

UTILIZATION OF PRISONERS OF WAR IN THE
UNITED STATES DURING WORLD WAR II
TEXAS: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

More than four hundred thousand prisoners of war were interned in the United States during World War II. Of the total number of prisoners, 87 percent were German, 12 percent Italians, and one percent Japanese. In order to accommodate these prisoners new prisoner-of-war base and branch camps were constructed throughout the country. Most of the camps were located on existing military reservations, and some were constructed strictly for the internment of prisoners of war. By April, 1945, there were one hundred and fifty base camps and over three hundred branch or temporary camps in the United States.

During the war the War Department substituted the policy of maximum utilization for maximum security of the prisoners. The third section of Part III of the Geneva Convention of 1929 dealt with the employment of prisoners of war. Within the framework of the Geneva Convention rules, the War Department provided general policies and procedures for the employment of prisoner labor in military and nonmilitary projects. The extent

of utilization of prisoner labor eventually resulted in millions of man-days of work in vital agricultural and nonagricultural areas.

Throughout the war Texas had approximately twice as many prisoner camps as any other state. The establishment of these camps in Texas alleviated critical manpower shortages in agriculture. Over half of the forty-five thousand prisoners interned in Texas performed agricultural labor. The prisoners were well-treated and later expressed the desire to return to Texas. In addition to providing a reservoir of farm laborers the prisoner-of-war camps strengthened not only the war-time economy but also the post-war economy of the state.

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CHAPTER I

PRISONERS OF WAR IN THE UNITED STATES

DURING WORLD WAR II

Immediately after the outbreak of World War II the United States planned for the internment of enemy alien civilians. As early as December 9, 1941, preparations were started for the construction of a permanent alien enemy camp on the Florence Military Reservation in Arizona. While work was proceeding on this camp, ten emergency camps were established on Army posts strategically located on each coast and land frontier of the United States. In January, 1942, two additional three thousand-man camps were authorized. In an effort to move many of the alien enemy civilians from California, the Provost Marshal General and the Quartermaster General selected sites for additional camps in the Southwest, authorized the construction of nine other permanent alien camps, and planned for fourteen more alien camps.¹

¹U.S., Department of the Army, History of Prisoner of War Utilization by the United States Army, 1776-1945,

By December, 1942, there were only about four thousand enemy aliens interned in the United States instead of the March prediction of one hundred thousand. As a result of this miscalculation numerous camps under construction were later converted to prisoner-of-war camps.²

Early in 1942 the War Department directed the transfer of all captured enemy personnel to the United States in an effort to relieve overseas forces from the problems of guarding, feeding, and housing prisoners of war. However, very few prisoners were captured by United States forces in 1942, and by December 31 of that year only 1,881 prisoners had been interned in the United States.³

In August, 1942, Great Britain proposed the transfer of one hundred and fifty thousand British-captured prisoners of war to the United States. At that

by George G. Lewis and John Mewha, Department of the Army Pamphlet No. 20-213 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1955), p. 82. (Hereinafter referred to as Lewis and Mewha, Prisoner Utilization.)

²Ibid.

³Ibid., p. 83.

time Great Britain held twenty-three thousand German and two hundred and fifty thousand Italian prisoners and believed that wholesale captures would strain facilities in their country; therefore, Britain suggested that the United States intern fifty thousand of these prisoners on one month's notice and the other one hundred thousand on three months' notice. The United States Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Joint Staff Planners agreed to accept the one hundred and fifty thousand prisoners of war with the understanding that the War Department would be given one month's notice before the acceptance of the first shipment of fifty thousand and one month's notice for each consignment thereafter.⁴

This decision to accept prisoners of war in the continental United States changed the activity of the Joint Chiefs of Staff from enemy alien civilians to the internment of prisoners of war. Plans were thus initiated for the necessary construction of prisoner-of-war camps.

The Provost Marshal General held administrative supervision over prisoner-of-war operations and functioned

⁴Ibid.

as the staff agency of the Commanding General, Army Service Forces.⁵ The Prisoner of War Division of the Provost Marshal General included the P. O. W. Information Bureau, Camp Operations Branch, Legal Branch, Work Projects Branch, and Field Liaison Branch.⁶

In September, 1942, the Provost Marshal General submitted construction plans for the distribution of the first fifty thousand prisoners among existing facilities and new facilities for the second group of one hundred thousand. The Provost Marshal General decided to utilize the unused camps in the Southwest (Eighth Service Command) which had been constructed or were under construction for enemy aliens. These camps could handle three-fourths of the first shipment of fifty thousand prisoners. At that time permanent and temporary camps could house only thirty-two thousand prisoners; therefore, the Provost Marshal General advanced the completion date of other

⁵U.S., War Department, "Enemy Prisoners of War," War Department Technical Manual TM 19-500 (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1944), p. 1.3. (Hereinafter referred to as TM 19-500.)

⁶Lewis and Mewha, Prisoner Utilization, pp. 80-81.

camps in order to provide accommodations for an additional 22,500 internees. Temporary housing on military installations was sought to handle approximately twenty thousand more prisoners of war.⁷

The following were completed, permanent internment camps and their prisoner capacity in the United States on September 15, 1942: Camp Clark, Missouri (3,000); Florence, Arizona (3,000); Camp Forrest, Tennessee (3,000); Huntsville, Texas (3,000); Camp Livingston, Louisiana (5,000); Lordsburg, New Mexico (3,000); and Stringtown, Oklahoma (400). The prisoner capacity of these camps totaled 26,400.⁸

Eight permanent camps, with a 22,500-prisoner capacity, were under construction: Alva, Oklahoma (3,000); Crossville, Tennessee (1,500); Hearne, Texas (3,000); Hereford, Texas (3,000); Mexia, Texas (3,000); Monticello, Arkansas (3,000); Ruston, Louisiana (3,000); and Weingarten, Missouri (3,000).⁹

⁷Ibid., p. 84.

⁸Ibid., pp. 84-85.

⁹Ibid., p. 85.

The following six permanent camps were authorized on September 9, 1942: Tonkawa, Oklahoma (3,000); Mclean, Texas (3,000); Como, Mississippi (3,000); Aliceville, Alabama (6,000); Concordia, Kansas (3,000); Florence, Arizona (increase of 3,000). These camps could accommodate twenty-one thousand prisoners.¹⁰

Ten temporary internment camps, originally intended for civilian aliens, could accommodate 8,318 prisoners. These were: Camp Blanding, Florida (200); Fort Bliss, Texas (1,350); Fort Bragg, North Carolina (140); Fort Devens, Massachusetts (1,000); Fort Meade, Maryland (1,680); Camp McCoy, Wisconsin (100); Fort Oglethorpe, Georgia (948); Fort Sam Houston, Texas (1,000); Camp Shelby, Mississippi (1,200); Fort Sill, Oklahoma (700). The total capacity of all internment camps for prisoners of war amounted to 78,218.¹¹

The second phase of the prisoner-of-war construction program was geared to the next consignment of one hundred thousand prisoners. The majority of these were

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

to be located in the South and Southwest, which consisted of the Fourth, Seventh, and Eighth Service Commands.¹² The Fourth Service Command was composed of Alabama, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee. The Seventh Service Command consisted of Colorado, Iowa, Kansas, Minnesota, Missouri, Nebraska, and Wyoming. The Eighth Service Command was composed of Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas.¹³

Security was the primary consideration in the location of prisoner camps in the South and Southwest. Security regulations restricted the selection of possible camp sites in the eastern and western coastal zones of the United States. The location of internment camps in mild climate areas kept construction costs to a minimum, and the idea of future employment of prisoners of war in agricultural areas might also have been a consideration in the selection of these camps in the southern sections

¹²Ibid., p. 86.

¹³"War and Postwar Policies," Monthly Labor Review, LXI (November, 1945), 911.

of the United States. In order to accommodate the expected shipments of prisoners, the Provost Marshal General recommended that additional camps be built to intern 144,000 prisoners of war.¹⁴

The expected one hundred and fifty thousand British-captured prisoners never arrived, however, and by the end of December, 1942, there were only 1,881 German, Italian, and Japanese prisoners of war interned in the continental United States.¹⁵ The successful North African campaign, nevertheless, drastically changed this picture, and by mid-August of 1943 the total number of prisoners in the United States exceeded one hundred and thirty thousand. Part of this increase occurred from an agreement between Britain and the United States to consider all prisoners captured in northwest Africa "American-owned."¹⁶

As the war progressed the total number of prisoners of war interned in the United States greatly

¹⁴Lewis and Mewha, Prisoner Utilization, p. 86.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 83.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 90.

increased and ultimately reached 425,806 by the end of June, 1945. Of this total, 371,505 were Germans, 50,052 Italians, and 4,249 Japanese. From 1942 through 1946 the highest number of Germans interned in the United States was 371,683, reached in May, 1945. Italian internees reached a high of 51,156 in November, 1944, and Japanese prisoners totaled 5,413 in August of 1945. The repatriation of all prisoners of war from the United States was completed by June 30, 1946, except for one hundred and forty-one Germans, twenty Italians, and one Japanese who were serving prison terms in penal institutions.¹⁷

With the arrival of large numbers of prisoners in 1943, the Provost Marshal General segregated prisoners according to the following categories: German Army anti-Nazi prisoners, the remaining German Army prisoners, German Navy anti-Nazi prisoners, the remaining German Navy prisoners, Italian prisoners, and Japanese prisoners. Officer prisoners were incarcerated in the same camps but in different compounds from the enlisted personnel. Also, the Provost Marshal General authorized the Army Service

¹⁷Ibid., p. 91.

Commands to transfer the prisoners within their commands but not to mix the categories described above.¹⁸

In an effort to supplement the rules of the Geneva agreement of 1929 and to provide an official handbook for the Army, the War Department published a manual entitled "Enemy Prisoners of War." It defined prisoner-of-war camps as "installations in the zone of the interior established for the internment of prisoners and located on, or independent of, other military installations."¹⁹ These camps were either processing stations, base camps, or branch camps. Processing stations were utilized for the temporary detention of prisoners pending assignment to base camps and were usually located in coastal areas of the United States. Prisoner-of-war base camps were established on a permanent basis for the complete administration of prisoners. Branch camps were organized on a permanent or temporary basis and were administrated and supervised by their respective base camps.²⁰

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 91-92.

¹⁹TM 19-500, p. 2.1.

²⁰Ibid.

As the war continued the Commanding General of the Army Service Forces was assigned the authority and responsibility in all matters pertaining to enemy prisoners in the continental United States. His jurisdiction included the custody, control, utilization, care, treatment, repatriation, security, and location of the prisoners of war.²¹

The number of base camps and branch camps fluctuated in the various sections of the country during the war. By August 31, 1943, there were seventy-two base and branch camps, and by June 1, 1944, the number had reached approximately three hundred. By April, 1945, the number had increased to one hundred and fifty base camps and three hundred and forty branch camps throughout the United States.²²

According to the Geneva Convention of 1929, the construction of prisoner-of-war camps had to be equivalent to that provided for United States troops. Camps built from new materials had to be approved by the Commanding General, Army Service Forces, and in accordance with

²¹Ibid., p. 1.3.

²²Lewis and Mewha, Prisoner Utilization, p. 111.

construction plans for prisoner camps prepared by the Office of the Chief of Engineers.²³ The basic feature of the standard layout plan was the compound. The camp generally consisted of one or more of these compounds surrounded by two wire fences and separated from each other by a single fence. Four companies of two hundred and fifty prisoners each were housed in each compound. In accordance with Article 10 of the Geneva Convention, housing and messing facilities had to be equivalent to those furnished to United States troops at base camps and usually consisted of five barracks, a latrine with showers and laundry tubs, a mess hall, and an administrative building for each company. In addition, each compound was to provide a recreation building, canteen, infirmary, station hospital, chapel, work shop, and an outdoor recreation area.²⁴

Base camps converted from existing facilities had to meet certain requirements. Buildings or tents had

²³TM 19-500, p. 2.2.

²⁴Maxwell S. McKnight, "The Employment of Prisoners of War in the United States," International Labour Review, L (July, 1944), 50.

to be sufficiently lighted and heated. Officers' quarters had to contain one hundred and twenty square feet per man and those of enlisted men forty square feet per man. The camp had to contain sanitary facilities, latrines, adequate drainage and water supply (including hot water), and one laundry tub for every twenty-five men. Indoor recreation space had to be provided on a basis of two square feet per man at year-round camps, and an outdoor recreation area based on two hundred square feet per man. A prisoner-of-war canteen had to be built on a basis of two square feet per man, and a separate building for religious services was recommended. Infirmary facilities had to be situated in each compound, and hospital facilities had to be located either at the camp or in the immediate area. The camp also had to have single or double barbed wire fences, warehouse space, and sentry boxes or guard towers. In addition the camp had to furnish guard house detention facilities, adequate lighting of fences and grounds, and fire protection devices.²⁵

²⁵TM 19-500, p. 2.2.

Certain security measures and specifications were also recommended for base camps. A minimum of five hundred feet from any boundary, public road, or railroad to all fenced areas must be upheld. Also there must be a minimum of seventy-five feet from the inner fence to buildings inside the stockade and a minimum distance between buildings of thirty feet. A fire station was usually situated within one and a half to two miles from the camp, and an auxiliary lighting system and prisoner work shop were recommended. However, a possible camp site was not rejected due to the lack of one or more of the above specifications.²⁶

Branch camps were constructed on a permanent or temporary basis to fulfill a definite work need. Generally, those that provided prisoner labor for private contractors could not be erected at the expense of the War Department, but camps could be established if the estimated net income to the United States Government during the duration of the contract (not in excess of a six-month period) exceeded the costs of camp construction

²⁶Ibid.

or conversion.²⁷ Specific rules governed the conversion of existing housing for camps and the utilization of prisoner labor in the erection, conversion, maintenance, and dismantlement of security and housing facilities. In almost every case, the base camps administered and supplied their respective branch camps.²⁸

The final processing of prisoners occurred after they were transported by rail to their designated base camps in the United States. A basic personnel record was prepared in triplicate for each internee. The original copy remained at the prisoner-of-war camp, and the other two copies were sent to the Enemy Prisoner of War Information Bureau, Provost Marshal General's Office, Fort Meade, Maryland. This record contained the prisoner's name, serial number, photograph, fingerprints, and an inventory of personal effects.²⁹

At the time of capture, each prisoner was assigned a serial number by the capturing command. The first

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid., pp. 2.3-2.4.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 2.4-2.5.

component consisted of a number symbol designating the command in which the prisoner was captured, such as 81 for the United States Army Forces in the Mediterranean Theater of Operations (formerly the North African Theater). The second symbol was the first letter of the name of the enemy country in whose armed forces the prisoner was serving, such as "G" for Germany, "J" for Japan, and "I" for Italy. The second component was an individual number assigned consecutively to each prisoner processed. For example, the tenth German prisoner processed by the United States Forces in the North African Theater of Operations received the serial number of 81G-10.³⁰

If a prisoner was not assigned a serial number by the capturing command, the service command at the base camp was required to do so. This serial number consisted of a number that represented the service command involved, the letter "W" that represented the War Department, the first letter of the country that the internee had served, and the number assigned to each prisoner

³⁰Ibid., p. 2.5.

processed. For example, the first German prisoner processed in the Eighth Service Command would be 8WG-1, and the tenth prisoner (if an Italian) processed in the same service command would be 8WI-10.³¹

Prisoners were allowed to retain certain personal effects, while other articles were temporarily removed but returned as soon as "practicable." Some articles were confiscated and not returned to the prisoner during internment. These included large sums of money and any commodities which might facilitate an escape.³²

Prisoners wore their own uniforms or renovated discarded United States Army uniforms.³³ Except for hats and national uniforms, outer garments had to be marked with the letters "PW." All shirts, undershirts, jackets, and coats had to be marked across the back with the letters "PW" six inches high and on the front of each sleeve (between the elbow and shoulder) with the same letters four inches high. Trousers and shorts were imprinted

³¹Ibid., p. 2.6.

³²Ibid., p. 2.7.

³³Ibid., p. 2.13.

with the letters "PW" four inches high across the back and below the belt. The front of each leg above the knee was marked with four-inch high letters. Clothing and equipment allowances were issued to the prisoners to enable them to work in the stockade and on work projects outside the camp.³⁴

The types and quantities of food provided for the prisoners were prepared according to a menu guide by the Office of the Quartermaster General. This guide was used in the preparation of the monthly menus for the service commands. The quantity of food was based on the activity of the prisoners. Prisoners not actively employed on Sundays or other days were fed meals that contained 2,500 calories. Regulations were issued to prohibit the accumulation of foods for special occasions and to reduce the wastage of certain items. Monthly frequency charts were prepared to reveal the issuance of rations, and reports were made concerning the quantities of garden products delivered from prisoner-of-war gardens to the mess. Rye bread for German prisoners and native-type

³⁴Ibid., pp. 2.13-2.15.

stick bread for Italians could be baked by the prisoners at Army posts with bakery facilities. In addition to bread, other foods were incorporated into the prisoners' menus, such as frankfurters, salami, bologna, cheese, fish, cabbage, lettuce, potatoes, sauerkraut, and leafy greens.³⁵

In order to provide articles not issued by the United States Army or the Red Cross, canteens were established in base camps, branch camps, and hospitals designated exclusively for prisoners of war. The canteens were authorized to purchase commodities from the nearest Army exchange on a ninety-day credit basis but were separated from any Army exchange and maintained separate sets of books and records. Usually, the canteens were operated by prisoner personnel and were responsible for all revenue-producing activities within the prisoner compound. Canteens could only stock articles that were included in the restricted list.³⁶ In August, 1945, beer (3.2 percent alcohol), cookies, crackers, and soft drinks were removed from this list of items.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 2.19-2.21.

³⁶See Appendix A.

Only coupons could be used to purchase merchandise from prisoner canteens. They were redeemable only at the camp of issuance and were valid for a period of two calendar months after the end of the payroll month. New series of coupons were printed on different colored paper and were issued on or about July 25 and January 25 of each year. All dividends from canteen profits were transferred periodically to the local prisoner fund.³⁷

During internment the prisoners could participate in educational classes, lectures, studies, and discussion groups within the camp and enroll in correspondence courses from fourteen educational institutions in the United States. The educational programs sponsored by each camp usually emphasized such basic courses as reading, writing, geography, mathematics, languages, music, arts, history, and literature. These courses were usually taught by the prisoners and assisted by civilians who were approved by the camp commander and the Provost Marshal General.³⁸

³⁷Ibid., pp. 2.29-2.30, 4.6.

³⁸Ibid., pp. 2.26-2.27.

Prisoners of war could participate in sports and athletic contests. Prisoner funds could be utilized for the purchase or rent of recreational equipment, handi-craft tools, motion picture films and projectors, public address systems, fine arts, and theatrical accessories. The prisoners could also maintain a library and reading room, which could only contain censored reading material. Plays and musical concerts could be performed by the prisoners with the approval of the camp commander. Prisoners could attend censored motion pictures and possess and operate a standard radio receiver that was incapable of shortwave reception. Prisoners were also allowed to attend religious services within the camp and were permitted to receive visitors twice a month who were related to the prisoner as wife, child, parent, brother, sister, grandparent, uncle, or aunt.³⁹

Civilian visitors to the prisoner camps were strictly supervised, and only authorized information was released from the camp. Interviews with prisoners were not permitted, but articles could be written describing the activities of the camp, excluding details of guard

³⁹Ibid., pp. 2.27-2.28.

and security systems. Names of prisoners could not be released to news media except in cases of escapes, recaptures, or death. Public relations officers at the camps were authorized to release information pertaining to escapes and recaptures, deaths, and work projects, including contracts let, employers, location of work projects and branch camps, and availability of prisoners for work.⁴⁰

The discipline of prisoners were strictly managed by the laws, regulations, and orders in force in the United States Army and the articles of the Geneva Convention. In the performance of his duties, the camp commander could admonish or reprimand (oral or written), withhold privileges (including restrictions on diet), and discontinue pay and allowance (ten cents daily allowance up to two dollars a month). Disciplinary measures could entail extra fatigue duty, hard labor without confinement (except officers and noncommissioned officers), overtime work not to exceed four hours a day, and withhold pay for one week. The camp commander could impose

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 2.35-2.36.

a maximum disciplinary punishment of thirty days confinement and fourteen days on bread and water. Except for officers, prisoners could be tried by summary court martial with the sentence not to exceed thirty days in duration.⁴¹

The fourth chapter of the War Department Technical Manual TM 19-500 dealt with the finances of the prisoners. Trust fund accounts of prisoners were maintained by the Treasury of the United States and under the direction of the Comptroller General. This fund was entitled "Trust Fund 218915--Deposits, Funds of Civilian Internees and Prisoners of War."⁴² Money found in the possession of a prisoner and the balance of a prisoner's monthly allowance were credited to this trust fund. With the approval of the camp commander, a prisoner could withdraw from his account any amount not over the total amount to his credit. Enlisted personnel, however, could not take out more than thirty dollars per month to defray personal expenses. On the fifteenth of March, June, September, and December,

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 2.30-2.32.

⁴²Ibid., p. 4.1.

each prisoner received a statement of the total amount of his deposit.⁴³ Prisoners of war were paid a monthly credit allowance from the date of capture, which had to be verified from a source other than the prisoner. If the date of capture was not known, the prisoner was credited from the date of embarkation to the United States. German and Italian officer prisoners of war received a monthly allowance according to their grade in their respective armies. This monthly allowance was twenty dollars for lieutenants, thirty dollars for captains, and forty dollars for majors and above.⁴⁴

Prior planning for the expected hordes of enemy alien civilians and British-captured prisoners provided adequate facilities for the internment of war prisoners from northwest Africa. As the war continued a steady influx of prisoners arrived in the United States for internment and resulted in the construction of new base and branch camps throughout the country. All of the prison camp activities were governed by the rules and

⁴³Ibid.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 4.3-4.5.

regulations of the United States Army in accordance with the Geneva Convention. These camps were established to provide security and later were located to assure maximum employment for this potential labor force.

CHAPTER II

THE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR THE EMPLOYMENT OF PRISONERS OF WAR IN THE UNITED STATES

The taking of a prisoner during war had traditionally meant only the removal of an enemy from the field of battle. As the United States became more involved in World War II, however, the number of prisoners held in this country increased and became an important source of labor from 1943 until the end of the war.

The Geneva Convention of 1929 was the basic criterion for the treatment and utilization of prisoners. The articles of this Convention were signed on July 27, 1929, and were eventually ratified by thirty-seven countries and approved by five others. The Geneva Convention was ratified by the United States Senate on January 7, 1932. On February 4, 1932, the document was deposited

with the government of Switzerland and announced by President Hoover on August the fourth of the same year.¹

The third section of Part III of the Geneva Convention dealt with the employment of prisoners of war and provided the guidelines for the utilization of prisoners in the United States. Article 27 of the Geneva Convention pertained to the labor of prisoners of war. Belligerents could employ prisoners who were physically fit, except officers and personnel of equivalent status. Officers could be employed, however, if they submitted a request for such work. Noncommissioned officers were required to perform supervisory work unless they requested remunerative employment. An addition to this article guaranteed a form of workman's compensation to prisoners who were injured in connection with their work.²

The organization of labor for the captives was clarified in Articles 28, 29, and 30. Article 28 stated

¹Archer L. Lerch, "The Army Reports on Prisoners of War," American Mercury, May, 1945, p. 537. (Hereinafter referred to as Lerch, "Army Reports.")

²Charles I. Bevans, comp., Treaties and Other International Agreements of the United States of America, 1776-1949, Vol. II (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1969), p. 944.

that the detaining country assumed the responsibility for the maintenance, care, treatment, and payment of wages of prisoners employed by individual contractors. According to Article 29 of the Geneva Convention, no prisoner of war could be employed on work for which he was physically unsuited. Article 30 was concerned with the working hours of the prisoners. The duration of the daily work, including the travel to and from the work site, could not be "excessive" and could not exceed the number of hours worked by civilian employees in the same region performing the same type of work. In addition, each prisoner was allowed a rest period of twenty-four consecutive hours every week, preferably on Sunday.³

Articles 31 and 32 regulated the kinds and conditions of labor. Article 31 stated that prisoners could not furnish labor that was directly related to war operations, such as the manufacture and transportation of arms or munitions of any kind, or the transportation of materials intended for units in combat. In accordance with Article 32, prisoners were not allowed to participate in unhealthy or dangerous work. The containing country

³Ibid., pp. 944-945.

was forbidden to use disciplinary measures that would aggravate the conditions of labor.⁴

Article 33 enumerated the system of and responsibility for prisoner-of-war labor detachments. The system of labor detachments had to be similar to that of prisoner-of-war camps, especially in regard to sanitary conditions, food, medical attention, correspondence, and the receipt of packages. Since the labor detachments were dependent upon the prisoner camp, the camp commander was responsible for the application and enforcement of the Geneva Convention rules in the labor detachments.⁵

Finally, Article 34 dealt with the wages for prisoner-of-war labor. On work other than the administration, management, and maintenance of the camps, prisoners were entitled to a rate of pay fixed by agreements between the belligerents. These agreements were also to include the amount of the wages to be retained by the camp administration, the amount that belonged to the prisoner, and the manner in which the prisoner could obtain his pay

⁴Ibid., p. 945.

⁵Ibid.

during internment. The amount credited to the prisoner was to be delivered to him upon repatriation; in cases of death, the pay credited to the prisoner was sent to the heirs of the deceased.⁶

The United States War Department incorporated and interpreted the rules of the Geneva Convention in determining the policies for the utilization of prisoner-of-war labor. According to the last paragraph of Article 27 of the Geneva Convention, every prisoner must receive workman's compensation if injured in connection with his work. The War Department considered each prisoner "an employee of the United States for the purpose of disability compensation."⁷ If a prisoner was disabled while on the job, he would be paid forty cents per day for six days a week. Certain limitations were placed upon this compensation. No disability payment was made for the first three days, and no money was paid to the prisoner if his injury was self-inflicted or caused by misconduct or "voluntary intoxication." The disability compensation

⁶Ibid., pp. 945-946.

⁷TM 19-500, p. 5.12.

expired when the prisoner could perform paid work, was repatriated, or when he died.⁸

Article 31 of the Geneva Convention contained the general prohibition against the use of prisoner labor in "direct relation with war operations." The War Department construed this prohibition to mean that prisoners could provide labor essential for the feeding, sheltering, and clothing of military and nonmilitary personnel. Prisoners could not be employed, however, in tasks which were solely of value in assisting the conduct of active belligerent operations. For example, prisoners could work in the manufacturing of trucks and parts, which were to be eventually used by the military, but they could not manufacture parts exclusively for tanks and similar commodities. Prisoners could also be used in agriculture, food processing, and the manufacture of clothing, even though soldiers might eventually benefit from these activities. Since the War Department conceded that an inclusive definition was impossible, the Prisoner

⁸Ibid.

of War Employment Reviewing Board was created to examine doubtful cases.⁹

In the interpretation of Article 32 of the Geneva Convention, which prohibited dangerous or unhealthy work, the War Department applied this article to the particular task and not to the industry as a whole. The inherent nature of the job, the actual working conditions, and the physical fitness and training of the prisoners determined the suitability of the work to be performed. Thus certain dangerous tasks could be made safe by preliminary training, adequate safety devices, and protective clothing and accessories, such as hard-toed shoes, goggles, and gloves. In addition to these general guidelines, the War Department imposed specific rules and regulations on the use of prisoner labor in logging and lumber industries, meatpacking and other food industries, and railroad maintenance.¹⁰

Article 30 of the Geneva Convention prescribed the hours of work for the prisoners of war. The interpretation of this article by the War Department permitted

⁹Ibid., p. 5.4.

¹⁰Ibid., pp. 5.4-5.7.

the extension of the normal working day for prisoners who were under a task system and who failed to complete the assigned work. The task system consisted of an assignment of a definite, reasonable amount of work for each prisoner or group of prisoners. Prisoners could not work more than twelve hours a day, excluding the lunch period, and could not be kept out of the stockade more than fourteen consecutive hours, which could be computed as part of the permissible working day. Concerning the prisoners' day of rest, the War Department explained that when prisoners were engaged on work projects outside the camp and lost a full day of work during inclement weather, that day would be considered their day of rest, and the prisoners could be required to work on Sunday.¹¹

Detailed information was provided by the War Department in regard to the wages given prisoners who were employed on paid work. According to Article 34 of the Geneva Convention, prisoners were not paid for work which was connected with the administration, management, and maintenance of the prisoner camps. Enlisted prisoner personnel usually received an allowance of ten cents per

¹¹Ibid., pp. 5.7-5.8, 5.10.

day whether they worked or not. Prisoners were paid for all other work, including labor performed for a contract employer, federal agency, branches and services of the War and Navy Departments. Prisoners were also compensated for services as orderlies and cooks for the officer prisoners.¹² In an agreement between the United States and Germany, the United States promised to pay German prisoners eighty cents per day in work outside the camps, while Germany agreed to pay American captives a comparable sum of seventy pfennigs a day.¹³

Prisoners of war employed on paid work were compensated either on a piece-work rate or day-work rate basis. Piece-work rates were established for the employment of prisoner labor for a contract employer or a federal agency other than the War and Navy Departments. The prisoners were paid according to the number of work units completed, but the pay could not exceed \$1.20 for a single day of work. The War Manpower Commission or the War Food Administration (Extension Service, United States Department of Agriculture) had to certify each

¹² Ibid., p. 5.8.

¹³ Lerch, "Army Reports," 544.

proposed piece-work project. A part of this "Certification of Need for Employment of Prisoners of War" contained the following statement: "If at piece rate, average civilian labor will complete _____ units per day."¹⁴ The amount paid the prisoner for each unit was determined by dividing eighty cents by the number of units stated in the certification form. Prisoners employed on a piece-work rate basis were assigned to work in groups, usually not more than twenty-five. The work units were totaled, and each prisoner received his share of the total production. When group measurement was impractical, each prisoner was paid according to his own production of completed work units.¹⁵

Day-work rates were utilized for all other paid work, including that performed for the War and Navy Departments. Under this system, prisoners were paid eighty cents for a full working day and not paid for overtime.¹⁶

¹⁴See Appendix B.

¹⁵TM 19-500, p. 5.9.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 5.9-5.10.

In addition to these specific interpretations of the Geneva Convention, the War Department provided general policies and procedures for the employment of prisoner labor in the United States. The general policies concerning the utilization of prisoner-of-war labor emphasized three areas. Prisoners were to be employed in all activities necessary for the administration, management, and maintenance of prisoner camps. In accordance with the Geneva Convention, prisoners were to perform essential skilled and unskilled work. The War Department defined essential work as that which would have to be done whether or not there were any prisoners available. The last area dealt with the repatriation of the prisoners held in this country. After the war, prisoners would be repatriated as soon as possible, provided that this action did not interfere with the essential labor requirements.¹⁷

The War Department grouped the various types of prisoner labor into three priorities. Priority I consisted of essential Army and Navy work for the operation and maintenance of the military installations. This type

¹⁷Ibid., p. 5.1.

of work was considered the most satisfactory and economical means of utilizing prisoner labor. Priority II comprised the work projects certified by the War Manpower Commission or the War Food Administration. Useful, but nonessential, work on military establishments fell into Priority III. In reference to these priorities, the War Department stated that prisoner labor would be made available to meet emergencies and critical labor shortages including the essential needs of agriculture and food processing industries.¹⁸

Contracts for the employment of prisoners fell into two general categories. One category consisted of the contracts for the furnishing of prisoner labor from an established base or branch camp. The other category dealt with the contracts that covered the housing and utilities provided by the contract employer for a branch camp. The furnishing of housing and utilities for a branch camp had to be specified in a section of or addendum to the contract for prisoner labor.¹⁹

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 5.18.

In order to meet critical labor shortages in the United States the War Department devised detailed policies and procedures for contract employment of prisoners of war. All private individuals, corporations, associations, municipal governments, and state agencies were defined as "contract employers."²⁰

Several specific policies governed the utilization of prisoner labor by these contract employers. The War Department was responsible for the guarding, rationing, clothing, housing of the prisoners, and for medical and postal services. The requirements of the Geneva Convention and the War Department regulated the employment conditions. According to another policy, the War Department would adjust the cost of prisoner labor so that the price paid by the contract employer would be equivalent to that paid for the free laborer performing similar tasks in the same area. A representative of the certifying agency had to fill out and sign a "Certification of Need for Employment of Prisoners of War" before the War

²⁰Ibid., p. 5.16.

Department would enter into a contract with a prospective employer.²¹

Another policy stated that the anticipated gross income under the contract had to be greater than the sum of the prisoner payroll, except in cases of emergency. Whenever practical, the payment for prisoner labor was to be on a piece-work rather than a man-hour or man-day basis. The War Department was to provide information pertaining to the availability of prisoners of war as a labor supply. Another policy dealt with the location of branch camps. Service commanders and camp commanders could request certifying agencies to provide information and recommendations for the establishment of prospective branch camps.²²

To implement these specific policies, contract employment procedures were instituted to provide the necessary guidelines for the utilization of prisoner labor. It was the responsibility of the appropriate certifying agency to investigate the requests for the use of prisoners by contract employers and by agencies of the

²¹Ibid., p. 5.17.

²²Ibid.

Federal Government, excluding the War and Navy Departments.²³

After the request had been examined, the certifying agency forwarded the "Certification of Need for Employment of Prisoners of War" to the nearest camp commander. In the employment of prisoners in agriculture, the State Director of Extension of the United States Department of Agriculture sent a copy of each certification for prisoner employment to the State Director of the War Manpower Commission, who determined and certified to the service commanders the priorities of agricultural projects in relation to other contract projects.²⁴

After the receipt of an acceptable certificate for prisoner employment, the camp commander determined whether or not prisoner labor could be provided for the contract employer. If no prisoners were available for the project, the camp commander sent the certification to the service commander. If prisoner labor was unavailable in the service command, then the service commander forwarded the request to the certifying agency. If the camp commander

²³Ibid.

²⁴Ibid.

could provide the needed prisoner labor, then he was authorized to enter into a contract with the prospective employer.²⁵ This contract had to conform to the requirements listed in the "Certification of Need for Employment of Prisoners of War" and correspond to the standard form entitled "Contract for Labor of Prisoners of War."²⁶

The "Certification of Need for Employment of Prisoners of War" contained certain specific information. The document included the need of one or more employers for prisoner labor and the place and type of work. The certificate also incorporated the estimated number of man-hours or man-days of work, and the priority of the requested work in relation with other requests for prisoner labor. Finally, the certification of need for prisoner employment contained the following important statement:

It has been impossible to secure the necessary workers for this employer through an active campaign of recruitment which has taken into account not only persons normally engaged in the activities listed

²⁵Ibid.

²⁶See Appendix C.

above, but also potential workers from other fields of activities.²⁷

The certification of need for prisoner labor was handled by the War Manpower Commission and the War Food Administration. Both of these agencies certified to the use of prisoners by contract employers and federal agencies other than the War and Navy Departments.²⁸

The War Manpower Commission operated in the field through its regional, state, and local United States Employment Service offices. This Commission received and investigated the requests for contract employment of prisoners and issued certifications of need for prisoner employment, except in the field of agriculture. It was also the responsibility of the War Manpower Commission to assign a priority number or symbol to each certificate of need for prisoner labor and to submit recommendations for the location of camps to the War Department. The Commission reviewed the prevailing wage rates of free labor and examined contract employers' claims into the discrepancies between prisoner and free labor costs.²⁹

²⁷Ibid., p. 5.20.

²⁸Ibid., p. 5.19.

²⁹Ibid., p. 5.20.

The War Food Administration functioned in the field through the Extension Service of the United States Department of Agriculture, which included the State Directors of Extension and County Agents. To receive and investigate requests for prisoner employment in agriculture was the responsibility of the War Food Administration. This administration also issued the "Certification of Need for Employment of Prisoners of War" and recommended the location of camps for agricultural employment. The War Food Administration also examined prevailing wage rates and production rates of free labor in agriculture and amended certifications accordingly.³⁰

The extent of utilization of prisoner labor eventually resulted in millions of man-days of work in vital agricultural and nonagricultural areas. However, during 1942, there was little opportunity to use prisoner labor in the United States because only a few prisoners were interned in this country, and manpower shortages in industry and agriculture did not become critical until the latter part of that year.³¹

³⁰Ibid.

³¹Lewis and Mewha, Prisoner Utilization, p. 101.

Early in 1943 critical manpower shortages developed in many areas of agriculture and in certain industries. These shortages resulted in an increase of prisoner employment by August of that year. The greater number of prisoners available for work and the stimulation of the prisoner employment program by the War Department also contributed to the increase of prisoner labor. More prisoner information was made available to employers, and the number of jobs that prisoners could perform were increased. Numerous branch camps were established near critical labor areas, and better cooperation existed between the War Department and the United States Employment Service. Even with these improvements only 59.7 percent of the internees were employed by February, 1944.³²

The commanding generals of the service commands conferred at Dallas, Texas, in February, 1944, to discuss the manpower situation in the United States and the problems relating to prisoners of war. The necessity of maximum prisoner utilization was stressed in an effort

³²Ibid., p. 110.

to replace Army personnel and alleviate civilian labor shortages. This conference adopted the policy to "balance the risk of prisoner escapes against the value of work to be done."³³ This balance of security with productivity removed the last major obstacle to the program of full prisoner employment.

As a result of these policies the overall percentage of prisoners available for work increased to 72.8 percent by May 31, 1944, and to 91.3 percent by April 26, 1945. From June, 1944, to August, 1945, 851,994 man-months were worked by prisoners of war in agriculture, pulpwood and lumber, mining and quarrying, construction, food processing and other manufacturing, transportation, trade, and other industries not related to governmental work.³⁴

During World War II more prisoners in this country were utilized in agriculture than in any other form of prisoner contract labor. Of the 851,994 man-months worked by prisoners, 439,163 man-months were performed by

³³Ibid., p. 118.

³⁴Ibid., pp. 125-126.

prisoners on numerous types of farm work in every major agricultural section of the country. Prisoners of war, in addition to relieving critical manpower shortages, saved many crops and made it possible to increase production. Crops harvested by prisoner labor from late 1943 to early 1946 included apples, asparagus, corn, cotton, figs, hay, oats, onions, peaches, peanuts, pecans, potatoes, rice, seed crops, small grain, soybeans, spinach, string beans, sugar beets, tomatoes, and wheat. The employment of prisoners in agricultural work was so successful that in 1946 the repatriation of about fourteen thousand prisoners was postponed at the request of the Secretary of Agriculture so that prisoners could be used on essential farm work.³⁵

By 1945, 95.6 percent of prisoners available for employment were working for military and nonmilitary contract employers. In May, 1945, shipments of German and Italian prisoners to this country were terminated, and the employment of prisoners of war was reduced. Plans were initiated for the repatriation of all captives, provided

³⁵Ibid., pp. 126-127.

that civilians could replace the prisoner labor, and transports could be available for the return of the prisoners to Europe.³⁶

Under pressure from some members of Congress and the Secretary of Agriculture, President Harry S. Truman announced in January, 1946, that repatriation of captives would be deferred for sixty days in order to alleviate temporary labor shortages in certain industries. The Secretary of War stated that 20,300 prisoners would be available for agricultural labor in April, 10,150 in May, and 10,420 in June, 1946. President Truman later announced that all German prisoners would be removed from the United States by the end of June, 1946. This announcement terminated the prisoner-of-war employment program in the United States.³⁷

After the War Department substituted the policy of maximum utilization for maximum security of the prisoners of war, the expected increase of prisoner escapes never materialized. According to Provost Marshal

³⁶Ibid., pp. 171-172.

³⁷Ibid., p. 173.

General Archer L. Lerch, there had been 1,369 escapes as of March 1, 1945, with only twelve prisoners still at large. From November, 1942, through December 31, 1944, 648 prisoners of war had been at large for one day or less, 148 for two days or less, 111 for three days, and only 31 for more than fourteen days.³⁸

The productivity of prisoner labor far outweighed the security risks that had to be taken. The prisoners performed 90,629,233 man-days of labor in paid work on military installations during 1943 through 1945. This labor resulted in a savings of more than \$131,000,000 and netted a total of \$39,000,000 from nonmilitary contract work projects. In contract employment the prisoners performed 34,219,185 man-days of work from 1943 through 1945. Of this total, 20,882,852 man-days occurred in the field of agriculture. Thus the majority of the prisoners were utilized on military establishments, and over twenty-five percent of the total labor constituted contract employment.³⁹

³⁸Lerch, "Army Reports," 545-546.

³⁹Lewis and Mewha, Prisoner Utilization, pp. 263-264.

The utilization of prisoners of war as a labor force in the United States proved to be a success during World War II. The War Department coordinated its program within the rules established by the Geneva Convention and succeeded in reducing the expenditures for maintaining the prisoners and in using the prisoners effectively. The employment of prisoners relieved critical manpower shortages by releasing soldiers and civilians from skilled and unskilled labor projects, alleviated farm labor shortages, and saved numerous crops throughout the United States.

CHAPTER III

PRISONERS OF WAR IN TEXAS

During World War II prisoner-of-war camps were established in every state of the United States except Nevada, Montana, North Dakota, and Vermont. As of June, 1944, the Eighth Service Command maintained eighty-nine of the approximately three hundred prisoner-of-war camps in the continental United States. The following five states constituted the Eighth Service Command:

| <u>States</u> | <u>Number of Camps</u> |
|---------------|------------------------|
| Arkansas | 17 |
| Louisiana | 16 |
| New Mexico | 8 |
| Oklahoma | 15 |
| Texas | 33 ¹ |

Throughout the war Texas had approximately twice as many prisoner camps as any other state. By August, 1943, there were twelve camps in Texas, and by June 1, 1944, there were thirty-three.² More prisoner-of-war

¹Lewis and Mewha, Prisoner Utilization, p. 112.

²Ibid., pp. 111-112.

camps were located in Texas than in any other state due to several reasons. Security regulations from the Provost Marshal General limited the establishment of prisoner camps in the eastern and western coastal zones of the United States, and mild climate regions were preferred because they kept construction costs to a minimum.³ The size of Texas provided greater opportunities to establish more camps in isolated areas. As the shift from maximum security to maximum utilization of prisoners occurred, Texas could also furnish employment opportunities for prisoner labor in agriculture and certain industries.

As in all of the states the number of base and branch camps fluctuated during each year of the war. Most of the prisoner-of-war base camps were located on existing military reservations. At one time or another base camps were located on the following fourteen military installations in Texas: Camp Barkeley (Taylor County), Camp Bowie (Brown County), Camp Fannin (Smith County), Camp Hood (Bell County), Camp Howze (Cooke County), Camp Hulen (Matagorda County), Camp Maxey (Lamar County), Camp

³Ibid., p. 86.

Swift (Bastrop County), Camp Wolters (Palo Pinto County), Fort Bliss (El Paso County), Fort Brown (Cameron County), Fort Crockett (Galveston County), Fort D. A. Russell (Presidio County), and Fort Sam Houston (Bexar County).⁴

In March, 1945, the following seven base camps existed strictly for prisoners of war: Brady (McCulloch County), Hearne (Robertson County), Hereford (Deaf Smith County), Huntsville (Walker County), McLean (Gray County), Mexia (Limestone County), and Camp Wallace (Galveston County). All of the above base camps housed German prisoners of war except Hereford, which contained Italian prisoners. In addition, Japanese prisoners were also interned at Hearne and Huntsville during 1945.⁵

The number of prisoners that each base camp could accommodate varied greatly. By September 9, 1943, there were twelve camps in Texas that could intern a total of 44,400 prisoners. The largest base camp was located at Mexia, Texas, which had a total capacity of fifty-eight

⁴Texas Almanac, 1945-1946 (Dallas: A. H. Belo Corporation, 1945), p. 78.

⁵Ibid.; "Huntsville Jap POW Camp Experiments in Teaching Democratic Way of Life," Huntsville Item, December 6, 1945, p. 1; Carl Maisen, private interview in Mexia, Texas, August 5, 1971.

hundred. The second largest camp was at Hereford, which could contain five thousand internees. The following were the other camps in Texas and their prisoner capacity: Hearne (4,800), Huntsville (4,800), Camp Hood (4,000), Camp Maxey (4,000), Camp Swift (3,000), McLean (3,000), Camp Bowie (3,000), Brady (3,000), Camp Howze (3,000), and Camp Fannin (1,000).⁶

Almost every Texas base camp operated branch camps to provide prisoner labor in areas of labor shortages that were too far for daily transportation of prisoners from the base camp. In order to fulfill definite work needs in these critical areas, branch camps were usually constructed with temporary materials, or they utilized existing facilities, such as school houses, fair grounds, and other public buildings. For example, the county fair grounds were used for a branch camp in Fort Bend County, abandoned Civilian Conservation Corps structures were utilized at Ysleta, and circus tents were erected for the Navasota branch camp.⁷ This idea of

⁶"44,400 Prisoners Called Capacity of Texas Camps," Mexia Daily News, September 9, 1943, p. 1.

⁷"'More Cotton Used--Higher the Prices' Theme of Fort Bend F. B. Fair Display," Texas Agriculture,

"portable camps" was first formulated by Lieutenant Colonel James G. Gee, who later was in charge of all prisoner-of-war activities within the Eighth Service Command.⁸

Because of the temporary facilities that were utilized for these mobile camps, the number of prisoner-of-war branch camps in Texas fluctuated greatly during the war. During 1943 nine branch camps were established, seven of which were still operational by the end of the year. In 1944 twelve new temporary or branch camps were located near the following towns: Alvin (Brazoria County), Angleton (Brazoria County), China (Jefferson County), Cleburne (Johnson County), Corsicana (Navarro County), Eagle Lake (Colorado County), El Campo (Wharton County), Fabens (El Paso County), Ganado (Jackson County), Garwood (Colorado County), Kaufman (Kaufman County), Kerrville (Kerr County), Liberty (Liberty County), Mont

December, 1946, p. 7; Texas Extension Service, "Annual Reports, 1944," Texas Agricultural and Mechanical University, pp. 204, 400. (Hereinafter referred to as "Annual Reports, 1944.")

⁸James G. Gee, private interview in Huntsville, Texas, May 30, 1972.

Belvieu (Chambers County), Navasota (Grimes County), Orange (Orange County), Stowell (Chambers County), Wharton (Wharton County), and Ysleta (El Paso County).⁹

During 1945 the number of branch camps in Texas reached twenty-two. The following three camps were added to the nineteen camps that were operational: Canutillo (El Paso County), Chance Plantation, and Princeton (Collin County).¹⁰ Other branch camps were established at Anahuac, Bay City, Beaumont, Center, Lufkin, Rosenberg, and San Augustine.¹¹

The number of prisoners of war stationed in each branch camp usually corresponded to the number needed to relieve manpower shortages in critical agricultural areas. Concerning the number of prisoners in branch camps in Texas from August to December, 1944, the following information was provided by J. M. Ward, Assistant State Farm Labor Supervisor, on May 22, 1945:

⁹"Annual Reports, 1944," p. 213.

¹⁰Texas Extension Service, "Annual Reports, 1945," Texas Agricultural and Mechanical University, p. 406. (Hereinafter referred to as "Annual Reports, 1945.")

¹¹"Annual Reports, 1944," p. 6; "War Prisoners to Aid," Mexia Daily News, October 8, 1943, p. 3; "POW Camp Closes," Mexia Daily News, November 12, 1945, p. 5.

| Camp | August | September to December | 1945 |
|--------------|--------|-----------------------------|------|
| Alvin | 244 | 400 | 200 |
| Angleton | 196 | 250 | 125 |
| Bay City | 217 | 350 | 150 |
| China | -0- | 300 | 450 |
| Cleburne | 109 | 150 | 400 |
| Eagle Lake | -0- | 200 | 225 |
| El Campo | -0- | 250 | 250 |
| Fabens | 200 | 400 | * |
| Ganado | -0- | 200 | 175 |
| Garwood | -0- | 200 | 225 |
| Kaufman | 409 | 150 | 400 |
| Liberty | 30 | 200 | 125 |
| Mont Belvieu | -0- | 100 | 125 |
| Orange | -0- | 100 | 100 |
| Rosenberg | 176 | 200 | 200 |
| Stowell | -0- | 200 | 300 |
| Wharton | 214 | 150 | -0- |
| Ysleta | 200 | 400 | * |

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*Both Fabens and Ysleta were in El Paso County, which contained a total of 1,000 prisoners.

The agricultural utilization of prisoners of war in Texas eventually became the responsibility of the Texas Extension Service, Texas Agricultural and Mechanical College. In a tentative procedure published by the War Foods Administration in July, 1943, farmers were

¹²Letter, J. M. Ward to Herbert Doerge, May 22, 1945, Texas Extension Service Records, Texas Agricultural and Mechanical University; "Annual Reports, 1945," p. 406.

allowed to apply to their local county agent for prisoner-of-war labor.¹³ This procedure established a more direct relationship between the representative of the Department of Agriculture Extension Service and the prison camp commander. In August of the same year, however, an agreement between the War Department and the War Manpower Commission prescribed that requests for prisoner labor for agriculture had to be channeled through the offices of the War Manpower Commission.¹⁴

As a result of the objections by farm leaders and agricultural officials Congress passed a bill that permitted direct negotiations between the War Foods Administration and the War Department for prisoner labor in agriculture. In this procedure the authority of the War Foods Administration was delegated to its administrator and the agricultural extension service of land grant colleges. In March, 1944, the Director of Extension was permitted by the War Department to submit his requests for prisoner-of-war labor directly to the service command

¹³Lewis and Mewha, Prisoner Utilization, p. 129.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 109.

involved. This request, however, had to be certified by the director of the War Manpower Commission, who formulated the priority of the farm projects.¹⁵ As a result the Texas Extension Service applied these policies on the state level and assumed the responsibility for the employment of prisoners of war in agricultural areas throughout Texas.

The Texas Extension Service organized its personnel to deal with the agricultural problems encountered during World War II. The Director of the Extension Service had the overall responsibility for the farm labor program and delegated the administrative responsibility to the Vice Director. The planning, operation, and details of the farm labor program were managed by the Extension State Farm Labor Office. These plans of operation were sent to the district agents, who in turn relayed them to the county agricultural agents.

The personnel of the Extension State Farm Labor Office consisted of a State Farm Labor Supervisor, four Assistant State Farm Labor Supervisors, two Farm Labor

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 129-130.

Field Assistants, a State Farm Labor Assistant, and from ten to twenty State Migratory Labor Assistants. The four Assistant State Farm Labor Supervisors were in charge of the migratory labor phase, the labor-saving device phase, the Victory Farm Volunteer phase, and the prisoner-of-war phase and statistical work.¹⁶

The county agents determined the farm labor needs and analyzed the local labor supply in their respective counties. The county agent used surveys to determine crop acreage, prospective yields, estimated data of peak harvest season, and labor and housing available within the county. Weekly reports were submitted by the county agent to the Extension State Farm Labor Office in regard to the county labor needs.¹⁷

According to the "Annual Reports, 1943," of the Texas Extension Service, the reduction of the normal farm labor supply necessitated the emergency farm labor program. Many of the individuals in the twenty to thirty-five year age group were lost to the armed services and industry.

¹⁶"Annual Reports, 1945," pp. 353-354.

¹⁷Ibid., pp. 355-356.

In April, 1943, the departure of twenty-five to thirty thousand migrant laborers to the northern sugar beet fields left only about one-third of the normal force of three hundred thousand needed to perform agricultural labor. The Texas Agricultural Experiment Station estimated that there were approximately six hundred and fifty thousand workers available from the farm population. However, the number of workers usually required for the peak labor season of a normal year was 958,000. Thus a manpower deficit of 308,000 was estimated for 1943.¹⁸

The Extension Service alleviated this critical manpower shortage by utilizing laborers from non-farm rural and urban areas. When these sources of labor had been depleted for a particular work project, the county agricultural agent requested prisoners of war from the United States Army. This procedure resulted in the utilization of approximately thirty-five hundred prisoners of war in twenty-nine Texas counties during 1943.¹⁹

¹⁸Texas Extension Service, "Annual Reports, 1943," Texas Agricultural and Mechanical University, p. 10. (Hereinafter referred to as "Annual Reports, 1943.")

¹⁹"Annual Reports, 1943," p. 11; "Annual Reports, 1944," p. 203.

In the early months of 1944 the outlook for the employment of prisoners of war in Texas was not favorable. The Eighth Service Command, headquartered in Dallas, made no commitments concerning the number of prisoners that could be utilized for agricultural work. According to the "Annual Reports, 1944," of the Texas Extension Service, there was "widespread demand" for prisoner labor throughout the state.²⁰ Surveys revealed that 21,200 prisoners were needed in sixty-five counties. The Extension Service stated that they were determined to use prisoner labor in the most crucial areas and especially the rice-producing area.²¹

In an effort to obtain more consideration from the Eighth Service Command, the Extension Service divided the state into priority areas and determined the probable number of prisoners needed in each area. Priority I included rice harvesting (August 1-December 15), cotton chopping (April 20-June 15), cotton picking (August-September), and corn pulling (September-October).

²⁰"Annual Reports, 1944," p. 203.

²¹Ibid.

Priority II consisted of cotton chopping (May 15-June 30), hay bailing (June 1-October 31), and cotton picking (September 1-December 1). Feed harvesting (September-December), vegetables (April-November), and wheat harvesting (June 15-July 30) were classified into Priority III. In order for this plan to succeed, mobilization of prisoner-of-war labor was essential and led to the establishment of mobile or branch camps.²²

On May 24, 1944, a conference was held in Dallas to discuss the problems that related to prisoner-of-war employment in the Eighth Service Command. Attending the conference were the State Directors of Agricultural Extension Service, Aubrey D. Gates of Arkansas, H. C. Sanders of Louisiana, J. D. Prewit of Texas, Brigadier General L. F. Guerre, Director of the Security and Intelligence Division, and Lieutenant Colonel James G. Gee, Chief of the Works Project Section. Agreements were reached concerning projects for prisoner labor, wage rates, availability of prisoner labor, standard operating procedures for the selection of camp sites, requirements

²²Ibid., pp. 203, 214.

of states involved, and the establishment of mobile camps. The conference resulted in a better understanding between the State Directors of the Extension Service and the Eighth Service Command. Also, Brigadier General Guerre tentatively allocated five thousand prisoners to each state. However, before the Texas Extension Service could formulate the distribution of this labor, the Eighth Service Command reduced the number of prisoners to forty-five hundred. Using this basis the Texas Extension Service allocated thirty-two hundred of this total to the rice counties. In August, 1944, Texas farmers were permitted to use additional prisoners of war, who provided sufficient labor to harvest vital war crops.²³

In June, 1944, a meeting was held in Houston to determine the wage rate for prisoner-of-war labor in the thirteen rice-producing counties. This area meeting was attended by Lieutenant Colonel James G. Gee, both commanding officers of the base camps at Huntsville and Camp Swift, the county and district agents, and the chairman of the County Farm Wage Board. The Extension State Farm

²³Ibid., pp. 203-204, 213.

Labor Office was represented by the State Farm Labor Supervisor and the Assistant State Farm Labor Supervisor. After the county wage rates had been analyzed and an average rate for the area had been determined, the conference recommended a wage of twenty-five cents per hour for general farm work and three dollars per day for rice harvesting. Both the representatives of the Eighth Service Command and the counties in the area accepted this wage rate, which proved successful in reducing conflicts over prisoners' wages during 1944.²⁴

According to the various county reports prisoners of war alleviated manpower shortages in agriculture and harvested numerous crops during 1944. For instance, the report from Colorado County, which utilized prisoners from two branch camps in the county, stated that most farm work was accomplished through cooperation and exchange of labor and equipment among the farmers. However, the production and harvesting of about forty thousand acres of rice required outside labor, which was ultimately performed by prisoners of war from the Eagle Lake and Garwood camps. Colorado County reported that about six hundred prisoners

²⁴Ibid., pp. 204-205.

harvested more than 80 percent of the forty thousand acres of rice.²⁵

Lamar County, which employed prisoners from the base camp at Camp Maxey, reported that 526 prisoners of war had been used in one day, and a daily average of 190 prisoners performed agricultural labor for a period of six weeks. According to the report from El Paso County, eleven hundred Italian prisoners saved a possible loss of approximately sixty-five thousand dollars in cotton production, while the seven hundred German prisoners picked an average of about eighty bales of cotton per day.²⁶

Many of the county reports explained that prisoner-of-war labor was not satisfactory in all instances, but the prisoners supplied essential labor that could not be found elsewhere. The county reports to the Texas Extension Service revealed that 11,505 prisoners had been utilized in thirty-nine counties as farm laborers during 1944. These prisoners greatly contributed to agricultural production in the state and performed the following tasks:

²⁵Ibid., pp. 205-207.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 207-208.

42,071 acres of cotton chopped
 8,152 bales of cotton picked or pulled
 9,395 acres of corn chopped or thinned
 12,749 acres of corn harvested
 15,730 tons of hay harvested
 174,343 acres of rice harvested
 3,872 cords of wood cut
 3,528 acres of land cleared
 1,593 miles of fence built or repaired
 172,351 acres of grain sorghum shocked
 1,842 acres of potatoes harvested
 1,430 acres of peanuts stacked
 7,000 bushels of peanuts threshed
 56,938 pounds of pecans picked
 150 acres of onions planted
 100 acres of small grain shocked
 70,970 bushels of small grain threshed
 3,900 tons of silage put up
 180 acres of corn detasseled
 876 acres of grain sorghum headed
 16 buildings repaired
 25 acres of tomatoes harvested
 400 acres of figs harvested
 75 acres of sweet potatoes harvested
 100 tons of hay stacked
 400 acres of Johnson Grass removed
 250 acres of legumes planted
 250 acres plowed
 300,000 pounds of grain sorghum shoveled
 130 acres of vegetables harvested
 5,200 man-hours in repairing buildings
 8,000 man-hours on canal work
 54,288 man-hours to chop cotton
 4,000 man-hours on repairing machines.²⁷

As in the early months of 1944, the prospect was not favorable for the utilization of prisoners of war in Texas in 1945. In March the Eighth Service Command

²⁷Ibid., pp. 209-211.

announced to the Texas Extension Service that fewer allocations had been established for each service command, and the number of allocations for prisoner labor had been reduced below the number actually needed. In the same month state allocations were given by the Eighth Service Command. Texas received only about 50 percent of the number requested but distributed this number to the various counties within the state. By May allocations for the growing season had been established, and in July the harvesting allocations were formulated.²⁸

The problem over prisoner-of-war wage rates was not encountered during the year. Wage hearings were held in all of the counties, and wages were periodically amended to correspond to changes in conditions and wages.²⁹

At the end of the year the Texas Extension Service reported that a maximum of twelve thousand prisoners had been utilized during the growing and harvesting seasons in approximately fifty counties. The prisoners

²⁸ "Annual Reports, 1945," p. 400.

²⁹ Ibid.

performed about one hundred operations and jobs during the year. The major tasks accomplished by the prisoners included the following:

- 103,487 acres of cotton chopped
- 16,500 bales of cotton picked or pulled
- 12,347 acres of corn chopped or thinned
- 21,000 acres of corn harvested
- 58,083 tons of hay harvested
- 102,088 acres of rice harvested
- 2,360 cords of wood cut
- 9,346 acres of land cleared
- 2,150 miles of fence built or repaired
- 133,952 acres of grain sorghum shocked
- 107,468 bushels of potatoes picked
- 1,848 acres of potatoes harvested³⁰

The Texas Extension Service reported that prisoner-of-war labor contributed greatly to the overall farm production and harvesting programs in Texas during the war. Many Navarro County farmers admitted that their 1945 production would have been "impossible" without the prisoner labor.³¹

Three of the largest prisoner base camps in Texas were located at Hearne, Huntsville, and Mexia. The total

³⁰Ibid., pp. 401-402, 405.

³¹Ibid., pp. 401, 404.

number of prisoners that these three camps could accommodate was slightly over fifteen thousand.³²

Both the Hearne and Huntsville camps had similar origins. The United States Army selected sites near Hearne and Huntsville because these sites fulfilled the basic requirements for the establishment of a base camp and were accessible to major railroad lines and highways. Two army officers arrived in Huntsville and selected a tract of land about twelve miles northeast of Huntsville on State Highway 19.³³ On August 13, 1942, approximately twenty army personnel arrived and began preparations for the prisoner-of-war camp. The camp was constructed along the lines of a military post and garrisoned by one or more army guard companies.³⁴ The Huntsville Prisoner-of-War Camp was completed by September 18, 1942, and consisted of approximately four hundred buildings, four deep water

³² "44,400 Prisoners Called Capacity of Texas Camps," Mexia Daily News, September 9, 1943, p. 1.

³³ Robert B. Smither, private interview in Huntsville, Texas, May 30, 1972; "'Country Campus' Is Added to Sam Houston Facilities," Huntsville Item, July 4, 1946, p. 1.

³⁴ "Soldiers To Garrison The Camp Near Here," Huntsville Item, August 27, 1942, p. 1.

wells, a sewage disposal plant, and an incinerator. The camp contained a laundry, bakery, clothing shop, post exchange, barber shop, cafeteria, commissary, gymnasium, fire station, guard house, and motor pool. Clubs for officers and noncommissioned officers and barracks for American personnel and prisoners of war were also erected. The hospital building was the largest and most expensive structure in the base camp. It consisted of seven wings for beds, one wing for a cafeteria, and one wing for dental work. With the exception of the hospital, the buildings were covered by heavy tar paper over wood frames. The camp was surrounded by two fences and twenty guard towers.³⁵

On July 23, 1942, engineers from the United States Army arrived in Hearne and started preparations for the construction of the prisoner-of-war camp one mile north of Hearne on Highway 190. By November 30, 1942, the Hearne Prisoner-of-War Camp was completed and ready for occupancy. This camp covered an area of approximately

³⁵Frances H. Bowers, "History of the Country Campus" (unpublished M.A. thesis, Sam Houston State Teachers College, 1950), pp. 10-12.

eight hundred acres and was basically constructed like the camp at Huntsville.³⁶

The selection of a prisoner-of-war base camp near Mexia was a direct result of the activities of the Mexia Chamber of Commerce and certain city officials. During the depression of the 1930's the federal government had acquired approximately twelve hundred acres of land about three miles west of Mexia. This tract of land had been purchased in order to resettle small farmers in the area but had never been fully developed by the government. The president of the Mexia Chamber of Commerce, Raymond L. Dillard, and Mexia's City Manager, Howard F. Mace, enlisted the aid of Congressman Luther A. Johnson of Corsicana in an effort to obtain some type of military installation.³⁷ On July 2, 1942, Congressman Johnson released the news that a two million dollar "Enemy Alien and War Prisoner" detention camp would be constructed

³⁶"Concentration Camp Project to Start," Hearne Democrat, July 24, 1942, p. 1; Lewis and Mewha, Prisoner Utilization, p. 85; Norman L. McCarver and Norman L. McCarver, Jr., Hearne on the Brazos (San Antonio: Century Press of Texas, 1958), pp. 78-79. (Hereinafter referred to as McCarver, Hearne.)

³⁷Raymond L. Dillard, private interview in Mexia, Texas, August 4, 1971.

near Mexia as soon as possible.³⁸ Preparations for the building of the camp began in August, and by December 30, 1942, the camp was completed and ready for prisoners.³⁹ The types of buildings and facilities that comprised the Mexia camp were basically similar to the camps at Hearne and Huntsville.⁴⁰

During the early months of 1943 German prisoners of war arrived at Hearne, Huntsville, and Mexia. For security reasons the exact dates of prisoner arrivals to the various camps were not published in any of the local newspapers. However, numerous people found out about the arrival of prisoners and observed the movement of the prisoners to the base camps.⁴¹ The first shipment of prisoners to Hearne, Huntsville, and Mexia arrived by train and were then marched to the base camp. The first consignment consisted of Germans who had been captured in

³⁸"Alien Camp To Be Built in Mexia," Mexia Daily News, July 2, 1942, p. 1.

³⁹"An Urgent Appeal," Mexia Daily News, August 4, 1942, p. 1; Lewis and Mewha, Prisoner Utilization, p. 85.

⁴⁰Carl Maisen.

⁴¹Raymond L. Dillard; Helen Cox Palmos, private interview in Hearne, Texas, May 25, 1972.

North Africa and had been a part of Rommel's Afrika Korps.⁴² As the war continued more German prisoners from other branches of the service arrived at the camps. In addition to the prisoners captured from the German Army, the Mexia camp contained German naval officers, including one of the highest ranking German admirals. During the late stages of the war Japanese prisoners were interned in both the Hearne and Huntsville camps, but no Italian prisoners of war were ever stationed at Hearne, Huntsville, or Mexia.⁴³

The daily life of the prisoners of war was basically the same in almost every base camp. Reveille was at five forty-five in the morning, and lights in the barracks were turned off at ten every night. The prisoners consumed the same type of field rations that the American soldiers received but were allowed to prepare the food by German recipes. Some of the prisoners performed certain duties essential in the operation of the camp,

⁴²McCarver, Hearne, p. 79; Carl Maisen; James G. Gee; Robert B. Smither; Jerry Miller, private interview in Mexia, Texas, August 9, 1971; Robert E. Rohde, Jr., private interview in Hearne, Texas, May 24, 1972.

⁴³Carl Maisen.

such as cooking, mowing grass, repainting tar paper barracks, and hauling supplies and garbage. Many of the prisoners were permitted to utilize their skills as mechanics, engineers, architects, and artists.⁴⁴

The recreational activities of the prisoners varied greatly. The internees participated in organized sports, such as soccer, handball, and track. The more artistic prisoners painted murals and pictures, maintained flower and vegetable gardens, constructed replicas of German castles and houses, and built accurate clocks and rock sun dials. Also, many of the camps had prisoner-of-war orchestras that performed on special occasions.⁴⁵

The prisoners also engaged in a few illegal activities, such as making their own liquor. At various times homemade stills were found in both the Hearne and Mexia camps. These stills were located under the barracks or

⁴⁴"Hans Is A Mighty Lucky Nazi," Houston Post, June 20, 1943, p. 5. (Hereinafter referred to as Houston Post, June 20, 1943.); Jerry Miller; McCarver, Hearne, p. 79.

⁴⁵Houston Post, June 20, 1943; G. E. Blair, private interview in Mexia, Texas, August 5, 1971; McCarver, Hearne, p. 79; Robert E. Rohde, Jr.; Jerry Miller; Harry Malcolm Hale, private interview in Mexia, Texas, August 9, 1971; "Christmas at Hearne Prisoner of War Camp," Hearne Democrat, December 31, 1943, p. 4.

in attics and were constructed from scrap metal and copper tubing. Sugar, potatoes, oranges, and apples were removed from the mess halls by the prisoners in order to make their beverages. Sometimes the stills were not found until after the prisoners had consumed the fruits of their labor.⁴⁶

Other incidents occurred as a result of the ingenuity of the prisoners of war. In June, 1944, the Federal Bureau of Investigation traced propaganda pamphlets to the Mexia prisoners. The German prisoners used a mimeograph machine from the American officers' club to produce handbills that criticized allied censorship and reported distorted allied invasion losses. These pamphlets were signed by the "American Soviet Committee" and appeared in Corsicana, Hubbard, and other central Texas towns.⁴⁷

Another incident occurred as a result of the selection of the Hearne camp as a mail distribution center

⁴⁶Robert E. Rohde, Jr.; Carl Maisen; Jerry Miller.

⁴⁷"FBI Traces Mysterious Propaganda Pamphlets to Mexia War Prisoners," Mexia Daily News, June 18, 1944, p. 1.

for German prisoners in the United States. In March, 1944, the Hearne Prisoner-of-War Camp was chosen to distribute all mail for German prisoners that were interned in the United States. Uncooperative German noncommissioned officers, under the supervision of United States Army personnel, operated the postal unit and directed the mail to approximately one hundred and fifty camps.⁴⁸ Trouble resulted when these German postal workers established an intelligence system directed against cooperative German prisoners in the continental United States. They noted camp censorship and postal markings, gained access to restricted camp rosters, manufactured unauthorized censorship and postmark stamps, and removed the United States examiners' label for their own use. Consequently the German postal unit at Hearne was discontinued, and Italian prisoners at Fort Meade assumed the distribution of mail for German prisoners in the United States.⁴⁹

Throughout the war escapes occurred from the Hearne, Huntsville, and Mexia camps but were of short

⁴⁸"Hearne Prisoner of War Camp Selected Distributing Point for Prisoner Mail in the U.S.," Hearne Democrat, March 24, 1944, p. 1.

⁴⁹Lewis and Mewha, Prisoner Utilization, p. 161.

duration. According to local newspaper accounts only six German prisoners escaped from Hearne, one from Huntsville, and ten from Mexia. All of these prisoners were captured within a week, and only two made it as far as Corpus Christi.⁵⁰ Most of these escapees were found and returned within two days, and one was found hanged one and a half miles from the Huntsville camp. Most of the prisoners escaped on foot, but three that escaped from the Hearne camp were found on the Brazos River in crude boats made of wood, canvas, and raincoats.⁵¹

The German prisoners of war interned at Hearne, Huntsville, and Mexia were utilized by the farmers in the surrounding areas. Almost all of the farmers that were interviewed employed prisoners on farm work due to the manpower shortages in the various areas. According to one county agent who had worked with the farmers near the Mexia camp, prisoners were used by farmers because there was no other labor available for farm work. Migratory laborers

⁵⁰ "State-Wide Search For 5 Ger. Ends in Capture," Mexia Daily News, February 10, 1944, p. 1.

⁵¹ "German Prisoner of War Found Hanged in Woods," Huntsville Item, April 20, 1944, p. 1; "Prisoners of War Back in Camp," Hearne Democrat, August 18, 1944, p. 1.

were not to be found in these critical agricultural areas, and able-bodied men were either in the military or had moved into the cities to work at war plants.⁵² According to W. O. Simmons of Huntsville, who had used both German and Japanese prisoners on his farm, "I damn sure didn't get them [prisoners] because I wanted to. I just got them because I couldn't do no better."⁵³

The procedures for obtaining the prisoners for farm labor basically followed the same pattern. The farmer would go to the prisoner-of-war camp and fill out a form, which included the number of prisoners needed, number of days that the prisoners would be employed, and the type of work involved. After a few days the farmer would usually return to the camp in the morning, pick up the needed prisoners and guards, transport them to the work fields, and return them to the camp around five o'clock in the evening. Sometimes, however, the army would supply the transportation of the prisoners to and from the farms.

⁵²J. D. Moore, private interview in Cameron, Texas, August 6, 1971; Fred C. Ferrara, private interview in Hearne, Texas, May 25, 1972.

⁵³W. O. Simmons, private interview near Huntsville, Texas, May 30, 1972.

The prisoners and guards brought their own lunches from the camp, but the farmer had to supply water during the day.⁵⁴

In some cases a farmer procured the same prisoners each time he went to the base camp. After a while the farmer had a group of hard-working internees that he could call "his own crew."⁵⁵ This selection process usually took place in the base camp by the prisoners themselves. With the permission of the farmer some of the prisoner-leaders of the crew replaced indolent workers with better men, which resulted in a "quality crew."⁵⁶

The types of farm work that the prisoners performed corresponded to the types of crops near the various camps. Prisoners of war from the Mexia camp picked and chopped cotton, pulled corn, baled hay, and chopped wood.⁵⁷ The prisoners from Huntsville picked and chopped cotton,

⁵⁴J. T. Bounds, private interview in Tehuacana, Texas, August 5, 1971; J. W. Elliot, private interview in Mexia, Texas, August 5, 1971; W. O. Simmons; Leo Luke Roffino, private interview in Hearne, Texas, May 25, 1972.

⁵⁵J. T. Bounds.

⁵⁶Ibid.

⁵⁷J. T. Bounds; J. W. Elliot: Lloyd D. Yelverton, private interview in Tehuacana, Texas, August 5, 1971; G. F. Thomason, private interview in Coolidge, Texas, August 9, 1971; Oliver J. Lee, private interview in Coolidge, Texas, August 9, 1971.

while the ones from the Hearne camp picked and chopped cotton, seeded, planted, and harvested onions, alfalfa, and grains.⁵⁸ In addition to farm labor the prisoners performed odd jobs around the farms, such as yard work and house painting, and a group of German prisoners from the Hearne camp worked in a turkey dressing plant in Cameron, Texas.⁵⁹

Most of the farmers interviewed for this study stated that the prisoners of war were not good at picking cotton. Most of the German prisoners had never seen a stalk of cotton, and according to one Huntsville farmer, the Germans did not know "a stalk of cotton from a goddamn cocklebur." ⁶⁰ Also the prisoners said that they did not like to pick cotton because it was "woman's work" and for a "lower class of people." ⁶¹ Their inexperience slowed down the total pounds of cotton

⁵⁸"Nazis Hoe Cotton," Business Week, June 19, 1943, p. 18; W. O. Simmons; Leo Luke Roffino; Fred C. Ferrara; James Cortemelia, private interview in Hearne, Texas, May 30, 1972.

⁵⁹J. T. Bounds; J. W. Elliot; J. D. Moore.

⁶⁰J. T. Bounds; W. O. Simmons.

⁶¹J. T. Bounds; J. D. Moore.

picked, but this problem was alleviated as the prisoners became more familiar with cotton.⁶²

Two farmers initiated a barter system to increase their total yield of cotton. Each prisoner received about a dollar and a half a day, which was paid by the base camp, to pick approximately one hundred and fifty pounds of cotton. In order to provide a work incentive and increase the total number of pounds picked, J. T. Bounds of Tehuacana told the prisoners that each pound they picked over the minimum would be credited to them. At the end of the day he would total the credits of each prisoner in his ledger and then go to the grocery store and purchase commodities that the prisoners could not get at the base camp, such as a loaf of bread, sweets, and peanut butter. On one occasion Bounds remembered that he purchased fifty dollars worth of groceries as a result of his "barter" system.⁶³ The prisoners who worked for him brought their overcoats and would stuff these items in their coats for the return trip to the base

⁶²J. T. Bounds; Lloyd D. Yelverton.

⁶³Ibid.

camp.⁶⁴ As a result of this system Bounds' work crew of about twenty-eight prisoners picked more than seven thousand pounds of cotton per day.⁶⁵

Problems also occurred in farm work when machinery was involved. According to many of the farmers, the German prisoners were extremely interested in machinery and preferred working with machines to picking cotton or any other farm task.⁶⁶ One prisoner volunteered to grease a farmer's trailer, while two others ground valves and overhauled a tractor engine.⁶⁷ Carl Maisen, who guarded prisoners on farm details near Mexia, related the following account:

I remember this one time I took a bunch of prisoners up to Rice. This old boy had tractor equipment and automotive equipment and shredders, and he also had a couple of hay balers and presses and stuff pulled by mules. And I had about fifty PW's up there that day, and the biggest fight I had was all fifty of them tried to get on the tractor and on this other stuff, and I had to divide them up and put half of them on the tractor and automotive and the other half

⁶⁴J. T. Bounds.

⁶⁵J. T. Bounds, personal ledger.

⁶⁶J. T. Bounds; J. W. Elliot; Oliver J. Lee; Carl Maisen.

⁶⁷J. T. Bounds; Oliver J. Lee.

on the mules. Then at noon I swapped them out, and I put the mule drivers over on this and that's the only way I got by with it.⁶⁸

Minimum security surrounded the German prisoners as they performed farm labor throughout the countryside. United States Army guards from the base camps accompanied the prisoners and watched over their activities during the day. The number of military personnel that guarded the prisoners fluctuated during the war. Usually there was one guard for every ten prisoners, but sometimes only one soldier guarded fifty to ninety prisoners while they worked in the fields.⁶⁹ On a few occasions no guard personnel accompanied the prisoners of war when a farmer needed only three prisoners for yard work and painting houses.⁷⁰ Most of the farmers interviewed for this study stated that security was not a problem with the prisoners. Some of the guards slept while the prisoners worked, and even one soldier left the prisoners unguarded and traveled a distance of twenty miles with the farmer.⁷¹

⁶⁸Carl Maisen.

⁶⁹J. W. Elliot; Carl Maisen.

⁷⁰J. T. Bounds; J. W. Elliot.

⁷¹G. F. Thomason; J. T. Bounds.

Other incidents recorded the laxity of army personnel in guarding the prisoners of war. One guard dismantled his weapon and cleaned it while the prisoners were in the fields.⁷² One soldier explained that he handed his rifle to a German prisoner while he climbed into the truck for the return trip to the base camp.⁷³ On another occasion a guard handed his rifle to a prisoner, who wrapped it up in his coat, and at the end of the day the prisoner returned the weapon to the guard.⁷⁴

Even with the minimum number of guards and the lax security, none of the German prisoners of war, according to the farmers interviewed, escaped or tried to escape while performing farm labor near Hearne, Huntsville, and Mexia. One farmer asked the prisoners why they did not try to escape and received the following explanation: "Well, where would I go? Where would we go if we ran off?"⁷⁵ Another farmer stated that three prisoners

⁷²James Cortemelia.

⁷³Carl Maisen.

⁷⁴J. T. Bounds.

⁷⁵Ibid.

escaped from a friend's farm, but by nine o'clock that evening the prisoners were searching for someone to take them back to the camp.⁷⁶

The German prisoners revealed their attitudes towards internment in Texas through their actions. On one occasion a few prisoners at the Mexia camp baked a wedding cake for one of the farmers, and one Hearne woman related that a German soldier made several wood carvings and a jewel box for her eight-year-old daughter.⁷⁷ Several people received numerous paintings from the prisoners they knew. Robert E. Rohde accepted about fifteen pictures from German prisoners at Hearne, and J. T. Bounds received an oil painting done on a window shade.⁷⁸

Almost all of the farmers who utilized German captives described them as being most cooperative, intelligent, good-natured, "real nice," well-mannered, and well-behaved.⁷⁹ One Tehuacana farmer, Lloyd D. Yelverton, stated, "They were just the best bunch of boys you ever

⁷⁶Fred C. Ferrara.

⁷⁷Lloyd D. Yelverton; Helen Cox Palmos.

⁷⁸Robert E. Rohde, Jr.; J. T. Bounds.

⁷⁹J. T. Bounds; W. O. Simmons; Fred C. Ferrara.

saw in your life. You enjoyed being around them."⁸⁰

Concerning the desire of the prisoners to perform farm work, J. T. Bounds said that some of the prisoners even "begged" to go with him and work in his fields.⁸¹

The prisoners' own words, however, best described their attitudes concerning internment and farm labor in Texas. Several people received letters from the German prisoners of war after they had left the United States. Most of these letters expressed the desire of the prisoners to stay in the United States or to return to Texas to perform farm work.⁸² J. T. Bounds received thirteen letters from German prisoners who had worked on his farm near Mexia. Helmut Niemeier, a former German prisoner at the Mexia camp, said, "I'll always be sincere in my friendship to you, and I hope that my paramount desire to be able to farm with you will be fulfilled in the near future."⁸³ Another prisoner made the following statements concerning Bounds' "barter" system:

⁸⁰Lloyd D. Yelverton.

⁸¹J. T. Bounds.

⁸²Robert E. Rohde, Jr.; J. W. Elliot.

⁸³Letter, Helmut Niemeier to J. T. Bounds, July 8, 1946.

It was a wonderful time when I was able to buy bread and butter, sausage and syrup, peanut butter and jam, also cigarettes and tobacco by picking more cotton than I had to. I wish I could do it again and to take the food home for my wife and myself.⁸⁴

In a letter to Bounds, Helmut Mahlo, a former Mexia internee, said,

I like to remember the time I was working for you. It was a very good time. All of you were so friendly to me though I was a prisoner. I'll never forget it.⁸⁵

In October, 1971, three former German prisoners of war returned to the site of the Mexia camp. They came back to the old prison camp because "they had some pretty good times here [Mexia] and made some close friendships."⁸⁶ Horst Tittman, one of the former prisoners, made the following statement: "I think the fact that we have returned indicates that it was not as bad being prisoners here as one might think."⁸⁷

⁸⁴Letter, Theodor Stahlberg to J. T. Bounds (undated).

⁸⁵Letter, Helmut Mahlo to J. T. Bounds, April 15, 1946.

⁸⁶"A Visit to Prison Grounds in Mexia," Waco News-Tribune, October 7, 1971, p. 1-B.

⁸⁷Ibid., p. 10-B.

Almost all of the farmers interviewed agreed that the utilization of the prisoners of war was beneficial to their personal economy. The availability of prisoners for farm labor enabled farmers to save time and money by planting more crops and harvesting them faster.⁸⁸ One Tehuacana farmer explained that the utilization of prisoners simplified the labor shortage problem and was extremely significant to his personal economy.⁸⁹ Another farmer stated that without the prisoners he would have never gotten his crops planted or harvested.⁹⁰

In addition to providing a reservoir of farm laborers the prisoner-of-war camps at Hearne, Huntsville, and Mexia strengthened the economy of the nearby towns. Most of the American officers rented apartments or houses in the city, and all of the military personnel brought needed revenue for the local merchants.⁹¹ Even some of the German prisoners interned at the Mexia camp purchased

⁸⁸Leo Luke Roffino.

⁸⁹J. T. Bounds.

⁹⁰Jerry Miller.

⁹¹J. T. Bounds.

flowers and ice cream through the prisoner post exchange from various Mexia stores. According to one of the prison guards the German officers would not eat unless flowers were on the table.⁹² Because of this attitude these prisoners had a standing order with the local florist for fifty dollars worth of flowers a day for their dining tables.⁹³ On one occasion a Mexia merchant received criticism from the townspeople for selling three thousand gallons of ice cream a month to the prisoner-of-war camp.⁹⁴

The prisoner-of-war camps also employed civilians from the nearby communities in such positions as clerks, typists, postal clerks, and firemen. Also a few of the farmers received contracts from the camp to provide eggs and chickens, Christmas trees and mistletoe, and remove garbage from the prison camp.⁹⁵

Branch camps were established from the base camps at Hearne, Huntsville, and Mexia. Only one branch camp

⁹²Harry Malcolm Hale.

⁹³G. E. Blair.

⁹⁴Leonard Tidwell, private interview in Mexia, Texas, August 5, 1971.

⁹⁵J. T. Bounds.

was connected with Huntsville Prisoner-of-War Camp. In June, 1943, the Huntsville camp sent German prisoners to a temporary camp near Madill, Oklahoma, in order to clear land for the Denison Dam reservoir.⁹⁶ The Mexia Prisoner-of-War Camp established three branch camps at Kaufman, Cleburne, and in the White Rock Lake area near Dallas.⁹⁷ The branch camp at Kaufman contained approximately three hundred German prisoners, who were supervised by two American officers and fifty guards from the Mexia camp. This camp was extremely small and surrounded by only one strand of barbed wire about four feet high.⁹⁸

In the early months of 1945 officials from the Texas Extension Service, Waco Chamber of Commerce, and Mexia camp discussed the proposal to establish a branch camp in Waco in order to offset labor shortages in the area. However, according to local newspapers and interviews, this branch camp never became a reality.⁹⁹

⁹⁶"Famed Afrika Korps Chops Trees in Texas," Huntsville Item, June 3, 1943, p. 1.

⁹⁷Carl Maisen; Jerry Miller.

⁹⁸Jerry Miller.

⁹⁹"Branch Work Camp is Slated for Waco," Mexia Daily News, January 7, 1945, p. 1; "Await Decision on Branch Camp," Mexia Daily News, February 1, 1945, p. 1; G. E. Blair.

The Hearne Prisoner-of-War Camp contained prisoners until December 20, 1945, and was officially closed on December 31, 1945.¹⁰⁰ The prisoner camp at Hearne opened one branch camp at Chance Plantation near Bryan, Texas, in April, 1945.¹⁰¹ Also the Mexia and Huntsville camps eventually became branch camps of the Hearne Prisoner-of-War Camp. On July 15, 1945, the Mexia camp became a branch camp of the Hearne camp. This change was purely administrative, and the Mexia camp continued to contain German prisoners until December 5, 1945, when the branch camp was closed.¹⁰² The Huntsville Prisoner-of-War Camp eventually became a branch camp of the Hearne base camp until September 27, 1945, when the German prisoners were sent to Hearne.¹⁰³

¹⁰⁰"Prisoner of War Camp Labor Report, Hearne, Texas," Office of the Provost Marshal General, December 19, 1945, p. 2.

¹⁰¹"P. of W. Camp News," Hearne Democrat, April 20, 1945, p. 1.

¹⁰²"Mexia Camp to Become Branch of Hearne Camp," Mexia Daily News, June 29, 1945, p. 1; "Prisoners of War Camp Labor Report, Mexia, Texas," Office of the Provost Marshal General, December 5, 1945, p. 2.

¹⁰³"Prisoner of War Camp Labor Report, Huntsville, Texas," Office of the Provost Marshal General, October 6, 1945, p. 2.

The Huntsville camp, however, did not cease to function as a prisoner-of-war camp. Japanese prisoners arrived at the camp in September, 1945, to study American democratic institutions. This "Japanese Reorientation Project" was supervised by the Provost Marshal General's Office and lasted until December 26, 1945.¹⁰⁴ In addition to this experiment the Japanese prisoners of war performed a total of 1,145 man-days in agricultural contract labor from mid-October through mid-December, 1945.¹⁰⁵ The prisoners were removed from the camp on December 26, 1945, and on January 5, 1946, the Huntsville Prisoner-of-War Camp was inactivated.¹⁰⁶

The German prisoners of war were eventually shipped to England. Some of the prisoners from the Mexia camp were sent to Hearne for fourteen days and then by train to Camp Bowie, Texas. They remained at Camp Bowie

¹⁰⁴"Huntsville Jap POW Camp Experiments in Teaching Democratic Way of Life," Huntsville Item, December 6, 1945, p. 1; "'Country Campus' Is Added to Sam Houston Facilities," Huntsville Item, July 4, 1946, p. 1.

¹⁰⁵"Prisoner of War Camp Labor Report, Huntsville, Texas," Office of the Provost Marshal General, October 23-December 17, 1945.

¹⁰⁶Letter, Captain Theron L. King, Headquarters, Eighth Service Command, to the Director, Prisoner of War Operations Division, Provost Marshal General's Office, January 28, 1946.

for over three months and then were shipped by train to Camp Shanks, New York. After three days at Camp Shanks the prisoners were placed on transport ships and nine days later arrived at Liverpool and Hull, England.¹⁰⁷

For over a year these German prisoners were retained in England and Scotland and engaged in farm work, such as growing corn, potatoes, and sugar beets.¹⁰⁸ Others worked in various factories and plants throughout the country.¹⁰⁹ According to one German prisoner who had traveled from the Mexia camp to Camp Watten, Caithness, Scotland, "We didn't go home, the greatest disappointment for me and my fellows . . . I'm a professional prisoner."¹¹⁰ Most of these prisoners expressed their desire to return to Texas. One prisoner who had been interned in Texas escaped from a British prisoner-of-war camp at Oxford and

¹⁰⁷Letter, Theodor Stahlberg to J. T. Bounds (undated).

¹⁰⁸Letter, Hans Lindner to J. T. Bounds, September 17, 1948.

¹⁰⁹Letter, Theodor Stahlberg to J. T. Bounds (undated).

¹¹⁰Letter, Helmut Mahlo to J. T. Bounds, April 15, 1946.

fled to the United States Embassy in London in hope that his return to Texas could be arranged.¹¹¹

Some of the German prisoners of war interned in Texas never returned alive to Germany. While in Texas some prisoners committed suicide, were killed by fellow prisoners, or died of natural causes. One farmer near Hearne explained that several prisoners working in his fields committed suicide by throwing themselves in front of passing trains.¹¹² In the Mexia camp one German officer was found hanged, and three "anti-Nazi" German officers were almost beaten to death by fellow officers. As a result of this incident these three prisoners were removed from the prisoner compound and kept in another part of the camp.¹¹³ In December, 1943, one German prisoner in the Hearne camp was beaten to death by fellow prisoners using boards with nails in them. He had lived in New York

¹¹¹"German Captive Attempts to Quit Britain for Texas," New York Times, June 21, 1946, p. 9.

¹¹²Leo Luke Roffino.

¹¹³"German Officer Found Hung," Mexia Daily News, February 22, 1945, p. 1; Carl Maisen; J. W. Elliot.

from 1928 to 1939 and was killed because of his pro-American sentiment and "disloyal" statements about Hitler.¹¹⁴

All of the prisoner-of-war base camps in Texas contained prisoner cemeteries. After a prisoner died he was buried in the cemetery with full military honors. When the camp was deactivated, his body was sent directly to Germany or to another base camp in Texas and then later returned to Germany. When the Hearne camp was closed, the bodies of the prisoners were sent to Camp Swift near Bastrop, Texas, and later to Fort Sam Houston or Germany.¹¹⁵

Some of the German, Italian, and Japanese prisoners of war interned in Texas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Arkansas never returned home. In September, 1972, there were 141 prisoners buried in the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery. Of this total one hundred and thirty-three were German, five were Italian, and three were Japanese. The earliest recorded death of a German prisoner interred in

¹¹⁴Sidney B. Fay, "German Prisoners of War," Current History, VIII (March 8, 1945), 197.

¹¹⁵Robert E. Rohde, Jr.

the cemetery was June 24, 1943, and the latest was May 23, 1946. The following number of prisoners from the various camps were buried in the Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery: ninety from Camp Dodd Field (Fort Sam Houston, Texas), twelve from Camp Swift (Texas), ten from Camp Robinson (Arkansas), eight from Camp Chaffee (Arkansas), seven from Camp Maxey (Texas), six from Camp Polk (Louisiana), four from Camp Gruber (Oklahoma), and four from Camp Hood (Texas).¹¹⁶ Periodically the family of a deceased prisoner located the cemetery in which their relative was buried and requested that the body be returned to his native country. The United States Government accepted the request and paid all of the transportation expenses.¹¹⁷

Even after the prisoner-of-war camps were deactivated they were still beneficial to the communities of Hearne, Huntsville, and Mexia. After the Hearne camp was closed its facilities were declared surplus property by

¹¹⁶Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery Records, Prisoners of War File.

¹¹⁷Chief Clerk, Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, private interview at Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, San Antonio, Texas, September, 1972.

the United States Government. Over two hundred buildings from the camp were sold to other government agencies, and many were removed from the camp site and converted into private homes. The hospital structures were utilized by black school children, and the commanding officer's headquarters and the officers' club buildings were purchased by the local American Legion Post. On March 11, 1946, the city of Hearne received a five-year lease from the Secretary of War for 292 acres of land and paid only one dollar. All of the camp utilities, such as a water pumping plant, overhead and ground water storage tanks, and a complete sanitary sewer system, were included in this lease agreement.¹¹⁸

In March, 1946, Sam Houston State Teachers College of Huntsville tried to obtain the land and facilities of the Huntsville Prisoner-of-War Camp. This proposed transaction was patterned after the one at Longview, Texas, where a seven million dollar army hospital was purchased for one dollar and transformed into the Le Tourneau

¹¹⁸McCarver, Hearne, pp. 78-80; "War Department Lease of United States Property," City of Hearne Records, March 11, 1946.

Technical College.¹¹⁹ As a result of activities of Congressman Tom Pickett, Senators Tom Connally and W. Lee O'Daniel, and Governor Coke Stevenson, Sam Houston State Teachers College received the deed for the land and facilities of the Huntsville Prisoner-of-War Camp on July 2, 1946. The 836.5 acres of land and four hundred and five buildings constituted the "Country Campus" of the college and was valued at three million dollars. The buildings were utilized as classrooms, administrative offices, recreational facilities, and housing for two hundred coeds and single veterans and eight hundred married veterans.¹²⁰

While the Mexia camp was still functioning as a prisoner-of-war compound, concerned citizens from Mexia began searching for post-war uses of the camp facilities that would benefit the local communities. Their main desire was to encourage some business or institution to utilize the camp facilities in an effort to maintain and

¹¹⁹"College Asking For Prisoner of War Site," Huntsville Item, March 7, 1946, p. 1.

¹²⁰"'Country Campus' Is Added to Sam Houston Facilities," Huntsville Item, July 4, 1946, p. 1.

strengthen the local economy. G. E. Blair, President of the Mexia Chamber of Commerce in 1945, stated that his organization considered various projects and proposals, but to no avail.¹²¹ Finally, Raymond L. Dillard, who was a Mexia resident and member of the State Parks Board, proposed that the State of Texas might be able to use the prison camp land and facilities.¹²²

The State Board of Control, which was responsible for the mentally retarded people in Texas, was in the process of acquiring additional buildings for a summer camp for the residents of the Austin State School. The state desired to purchase existing facilities because of the scarcity of building materials during the war. Raymond Dillard and Weaver Baker, who was the chairman of the State Board of Control, met with the Mexia Chamber of Commerce and discussed the possibility that the state might be interested in the prisoner-of-war camp facilities.¹²³

¹²¹G. E. Blair.

¹²²Raymond L. Dillard.

¹²³Raymond L. Dillard; G. E. Blair.

As a result of this meeting a committee of three, G. E. Blair, Raymond L. Dillard, and Howard Mace (City Manager of Mexia), was formed to pursue this proposal. Blair and Dillard traveled to Washington to discuss the project with Congressman Luther A. Johnson and the Provost Marshal General. After the proposal to use the camp facilities for mentally retarded children had been presented, the Provost Marshal General stated that he did not understand why every state in the Union had not thought of something like that.¹²⁴

After nine months of negotiations, nineteen trips to Austin, eight to Dallas (Eighth Service Command), and one to Washington, the State of Texas received a five-year lease of the Mexia Prisoner-of-War Camp in October, 1945.¹²⁵ The facilities of the camp were to provide housing for about five hundred handicapped children and more than two hundred mentally ill persons.¹²⁶ On

¹²⁴G. E. Blair.

¹²⁵"State School Came As Added Blessing," Mexia Daily News, June 30, 1971, p. 6; "Five-Year Lease Authorized for Mexia POW Camp," Mexia Daily News, October 18, 1945, p. 1.

¹²⁶"Mexia POW Camp Will Be Converted Into Institution," Mexia Daily News, October 10, 1945, p. 1.

April 24, 1946, the Mexia State School for the Mentally Retarded officially opened with the transfer of forty-eight mentally retarded persons from the Ink's Lake Branch of the Austin State School.¹²⁷

¹²⁷"State School Came As Added Blessing," Mexia Daily News, June 30, 1971, p. 6.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION

Immediately after the outbreak of World War II the United States planned for the internment of enemy alien civilians. Camps were constructed to house these enemy aliens, and other camps were later erected to incarcerate British-captured prisoners whom England could no longer accommodate. This planning for the enemy alien civilians and British-captured prisoners provided adequate facilities for the internment of war prisoners from northwest Africa.

As the war continued a steady influx of prisoners arrived in the United States, and by June, 1945, the total number of prisoners of war had reached 425,806. Of this total, 87 percent were German, 12 percent Italian, and one percent Japanese. In order to accommodate these prisoners new prisoner-of-war base and branch camps were constructed throughout the country. Most of the base camps were located on existing military reservations, and

some were constructed strictly for the internment of prisoners of war. By April, 1945, there were one hundred and fifty base camps and over three hundred branch or temporary camps in the United States.

During the war the War Department substituted the policy of maximum utilization for maximum security of the prisoners. The third section of Part III of the Geneva Convention of 1929 dealt with the employment of prisoners of war. Within the framework of the Geneva Convention rules, the War Department provided general policies and procedures for the employment of prisoner labor in military and nonmilitary projects. The extent of utilization of prisoner labor eventually resulted in millions of man-days of work in vital agricultural and nonagricultural areas.

Throughout World War II Texas had approximately twice as many prisoner camps as any other state. The number of base and branch camps in Texas fluctuated during each year of the war. Of the twenty-one prisoner base camps, fourteen were located on existing military reservations, and seven were constructed strictly for the internment of prisoners of war. Twenty-two branch camps

were erected in Texas to provide prisoner labor in areas of labor shortages that were too far for daily transportation of prisoners from the base camps.

The establishment of prisoner-of-war camps in Texas alleviated critical manpower shortages in agriculture and aided the economy of the state. Prisoner labor was utilized because of the manpower drain from the armed services and war industries. Also the movement of about thirty thousand migrant laborers to the northern sugar beet fields reduced the normal farm labor supply. Of the approximately forty-five thousand prisoners interned in Texas during the war, over twenty-seven thousand were employed in agriculture. The availability of prisoners for farm labor enabled farmers to save time and money by planting more crops and harvesting them faster.

The German prisoners of war were well-treated during their stay in Texas. Almost all of the farmers enjoyed being around the prisoners and described them as being most cooperative and well-mannered. Many of the prisoners wrote letters to the farmers and expressed their desire to return to Texas.

In addition to providing a reservoir of farm laborers the prisoner-of-war camps strengthened the economy of the nearby communities. The construction and maintenance of the camps brought in additional revenue and provided employment opportunities. Civilians from the nearby towns worked in the camps, and farmers received food and service contracts from the camps.

Even after the prisoner-of-war camps were deactivated they were still beneficial to the local communities. Neighboring towns purchased from the government at a nominal cost such camp facilities as buildings, utilities, and hospital equipment. In an effort to maintain and strengthen the local economy, concerned citizens from some communities encouraged private or state agencies to acquire the camp facilities. Thus the establishment of prisoner-of-war camps in Texas aided not only the war-time economy but also the post-war economy of the state.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

ITEMS WHICH MAY BE SOLD IN PRISONER OF WAR CANTEENS

-
- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Art Supplies, miscellaneous:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brushes for water color and oil painting (inexpensive) Canvas, oil painting Chalk (assorted colors) Charcoal sticks Crayons Erasers Fixative Individual colors, oil tubes, medium size Painting and pastel sets: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oil sets Water colors Pastel Pallettes Palette knives Paper, art: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Charcoal Water color Pastel Pencils Pens: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Drawing Lettering Thinner for oil paintings <p>2. Ashtrays (nonmetallic)</p> <p>3. Bands, wrist watch, web</p> <p>4. Beer (3.2)</p> <p>5. Belt, money</p> <p>6. Billfolds</p> <p>7. Blades, razor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Double edge Single edge </p> <p>8. Books</p> <p>9. Books, note, pocket</p> <p>10. Book, note, letter size</p> <p>11. Box, soap, plastic</p> <p>12. Brush, shaving</p> <p>13. Brush, tooth</p> <p>14. Buttons, assorted: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> White Khaki </p> | <p>15. Candy</p> <p>16. Cards, playing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pinochle Standard </p> <p>17. Case, cigarette, plastic</p> <p>18. Cigarettes</p> <p>19. Cigarette and cigar holders</p> <p>20. Cleaners, pipe</p> <p>21. Cloth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shoe Metal polishing </p> <p>22. Combs, pocket</p> <p>23. Cookies and crackers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Butter wafer cookies, 7 oz. Vanilla wafer cookies, 2 oz. Fig bars, 7¾ oz. Cheese crackers, 2 oz. Butter crackers, 8 oz. Pretzels, 8 oz. Doughnuts </p> <p>24. Cream, shaving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brushless, standard brands Lather, standard brands </p> <p>25. Deodorant, perspiration</p> <p>26. Diaries</p> <p>27. Dice</p> <p>28. Filters, pipe</p> <p>29. Flints and wicks, standard type</p> <p>30. Fluid, cleaning</p> <p>31. Fluid, lighter: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flame type Flameless </p> <p>32. Games</p> <p>33. Glue</p> <p>34. Hangers, clothes</p> <p>35. Ink, writing</p> <p>36. Ink, India</p> <p>37. Insect repellent</p> <p>38. Jelly, petroleum</p> <p>39. Kit, sewing</p> <p>40. Kit, toilet, apron type, unfilled</p> <p>41. Lacquer</p> |
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42. Lead for mechanical pencil
43. Magazines
44. Matches, safety-book
45. Matches, safety-box
46. Mirror, nonmetallic
47. Model making kits, supplies, etc. (inexpensive)
48. Needles
49. Newspapers
50. Nib, pen, steel
51. Oil, hair
52. Papers, cigarette, gummed and not gummed
53. Paste, tooth, standard brands
54. Pencil, styptic
55. Pencil, lead, wood-cased
56. Penholder, wood
57. Pins, common
58. Pins, safety
59. Pipes
60. Polish, shoe, paste, brown, standard brands
61. Pomade, lip
62. Pouch, tobacco, roll type
63. Powder:
 - Foot
 - Antiseptic
 - Talcum
 - Tooth
64. Razor, safety, Gillette type
65. Scissors, nail, small
66. Shampoo
67. Sheet music
68. Skin creams
69. Skin lotions
70. Snuff, 10¢ grade
71. Soap:
 - Saddle
 - Shaving, stick
 - Shaving, cake
 - Toilet
 - Grit
 - Laundry
72. Soft drinks
73. Solution, antiseptic
74. Sunburn oil
75. Sunglasses
76. Tablet, writing
77. Thread:
 - Khaki
 - White
78. Tobacco, smoking:
 - Cigarette, 5¢ brands
 - Pipe, 10¢ and 15¢ grades
79. Tobacco, chewing:
 - Plug, 5¢ and 10¢ grades
 - Scrap, 10¢ grade
80. Tonic, hair
81. Tube, toothbrush
82. Woodcarving sets

2. Conditions of employment offered by this employer are not less favorable than those for other workers in the same or similar employment at this establishment or farm, or less favorable than those prevailing in the locality for similar work.

3. The prevailing wage, or price per unit, certified above is that paid to free labor in this locality for this type of work. (For agricultural work, the prevailing wage, or price per unit, certified by the State Director of Extension may be based on public hearings conducted by County Farm Wage Boards.)

4. It has been impossible to secure the necessary workers for this employer through an active campaign of recruitment which has taken into account not only all persons normally engaged in the activities listed above, but also potential workers from other fields of activities.

5. The employer is willing to use through contract with the Government, the labor of prisoners of war detained by the United States of America and in the custody of the War Department. It is the understanding of the undersigned that such contract will follow substantially War Department contract Form No. _____ and that amount to be paid and conditions stated in the contract will be in accord with those certified in this statement.

INDORSEMENTS

I. Approval of the above certificate is recommended:

| | |
|-------------|-----------|
| _____ | _____ |
| (signature) | (title) |
| _____ | _____ |
| (date) | (address) |

II. The above certificate is approved:

| | |
|-------------|-----------|
| _____ | _____ |
| (signature) | (title) |
| _____ | _____ |
| (date) | (address) |

III. The labor certified above has been determined to fall in priority _____

| | |
|-------------|-----------|
| _____ | _____ |
| (signature) | (title) |
| _____ | _____ |
| (date) | (address) |

APPENDIX C

CONTRACT FOR LABOR OF PRISONERS OF WAR

WAR DEPARTMENT

CONTRACT FOR LABOR OF PRISONERS OF WAR

Prisoner of War Camp: _____

Contract No. _____

W. _____ pmg. _____

(This contract is authorized by and has been negotiated under The First
War Powers Act, 1941, and Executive Order No. 9001.)

THIS CONTRACT, entered into this _____ day of _____ between the

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

hereinafter referred to as the Government, represented by the Contracting Officer executing this contract and _____, (*) _____, whose address is _____ hereinafter called the Contractor, WITNESSETH that the parties mutually agree as follows:

1. LABOR—The Government will furnish the Contractor the labor of prisoners of war in the following amount:

- a. Number of men each work day _____
- b. Number of work days _____
- c. Labor will be furnished commencing on or about _____, and ending on or about _____
- d. Normal work day will consist of _____ hours of labor (excluding lunch and travel time).
- e. The address of the work site is _____
- f. Type of work is _____

2. TRANSPORTATION, TOOLS, ETC.

- a. Transportation for prisoners of war and guards from the camp to the work site and return to the camp will be furnished by the _____
- b. Distance between camp and work site is _____ miles.
- c. Tools and equipment will be furnished by the _____
- d. Maintenance of tools and equipment will be provided by the _____
- e. Other items _____

3. COMPENSATION—The contractor will pay to the Government compensation at the following rates:

- a. Labor:
- b. Transportation:
- c. Other items:

4. ALLOWANCES—The Government will grant the Contractor allowances as follows:

- a. Transportation:
- b. Other items:

5. VALUE OF CONTRACT (estimated)

Gross charges \$ _____ Allowances \$ _____ Net charges \$ _____

(*) Describe as: "an individual trading as _____"; "a partnership consisting of _____"; or, "a corporation organized under the laws of the State of _____"

6. If the Contractor fails to utilize fully the labor of prisoners of war in accordance with paragraph 1 above, the loss and damage to the Government resulting from the reduction in essential war production for which such labor could have been utilized will be impossible to determine, and in place thereof, the Contractor shall pay to the Government the sum of \$1.50 per day for each prisoner whose labor is not so utilized, unless the failure so to utilize such labor was due to unusually severe weather, acts of God, or other unforeseeable causes clearly beyond the control of the Contractor.

7. As a condition to the execution of this contract, the Contractor has furnished security for payment to the War Department in the form of *cash deposit—*bank guarantee—*surety bond, to guarantee the satisfactory settlement of accounts due for labor furnished under the provisions of this contract. The total security for payment required for this contract is \$_____ of which \$_____ is represented by the Contractor's investment in branch camp construction, and \$_____ is in the form indicated above, satisfactory evidence of which is attached hereto. (Certificate of surety, bank guarantee, or escrow agreement for cash deposits.) *(Note: Strike out types of security for payment not applicable.)

8. The Government will furnish meals for prisoners and guards unless otherwise provided in this contract.

9. The Contractor agrees to furnish adequate training instruction and supervision.

10. The Contractor will not be responsible for disability compensation or medical care for the prisoners of war.

11. The Contractor agrees to make payment to the Contracting Officer, by certified or cashiers' check, or United States Post Office Money Order, payable to the Treasurer of the United States, within ten days after receipt of bill or invoice.

12. The Contractor agrees to maintain conditions of employment in conformity with War Department regulations applicable to the employment of prisoners of war on the type of work described in this contract. The Contractor will comply with all written directions of the Government for the correction or improvement of conditions of employment found by the Government to be in violation of the Geneva Convention and for security and safety measures. The Contractor acknowledges the receipt of an "Instructions to the Contractor for Prisoner of War Labor" and agrees to observe these instructions and any amendments or additions that the Government may make in such instructions.

13. The Contractor agrees that duly accredited representatives of the Government and the Protecting Power will at all times have access to the site of the work in order to observe the conditions of employment.

14. The Contractor agrees that he has no authority to impose disciplinary measures on prisoners of war.

15. The Contractor agrees to permit the Government to maintain at the site of the work such guards and other security measures as may be found by the Government to be desirable or necessary, and to cooperate fully with the Government in all security measures.

16. If it be found by the Government that the Contractor has suffered damages to his property or to property for which he is responsible to a third party, uncompensated by insurance, arising out of the employment of prisoners of war, and not the result of fault or negligence of the Contractor, which are caused by the willful misconduct of prisoners, the Government (without prejudice to any other rights which the Contractor may have) will allow the amount of such damages as a credit against payments otherwise due from the Contractor hereunder; but no such credit shall be taken without the specific approval of the Government, nor shall the liability of the Government under this paragraph for any such damages exceed the unpaid amounts due from the Contractor at the time he files a claim for property damage and from amounts which subsequently become due under the terms of this contract.

17. This contract may be terminated by either party, with or without cause, by ten days' notice in writing. In event of termination the Contractor will pay to the Government, at the rates herein set forth, all charges accrued up to the effective date of this termination.

18. No member of or delegate to Congress or resident commissioner shall be admitted to any share or part of this contract or to any benefit that may arise therefrom, but this provision shall not be construed to extend to this contract if made with a corporation for its general benefit.

19. The Contractor warrants that he has not employed any person to solicit or secure this contract upon any agreement for a commission, percentage, brokerage, or contingent fee. Breach of this warranty shall give the Government the right to annul the contract, or at its option, to recover from the Contractor the amount of such commission, percentage, brokerage, or contingent fee, in addition to the consideration herein set forth. This warranty shall not apply to commissions payable by the Contractor upon contracts secured or made through bona fide established commercial agencies maintained by the Contractor for the purposes of doing business.

20. Except as otherwise specifically provided in this contract, all disputes concerning questions of fact which may arise under this contract, and which are not disposed of by mutual agreement, shall be decided by the Contracting Officer, who shall reduce his decision to writing and mail a copy thereof to the Contractor. Within 30 days from said mailing the Contractor may appeal to the Secretary of War, whose decision or that of his designated representative, representatives, or board shall be final and conclusive upon the parties hereto. Pending decision of a dispute hereunder the Contractor shall diligently proceed with the performance of this contract.

21. Except for the original signing of this contract, the term "Contracting Officer" as used herein shall include his duly appointed successor or his authorized representative.

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22. The "Certification of Need for Employment of Prisoners of War" attached to this contract is for the information and guidance of the appropriate contracting parties and is not a part of this contract.

23. The following changes were made, and addenda attached, to this contract before it was signed by the parties hereto:

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties hereto have executed this contract on the day and year first above written.

Witness:

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

By

(Address)

(Contracting Officer)

Witness:

Contractor:

By

(Address)

I, _____, certify that I am the Secretary of the corporation named as Contractor herein; that _____ who signed this contract on behalf of the Contractor was then _____ of said corporation; that said contract was duly signed for and on behalf of said corporation by authority of its governing body and is within the scope of its corporate powers.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto affixed my hand and the seal of said corporation this _____ day of _____, 194__.

(Secretary)

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