinnerung besucht. G. Stanglmaier: „Wir sind 1300 Kilometer quer durch das Land gefahren und haben von ihm gewissermaßen mehr gesehen, als viele Amerikaner in ihrem ganzen Leben“.

Im Alpenpaß-Kanton

DER HEIMKEHRER Studienfahrt der VHS/Auch in Via Mala AN POW

Fünf Tage lang galt eine Studienfahrt der Volkshochschule unter der Leitung von Stadtarchivar Dr. Dieter Kauß und mit 40 Teilnehmern Kunst und Kultur Graubündens. Am ersten Haltepunkt Vaduz in Liechtenstein galt der Besuch der Gemäldesammlung; die Stadtkirche von Friedrich v. Schmidt, dem Erbauer der Göppinger Marienkirche, war ein zweites Besichtigungsobjekt. Hoch über dem Rheintal wurde die alte Abteikirche Pfäfers besichtigt und in die Tamnaschlucht eingefahren. Man drang bis zu jener Stelle vor, an der früher Badegäste mit einem Seilkorb herabgelassen wurden, um in der warmen Mineralquelle zu baden. Den ersten Tag schloß die Quartiernahme in Chur ab. Der zweite Tag wurde mit einer Altstadtführung in Chur eröffnet. St. Stephan mit frühchristlichen und römischen Aus-

alte Häuser des 17. und 18. Jahrhunderts beeindruckten in Zuoz, ehe die Fahrt über den Ofenpaß in das abgeschiedene Münstertal führte. Erneut eine Dreispasidienkirche mit Fresken aus der Karolinger- und Stauferzeit präsentierte sich in Müstair. Dann ging es zurück nach Chur. Kloster und Tal Disentis mit dem Lukmanierpaß waren Stationen des vierten Tages. Pater Basil und Pater Ambros vermittelten barocke Kunst, das Leben der Leute damals, den Unterschied zwischen Küh-Schwyzler und Sauschwoba und die Sorgen und Bemühungen um die rätoromanischen Sprachen. Auf dem Lukmanierpaß hielt Dr. Kauß ein Kurzkolleg zur Alpenpaßpolitik der Stauer. Ein Spaziergang durch blühende Alpenwiesen galt zuvor aber noch der Agathekapelle in Disentis.

Am fünften Tag folgte die Rückreise über das Toblerburger Land

Vom Wochenmarkt

Der Mittwoch-Markt wurde mit Gemüse, Obst und Südfrüchten sowie mit Eiern gut beliefert. Schnittblumen, Topfpflanzen und Setzwar wurden in großer Auswahl angeboten. Die Notierung in Pfennigen: Obst je 500 Gramm: Erdbeere 250, Kirschen rot 280 bis 300, Aprikosen 180, Pfirsiche 180, Äpfel bis 180, Rhabarber 60 bis 80, Bananen 100, Zitronen 30, Melonen 60. Gemüse je 500 Gramm: Rotkraut 80, Weißkraut 80, Wirsing 80, Spinn 100, Erbsen 180, Bohnen 220 bis 240, gelbe Rüben 100, Tomaten 130 bis 200, Zwiebeln 100, Lauch 220, Japrika 200, Kartoffeln alt 40, Kartoffeln neu 60 bis 80, Knoblauch (g) 100. Gemüse je Stück: Radieschen 20 bis 50, Blumenkohl 180 bis 200, Kopfsalat 50 bis 60, Kresse (g) 100, Sellerie 140, Kohlrabi 50 bis 70, Gurken 60 bis 150, Eissalat Sock 120. Gemüse je Bund: Radieschen 150, Radieschen 50, gelbe Bohnen 100 bis 140, rote Beete 100 bis 160, Zwiebeln 100 bis 150, Petersilie 30 bis 50, Schnittlauch 40 bis 50, Suppengrün 50, Dill 50 bis 100, Petersilie je Stück: Größe 1 25; 2 23

When Klaus Majer and Georg Stanglmaier returned from their 1980 visit to Kansas, an article appeared in their hometown newspaper. See top article.

Der Heimkehrer, a newspaper for German POWs published by request for information, but I received no response from it.

Werkzeuge im Einsatz hatte mich ein Kaugesicht mit Ida Westertal

und ließ bald gute Bismarck-Gitarrenharmonika, luden Engen ein. Interessant zum heutigen Schüler und Ehemann und Bildschilfen (München) das Berg Am Sonntag-Mühnung Kundige Schatzwerte der Munden, in der Arbeit gewirkt hat, den sich die Gasten einfallen lassen, wenn im Hotel lud zum Spaziergang führt von Scholle eine befeuert ge-

die gute Organisations-Treffens über Teilnehmer Will in dieser Art im den hatte. Es beider die fünf neu werden mit ihren schreiben sich an (Kassel) sowie Koller (Coesfeld). 21. und 22. September einladen. Walter rich, 3500 Kassel.

Treffen 1985

den Helmut Lampe gemeinsam getroffen das diesjährige. Es findet vom 1320 Saalgrüner-Bad Hotel „Narscheller“ 41/37025 Alle Teilnehmergebracht wer-Überwachung und Best und Tag 40- (er Bad) - Kontakt: Kauchenend 40, H. 02273/54268

Zeitschrift WAS

gemeinschaft WAS in Heppenheim an der „Halber Mond“-Festung Menge, Max-empörung Tel 388

Verbands

n des ehem. Kgl. Schützeerie Farb Art. von Feldpost Nr. September 1985 in Westl. Hesel Eile K. Kasperer Lorenz

Kameraden suchen - Kameraden helfen

Gesucht werden Kameraden der Feldpost-Nr. 33863, Leipzig-Münster 2, 2/4 der auch OWA, Brona Redatzky, geb. am 10. Juli 1905 in Dettrobach-Ostpr. bis zu seiner Verletzung, Ende 1944, gehörte. Wer kann Auskunft über ihn geben? OWA, Gerhard Bedewski, der zu der Einheit gehörte, hat seiner Frau im Juni 1944 in Königsberg/Ostpr. Größe von ihm überbracht. Bitte melden. Finden Wunderschneeflecken der Feldpost Nr. 33842 statt Nachricht bitte an: Otto Schomig, Finkenpflanz 3, 3190 Wülzburg

An alle ehemaligen Angehörigen der 25. Pz.-Gr.-Div. 21. Pa.-Div. und 7. Pz.-Div. Zur Geschichtsbearbeitung der „Nordwind-Offensive“ im Januar 1945 in Eisenberg (Ebnath) sammeln wir Augenzeugenberichte. Wenn Sie im Januar 1945 in Rittershausen an der Schlacht teilgenommen haben bitten wir Sie um einen kurzen Bericht dessen, was Sie damals erlebt haben. Zur Erinnerung dieser Ereignisse möchten wir eine Gedenkstätte errichten. Das Museum gründen. Besondere Kenntnisse, Fotos und Dokumente an: An

Gesucht wird Alfred Lehmann, 323. (ma-Alt, 1945 Dänemark (Greta Lewicki) dann englische (Inhaftenschaft in Meide. Bitte melden bei: Ernst Stigmeier, Brunnenpflanzstr. 4, 7180 Crailsheim.

Gesucht werden ehemalige Angehörige der 308. Inf.-Div. (Wittau-194). Wer sich noch nicht gemeldet hat, bitte sofort schreiben. Wir treffen uns zum ersten Mal am 18. und 19. Mai 1985 in Hünnefeld, Gasthof Vollmerhaus. Wer noch lebende Kameraden von der 308. I. D. kennt bitte sofort die Anschriften mitteilen an: Werner Lauerbach, Wittauberg 11, 5052 Mx verlagsg 2, Tel. 02358/629

Gesucht werden Oberleutnant Buge, Oberst von Hanzow, Major Horzig und Hauptmann von Öttingen, die von 1942 bis 1947 an Schweregeschützen von Newtarscherkaak mit dem Bautechniker Gerhard Jona - Lagerortname Joseph (lebt - zusammen und befreundet waren Oberleutnant Buge war Jona Zellenkamerad, während Oberst von Hanzow, Major Horzig (beide aus Württemberg) und Hauptmann

von Öttingen im gleichen Stockwerk untergebracht waren. Bei dem Abtransport der Kameraden Ende 1949 nach der Moskauer Lubjanka ist Gerhard Jona dann vermutlich umgekommen. Wer Auskunft geben kann, melde sich bitte bei: Frau Harbel Steiner-Herzalmann, Besenbergerstraße 32, 7140 Ludwigsburg-Hohenock, Tel. 07141/51289.

Wer kann Auskunft geben über das Schicksal von Kasan Heidefrich, geb. am 23. 11. 1907 in Ebnath (Dobruška (Bismarck)) zuletzt schiffahrt in Russen Kreis (Helm). Nach einem Manövertransport ist er bei seiner Einheit, einer Inf.-Div. 3. Bat. II Kampf in Rastenburg/Ostpr. seit dem 18. Januar 1945 als vermisst gemeldet worden. Nachricht bitte an: Johannes Heidefrich jr., Am Freibad 2 7105 Leingarten 1.

Wer verfügt über Bildmaterial, Dokumente und Informationen über den ehemaligen Deutschen Soldatenriedrich in Karschau? Bitte Nachricht an: Wolfgang Lauenstein, Hauptstraße 178, 8700 Ludwigsburg, Tel. 0931/54213.

Zum Zwecke der Familienforschung werden alle Frauen des Namens „Szczepanski, von Szczepanski, Szcepanski etc.“ geboren in Verbindung zu setzen mit: Henryk Szczepanski, Hauptstraße 3, 7890 Mügg.

Für eine wissenschaftliche Untersuchung werden ehemalige deutsche Kriegsgefangene gesucht, die während des Zweiten Weltkrieges in Kansas (USA) vor allem im Kriegsgefangenenlager „Lake Wahawassa“, interniert waren. Meldungen bitte an: Mrs. Penny Clark, Division of Social Sciences, Emporia State University, Emporia, Kansas 66801 (USA).

Gesucht werden zu Information und Dokumentation Kameraden, die irgend einmal ab Januar 1944 bis Kriegsende in der Dienststelle Feldpost-Nr. 48328 in Lissa (Kasern) waren, besonders in den Monaten September und Oktober 1944? Wer wurde am 4. November 1944 (31. März) in dieser Dienststelle verabschiedet? Zuschriften oder Kontaktaufnahme an: Friedrich Fischer, Erwinstr. 46, 7800 Freiburg i. Br., Tel. 0781/51183

Das schrieben uns unsere Leser

„Wie offen ist die deutsche demokratische Republik Deutschland ist „Grenzte“

Der Heimkehrer, a newspaper for German POWs, published my request for information, but I received no response from it.

osterkirche in Lip-
tuse hatte man ein
is ausgesucht mit
das Wesertal.

end ließ bald gute
Hans Scholl, Gitar-
tharmonika, luden
ingen ein. Interes-
bis zum heutigen
Schiller und Ehe-
ort und Bild schil-
ann (München) das
berg. Am Sonntag-
führung. Kundige
Sehenswerte der
dt Münden, in der
enbart gewirkt hat.
itten sich die Gast-
e einfallen lassen.
essen im Hotel lud
amen Spaziergang
ohnort von Scholls
eine liebevoll ge-
rte.

die gute Organisa-
des Treffens über-
Teilnehmer Willi
fen dieser Art im
nen hatte. Er be-
nders die fünf neu
neraden mit ihren
schlossen sich an
(Kassel) sowie Küt-
tter (Coesfeld).
21. und 22. Septem-
el einladen: Walter
rsch, 3500 Kassel,

Treffen 1985

aden Heinz Lampe
emeinsam getroffe-
ssen. Es findet vom
3320 Salzgitter-Bad
Hotel „Ratskeller“,
41/37025. Alle Teil-
untergebracht wer-
Übernachtung und
Bett und Tag 60,-
ler Bad). – Kontakt-
im Keuschenend 40,
el. 02273/54266.

Verband WAS /Stalingrad)

gemeinschaft WAS
in Heppenheim an
tel „Halber Mond“.
emar Menge, Maxi-
ermering, Tel. 089/

Verbands

n des ehem. Rgt-
sbatterie Geb. Art.
sion, Feldpost-Nr.:
September 1985 in
ertal, Hotel Erle-
Kamerad Leopold
8784 Biezlern oder

Kameraden suchen – Kameraden helfen

Gesucht werden **Kameraden der Feldpost-Nr.: 53843 LpPo Münster 2**, zu der auch **Oblt. Bruno Redetzky**, geb. am 10. Juli 1905 in Heinrichswalde/Ostpr., bis zu seiner Versetzung, Ende 1944, gehörte. Wer kann Auskunft über ihn geben? **Oblt. Gerhard Sadowski**, der zu der Einheit gehörte, hat seiner Frau im Juni 1944 in Königsberg/Ostpr. Grüße von ihm überbracht. Bitte melden. Finden Wiedersehenstreffen der Feldpost-Nr.: 53843 statt. Nachricht bitte an: Otto Schöning, Stresemannstr. 3, 3180 Wolfsburg 1.

An alle ehemaligen Angehörigen der 25. Pz.-Gr.-Div.; 21. Pz.-Div. und 7. FJ.-Div. Zur Geschichtsschreibung der „Nordwind-Offensive“ im Januar 1945 in Rittershoffen (Elsaß) sammeln wir Augenzeugenberichte. Wenn Sie im Januar 1945 in Rittershoffen an der Schlacht teilgenommen haben bitten wir Sie um einen kurzen Bericht dessen, was Sie damals erlebt haben. Zur Erinnerung dieser Ereignisse möchten wir eine Gedenkstätte errichten und ein Museum gründen. Senden Sie bitte Ihre Kenntnisse, Fotos und Dokumente an: Association Arts-Histoire-Loisirs, F-67690 Rittershoffen.

Gesucht wird **Alfred Lehmann**, 523. Mine-Art., 1945 Dänemark (Grena Leuchturm), dann englische Gefangenschaft in Heide. Bitte melden bei: Ernst Stegmeier, Brunnenwiesenstr. 4, 7180 Crailsheim.

Gesucht werden ehemalige Angehörige der 306. Inf.-Div. (Wildsau-Div.) Wer sich noch nicht gemeldet hat, bitte sofort nachholen. Wir treffen uns zum zweiten Mal am 18. und 19. Mai 1985 in Hunswinkel, Gasthof Vollmerhaus. Wer noch lebende Kameraden von der 306. I. D. kennt bitte sofort die Anschriften mitteilen an: Werner Lüsebrink, Wilkenberg 11, 5882 Meinerzhagen 2, Tel. 02358/629.

Gesucht werden **Oberleutnant Ruge**, **Oberst von Hanstein**, **Major Herzog** und **Hauptmann von Öttingen**, die von 1948 bis 1949 im Schweigegefängnis von **Nowotzscherskask** mit dem Bautechniker **Gerhard Joos** – Lagerspitzname: Joschi-Gerd – zusammen und befreundet waren. Oberleutnant Ruge war Joos Zellenkamerad, während Oberst von Hanstein, Major Herzog (beide aus Württemberg) und Hauptmann

von Öttingen im gleichen Stockwerk untergebracht waren. Bei dem Abtransport der Kameraden Ende 1949 nach der Moskauer Lubjanka ist Gerhard Joos dann vermutlich umgekommen. Wer Auskunft geben kann, melde sich bitte bei: Frau Barbel Steiner-Heinzelmann, Beihingerstraße 32, 7140 Ludwigsburg-Hoheneck, Tel. 07141/51369.

Wer kann Auskunft geben über das Schicksal von **Anton Heidrich**, geb. am 25. 11. 1907 in Colelia/Dobruzscha (Rumänien), zuletzt wohnhaft in Rasaken Kreis Konin (Polen). Nach einem Munitionstransport ist H. bei seiner Einheit, einer **Inf.-Div. 3. Bat. 14. Komp. in Rastenburg/Ostpr.** seit dem 16. Januar 1945 als vermißt gemeldet worden. Nachricht bitte an: Johannes Heidrich jr., Am Freibad 3, 7105 Leingarten 1.

Wer verfügt über Bildmaterial, Dokumente und Informationen über den **ehemaligen Deutschen Soldatenfriedhof in Warschau**? Bitte Nachricht an: Wolfgaag Lauenstein, Hauptstraße 178, 6700 Ludwigschafen-Rheingönheim, Tel. 0621/542137.

Zum Zwecke der Familienforschung werden alle Träger des Namens „**Szczepanski, von Szczepanski, Szeppanski, Szeppanski etc.**“ gebeten sich in Verbindung zu setzen mit: Henryk Szczepanski, Hauensteinerstr. 3, 7886 Murg.

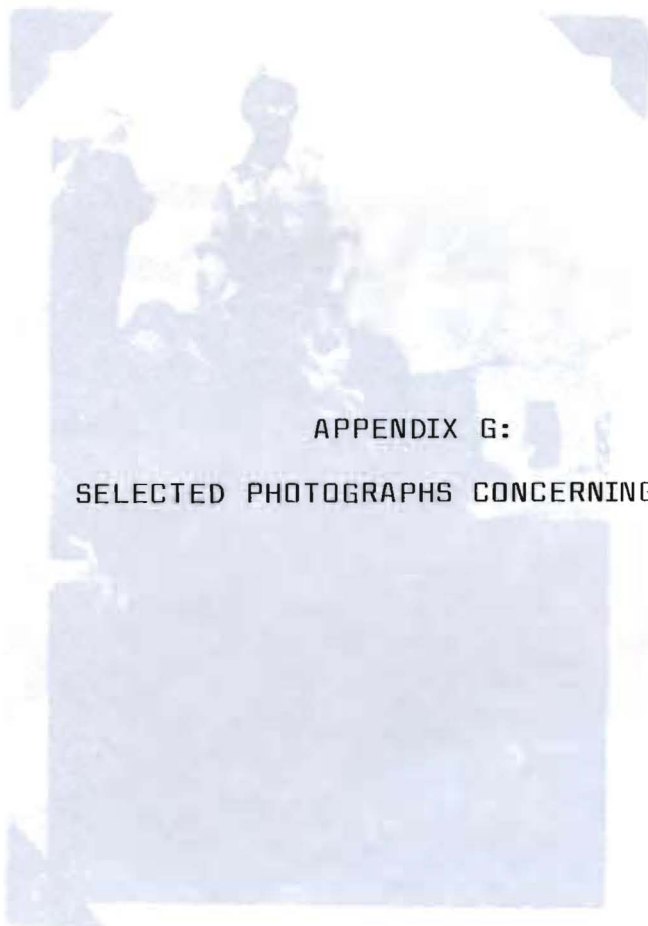
Für eine wissenschaftliche Untersuchung werden **ehemalige deutsche Kriegsgefangenen** gesucht, die während des Zweiten Weltkrieges in **Kansas (USA)**, vor allem im Kriegsgefangenenlager „**Lake Wabaunsee**“, interniert waren. Meldungen bitte an: Mrs. Penny Clark, Division of Social Sciences, Emporia State University, Emporia, Kansas 66801 (USA).

Gesucht werden zu Information und Dokumentation Kameraden, die irgend einmal ab Januar 1944 bis Kriegsende in der **Dienststelle Feldpost-Nr.: 46320 in Lissa** (Kaserne) waren, besonders in den Monaten September und Oktober 1944? Wer wurde am 4. November 1944 (31 Mann) in dieser Dienststelle verabschiedet? Zuschriften oder Kontaktaufnahme an: Friedrich Fischer, Erwinstr. 46, 7800 Freiburg i. Br., Tel. 0761/71783.

Das schrieben uns unsere Leser

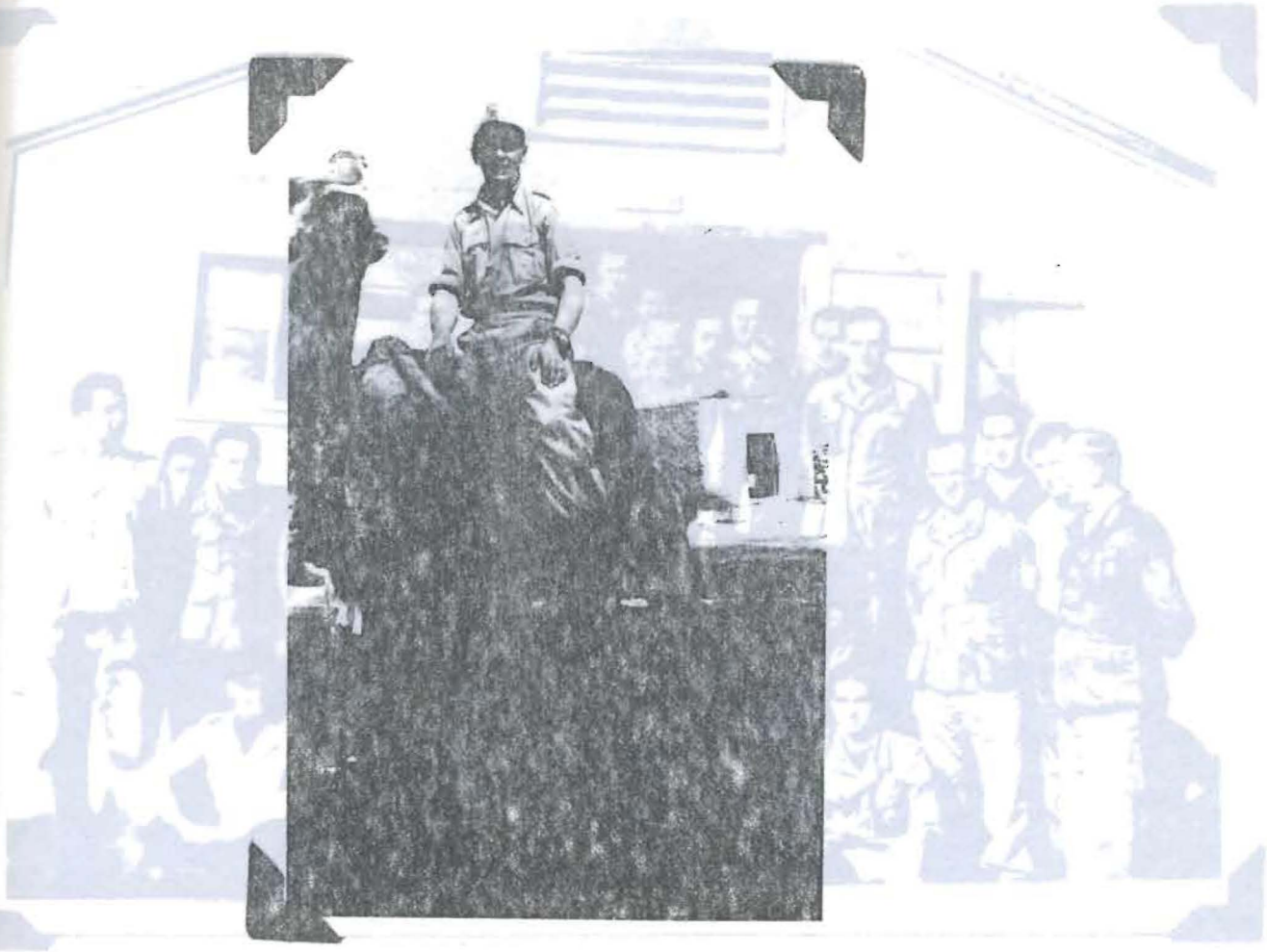
„Wie offen ist die deutsche Frage?“

desrepublik Deutschland ist „Grenzliebung“ kein Thema mehr, so sehr auch die



APPENDIX G:
SELECTED PHOTOGRAPHS CONCERNING POWS

not - Postal in Africa before
capture by the allies.



Ernst Kunze in Africa before his capture by the Allies



Occupants of a POW barrack at Camp Concordia

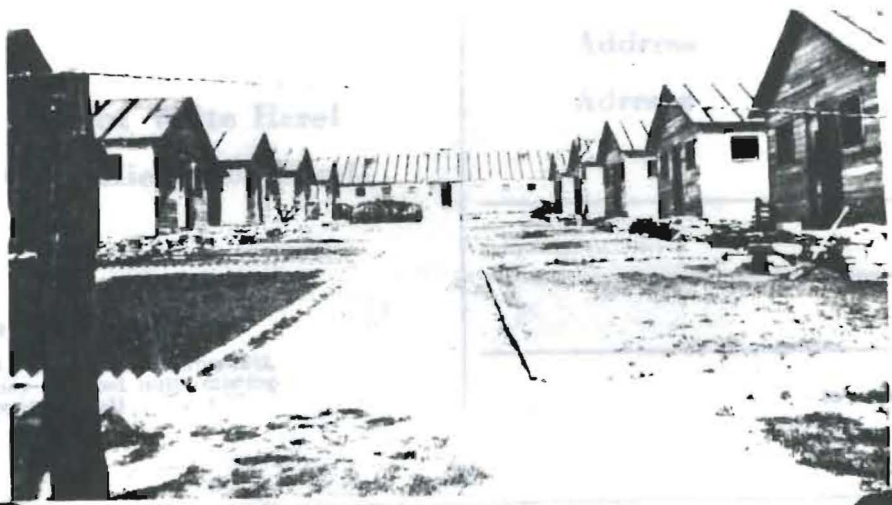


Camp World War II

Gustav Kolmel in his German Army uniform at Fort Riley

Postage Free
Postcard

PRISONER OF WAR POST CARD
Postkarte für Kriegsgefangene



Address

Address

WE
1000 PMO
WASH DC
70000-00

Camp as it looked during World War II

Postage Free
Portofrei

PRISONER OF WAR POST CARD
Postkarte für Kriegsgefangene

Do Not Write Here!
Nicht Hier Schreiben!

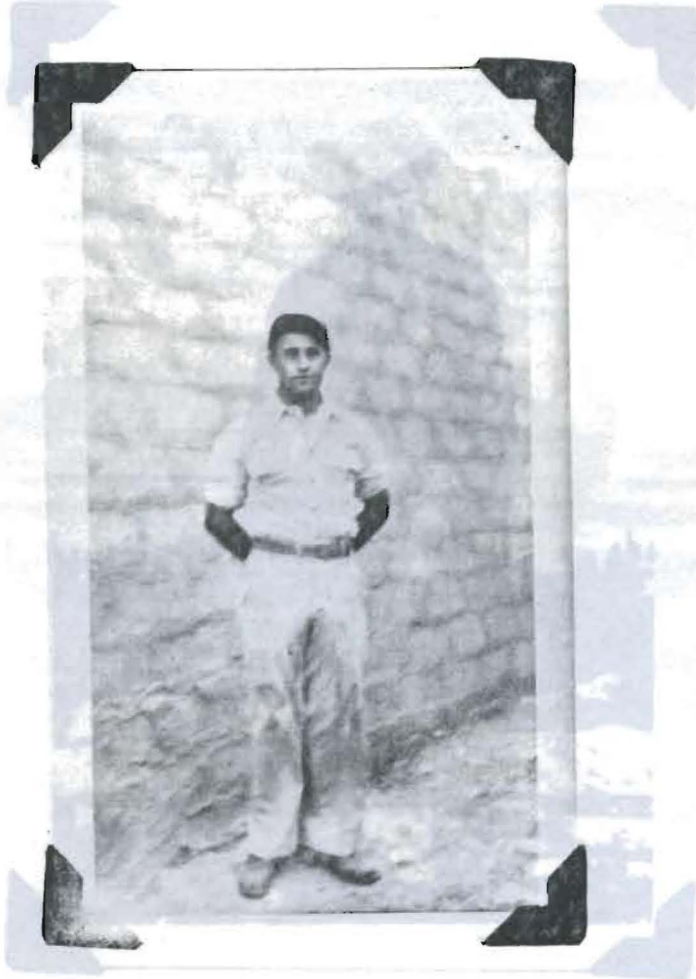
Address
Adresse

WD AGO Form 19-9
1 January 1945
(Old PMG Form 8-1, 1 November 1942,
which may be used until existing
stocks are exhausted)

16-42794-1

POWs were issued postage paid post cards to send messages home to Germany.

Fritz Ott in his POW uniform



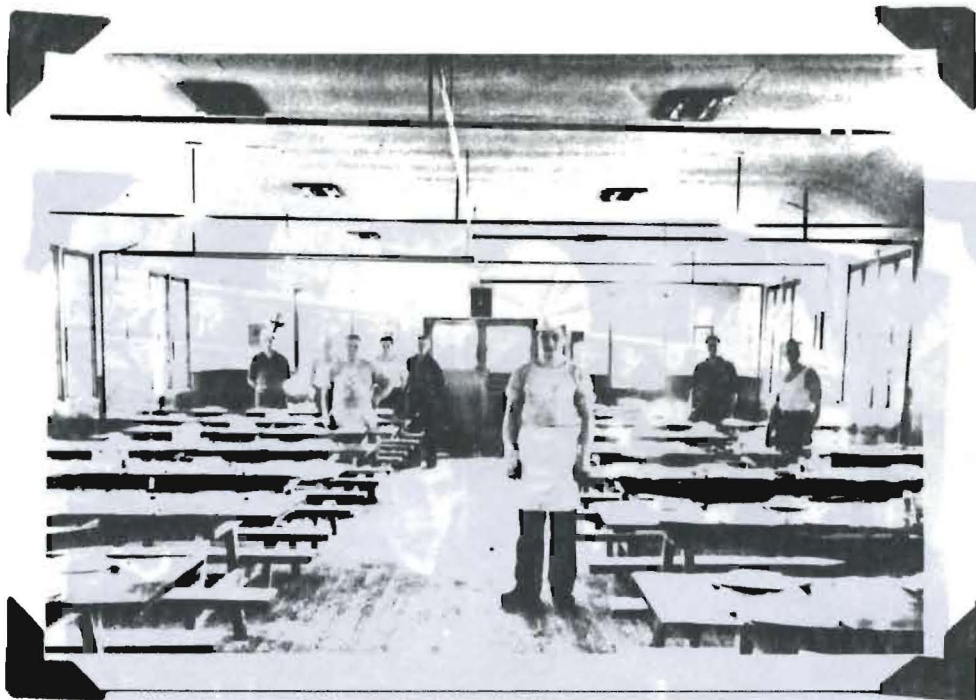
Fritz Ott in his POW uniform



POWs worked
Riley. Ernest
worked in the

Fort
(photo)

Hans Greiner in his POW uniform



POWs worked at many different jobs while at Fort Riley. Ernst Künzel (first on the left in this photo) worked in the kitchen.

Canteen at Lake Wabamsee



Canteen at Lake Wabaunsee

POWs developed close relationships with civilians while at Lake Wabaunsee. Ernest Kinzel is shown with Mr. and Mrs. John Schwain in the photograph at left. Felix Ott was photographed with the Edwin Ringel family on the right.



POWs developed close relationships with civilians while at Lake Wabaunsee. Ernst Künzel is shown with Mr. and Mrs. John Schwalm in the photograph at left. Fritz Ott was photographed with the Edwin Ringel family on the right.



POWs and their pets at Lake Wabaunsee; Heinrich Wolgast is third from left in the front row.

Hermann Dorn posed happily with his dogs for the photograph taken at Lake Wabaunsee.



Hermann Dorn posed happily with his dogs for this photograph taken at Lake Wabaunsee.



Heinrich Wolgast's American relatives: 1. William Wolgast; 2. Mrs. William Wolgast; 3. Mrs. Selma Haefke; 4. George Haefke; 5. Arthur Wolgast; 6. Mrs. Arthur Wolgast; 7. Walter Wolgast; 8. Mrs. Walter Wolgast; 9. Paul Zeckser. Children seated are unidentified grandchildren of the Wolgast family.

George Diehl, Jr., with his squirrel dog, Terry. The dog was a former pet of the POWs at Lake Wabouneee.

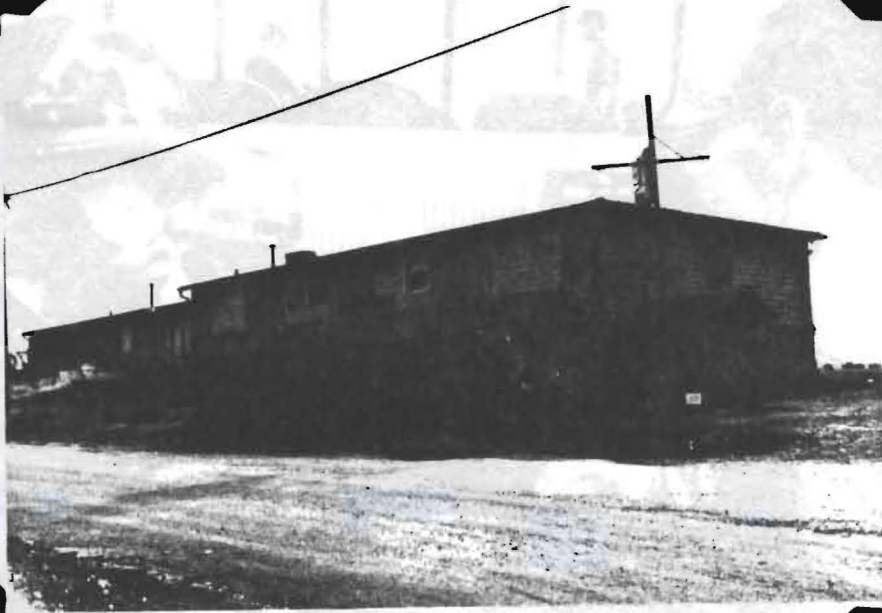


George Diehl, Jr., with his squirrel dog, Terry. The dog was a former pet of the POWs at Lake Wabaunsee.

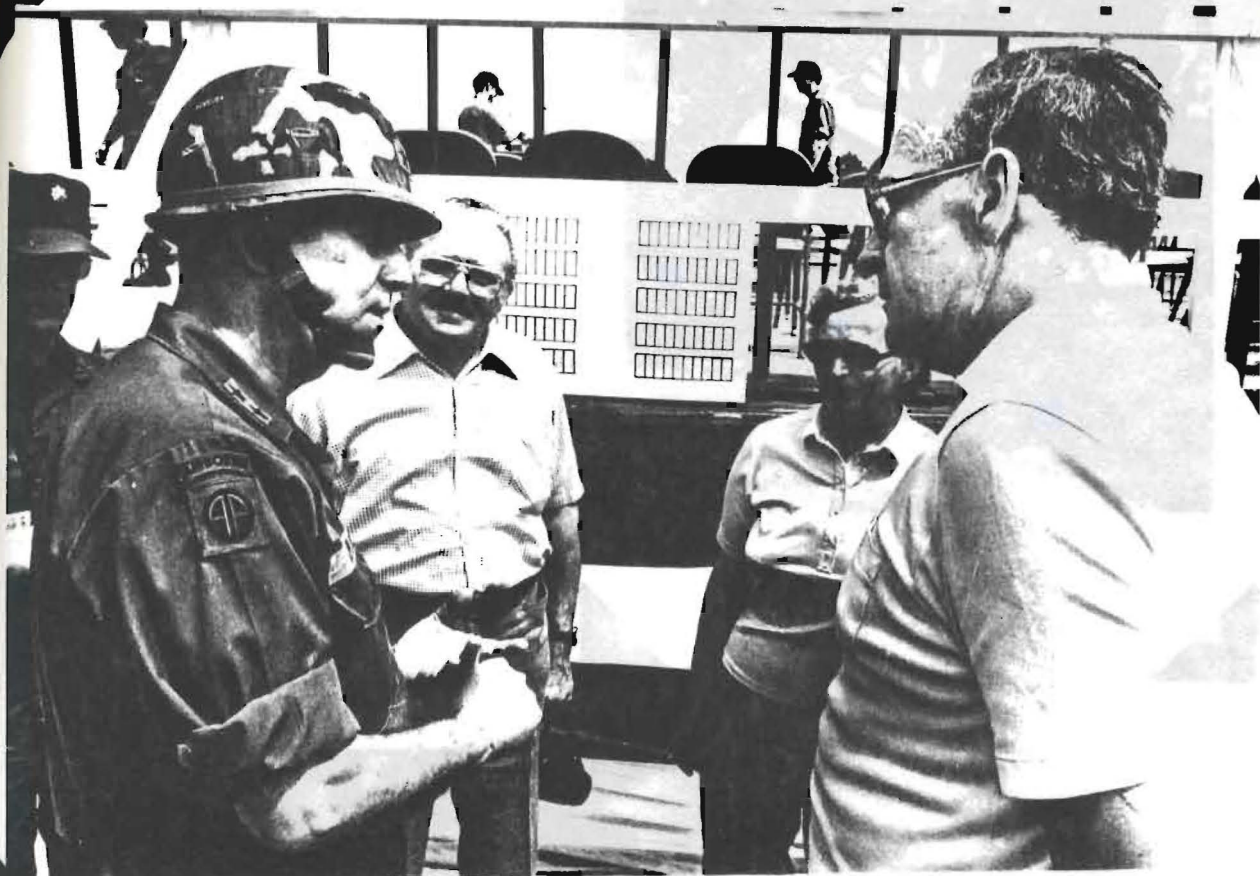
Joseph Weiser presented the Plaque
 Glutzbach family with a plaque
 and a turkey neck brush as thanks
 for their good treatment. The plaque
 has a turkey on the front (Weiser
 helped raise and dress 5000 tur-
 keys), and the words "for kind
 remembrance Joseph Weiser Kansas
 1945" and the words "Joseph Weiser
 Kansas 1945" on the back. The brush
 has a sunflower to represent Kansas.
 The words on the plaque and the
 sunflower are actual pieces of wood
 inlaid.



Josef Vesper presented the Vincent Glotzbach family with a plaque and a horse hair brush as thanks for their good treatment. The plaque has a turkey on the front (Vesper helped raise and dress 5000 turkeys), and the words "for kind remembrance Josef Vesper Kansas 1945" and the words "Josef Vesper Kansas 1945" on the back. The brush has a sunflower to represent Kansas. The words on the plaque and the sunflower are actual pieces of wood inlaid.



This building is now the Flint House, a private club and restaurant. During World War II, American guards and a few lucky POWs were lodged there.



Former POWs listen to Fort Riley Commander General Kaplan during their visit to Kansas in 1980. From left to right, Kaplan, Georg Stanglmeir, his wife, Freida, and Klaus Majer.

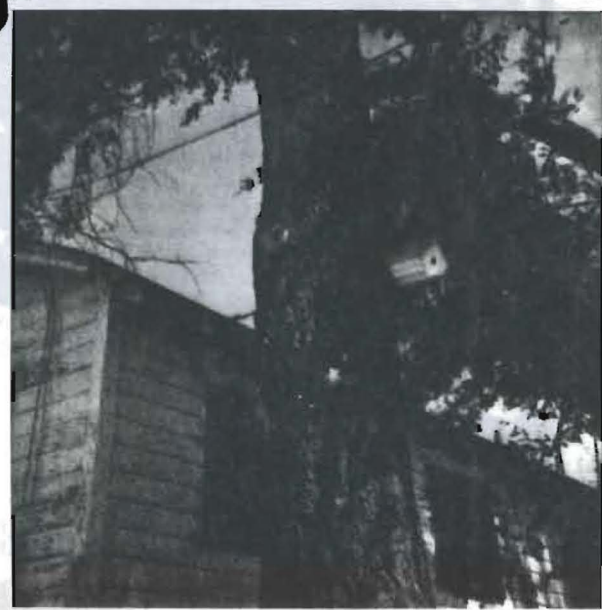
LAKE WABAUNSEE - SUMMER 1984



Old POW barracks at the lake

LAKE WABAUNSEE - SUMMER 1984

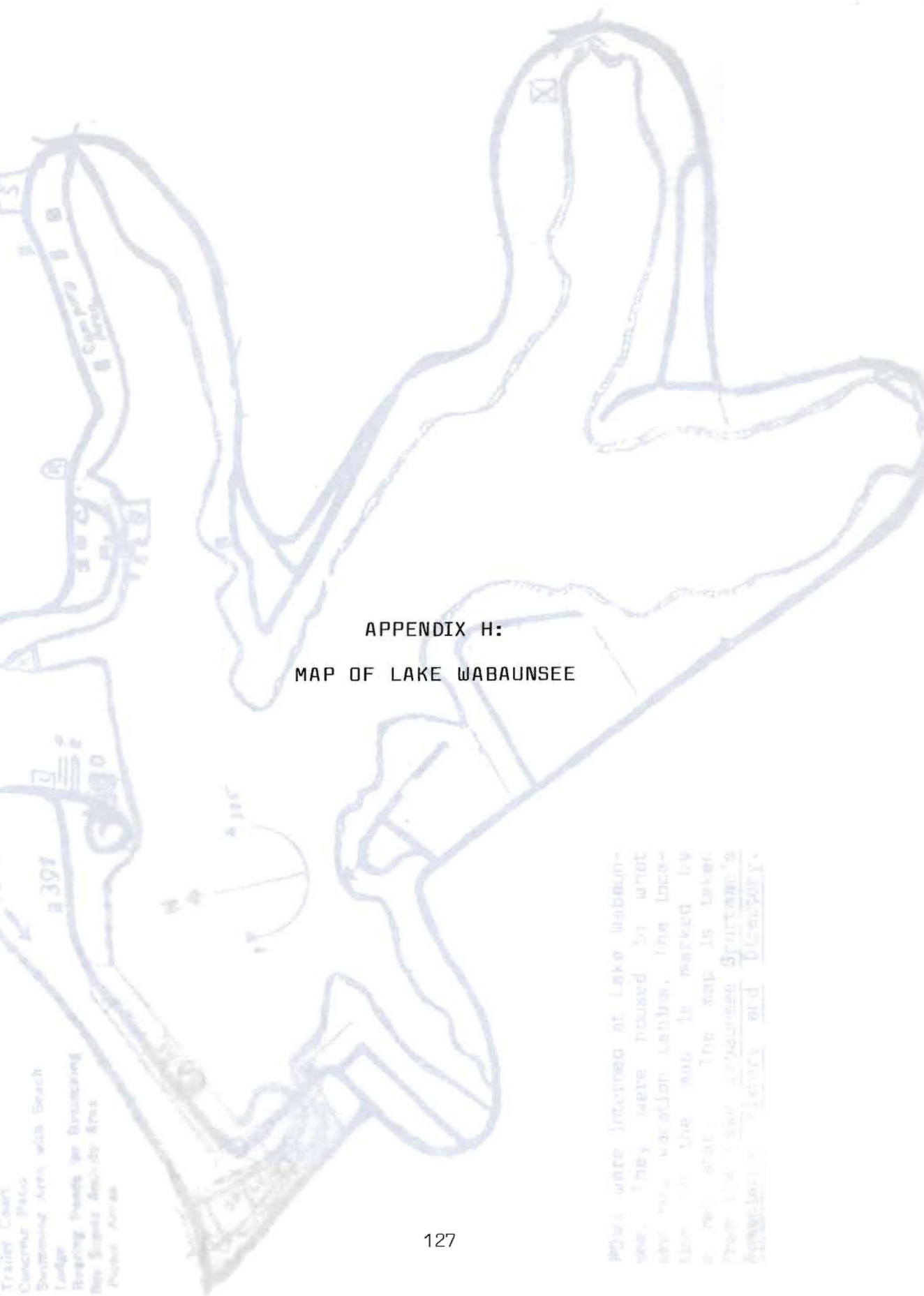
Was this bird house built by a German POW?



A view of Lake Wabaunsee and the surrounding area.



Former POWs enjoy the good life today in Germany. In the top photo, Mr. and Mrs. Julius Urban and their grandchild pose for the camera. At left Gustav Kölmel and Frau Maria Mazz enjoy their meal.



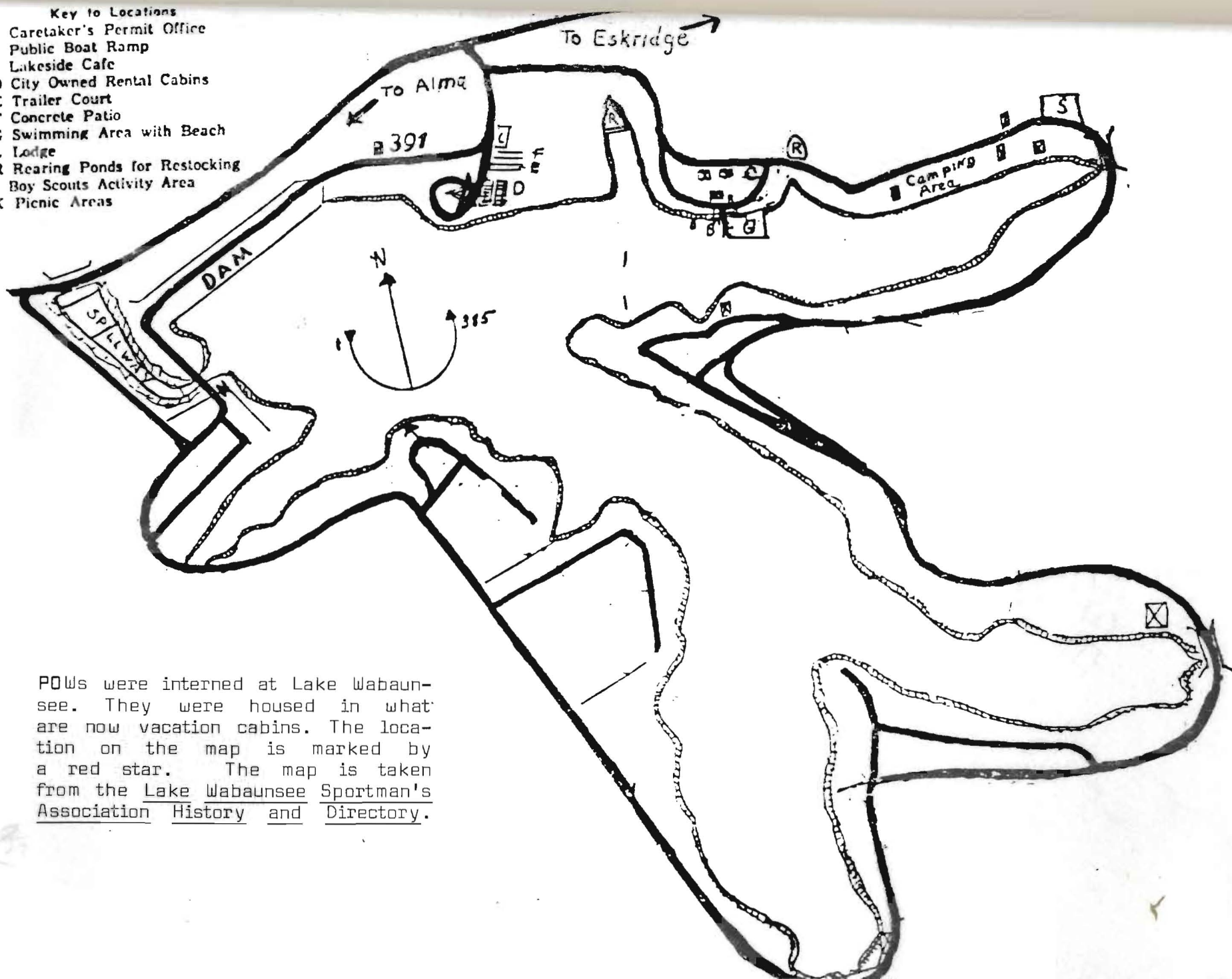
APPENDIX H:
MAP OF LAKE WABAUNSEE

Trailer Court
Concrete Patio
Swimming Area with Beach
Lodge
Boating Ponds for Bunting
Bly Sports Activity Area
Picnic Areas

Who were interned at Lake Wabaunsee. They were housed in what are the vacation cabins. The location on the map is marked by a red star. The map is taken from the Lake Wabaunsee Spurman's Anniversary Yearly and Yearbook.

Key to Locations

- A Caretaker's Permit Office
- B Public Boat Ramp
- C Lakeside Cafe
- D City Owned Rental Cabins
- E Trailer Court
- F Concrete Patio
- G Swimming Area with Beach
- I Lodge
- R Rearing Ponds for Restocking
- S Boy Scouts Activity Area
- X Picnic Areas



POWs were interned at Lake Wabaunsee. They were housed in what are now vacation cabins. The location on the map is marked by a red star. The map is taken from the Lake Wabaunsee Sportman's Association History and Directory.