

Volume 2 Section 354-00

Prisoners of War Life as a Prisoner Of War

Introduction

Many accounts of life as a POW have survived from three major sources, first letters home from POWs, second accounts in the local newspapers from men who were repatriated and finally the debriefing documents at the National Archives. Some of these accounts are reproduced in separate sub-sections as follows:-

- 354-01 Unidentified Private.
- 354-02 Lt Norman Langston
- 354-03 Unidentified Major
- 354-04 Cpl Percy Gordon Fulton (11695)
- 354-05 Pte Ernest Cousins (39290)
- 354-06 Major A S Turner
- 354-07 LCpl Sidney Page (22820)
- 354-08 Sgt Alfred Denham (6406)
- 354-09 Pte Harold Stanley (33037)
- 354-10 Pte Albert George Gee (9384)
- 354-11 Pte Charles Waters (9545)
- 354-12 LCpl Herbert Lewin (10094)
- 354-13 Cpl George Nutley (9013)
- 354-14 Pte George Tooley (220010)
- 354-15 Pte William Eden (9475)
- 354-16
- 354-17 LCpl A T Gasson (11767)
- 354-18 Pte George Tooley (220010)
- 354-19 Pte Millbank
- 354-20 Pte Isaac Adams (9997)

Other shorter accounts and mentions are given below.

Captain G R Hinchcliffe

Captain Hinchcliffe was among a party of 30 men from the 2nd/4th Battalion captured at Marteville on the 22nd March 1918 among whom was Pte George Tooley - see section 354-18.

Hinchcliffe had been commissioned into the Manchester Regiment and joined the 2nd/4th from the 6th Manches-

ters on the 20th August 1916 as a 2nd Lieutenant. He had obtained his Captaincy on the 2nd Feb 1918.

He was reported missing and wounded in the Berkshire Chronicle of 19/4/1918 and confirmed as a POW in the edition of 24/5/18.

Sgt Hoare

Sergeant Hoare is mentioned in WO161/98 page 548. This is a report by Pte James Musgrove (2395) of the 8th Durham Light Infantry. He was in the Franziskaner Hospital at Paderborn between Aug 1st and Oct 22nd 1915. He reported Sgt Hoare of the Berkshire Regiment as fetching hot water for the patients.

8236 Sgt Arthur Thomas Hughes

Hughes is mentioned in a report of Pte F Cleve (9503) of the 1st Lincolns` Cleve was at Langensalza from April to May 1916 (WO161/100 page 3017). He writes:-

Men were often not allowed to fall out for purposes of nature and I have seen men hit and kicked by under-officers and Feldwebels for easing nature in the ranks when having been repeatedly refused permission to fall out.

I complained of this treatment to a representative of the American Embassy and he took Lance Corporal Dubden, 1st Hants Regiment, and myself before the Commandant of the camp, Major Alexander and I asked him why I was treated like this and he replied it was because we had refused to work. We replied that we had never refused to work and that we had only refused to volunteer for work because the British sergeants of the strafe company (Sergeant Sterry, Royal West Kent, and Segeant Hughes, Berkshire Regiment) had told us that we should be liable to suffer the death penalty on our return home if we did so. The sergeants got this information out of their small books. The commandant told us that as long as we would not volunteer he would commandeer us.

Cleve then noted that both he and Hughes along with about 50 others were sent to the salt mines two days later and Volkenroda and Mantenroda where they remained for four months. He went on:-

The treatment here was very bad. If we were ill we had to report tto the sentry that came to wake us at 4 am. The sentry reported to the medical orderly, who was also a sentry, who took our temperature. If our temperature was below 39° Centigrade (102.2° Fahr) we were placed in a shed, our boots, jacket and cap being taken from us. Here we were left for three days and three nights without any food to eat or soup, not even any bread. At the end of which time the under-officer would come and ask us

whether we would work. The reply was generally in the affirmative as the men were starving. If the temperature was above 39° (102.2° Fahr) the men were allowed one day in bed in their hut and food. The day following they had to work on the top of the salt mine for 12 hours receiving no pay whatever.

13323 Pte O Jenkins

Private Jenkins was captured at Berry Au Bac. An extract from his statement was included in the papers of Lt H G Senior who had been reported missing. see section 312.

While withdrawing on May 28th, near Montigny Village, Lt. Senior was shot through the head with a machine gun bullet and died instantly.

Lt Senior had been listed as missing but "In view of this evidence the death of the above named officer had been accepted for official purposes as having occurred in action on May 28th 1918. [TX01151]

2Lt J Lawrence

2nd Lieut Lawrence was among a party of 30 men from the 2nd/4th Battalion captured at Marteville on the 22nd March 1918 among whom was Pte George Tooley - see section 354-18.

He was reported missing in the Berkshire Chronicle of 19/4/1918 and confirmed as a POW on the 31st August.

Sgt Lewis

31400 Pte F Longhurst

Longhurst's report is not printed but just listed as report 2487 on page 3168 of WO161/100. He served with the 8th battalion

Capt McGregor

Captain Donald Alastair McGregor hailed from Ardchoine, Oban. He was serving with the 2nd Royal Berkshires when he was captured at Fromelles on the 9th May 1915 while leading A Company. (see section 192)

He was mentioned by in WO161/98 page 94 by Cpl John Galvin (7554) of the 2nd Cheshires when he was being examined about his experiences in the Lazaret at the Kriegsschule at Hanover. He reported:-

I have no complaints to make of the general treatment personally, but I should like to report the case of Captain McGregor, Royal Berkshire Regiment. This officer who was badly wounded in the head was on bad terms with the Germans. His wound was allowed to heal up and he was sent to another hospital for three or four days; he then came back here and died, three days later of abscesses on the brain as we were told.

He died, aged 26, on the 15th August 1915 and is buried

in Hamburg Cemetery

7409 CSM Summers

CSM Summers was captured at Loos on the 25th September 1915 with LCpl Lewin (see section 354-12) He too was incarcerated at Munster II and wrote a letter to the ladies of the Berkshire POW Support Committee thanking them for their parcels (see section 353)

2Lt Tollet

2nd Lieut Tollet was among a party of 30 men from the 2nd/4th Battalion captured at Marteville on the 22nd March 1918 among whom was Pte George Tooley - see section 354-18.

He was reported missing in the Berkshire Chronicle of 19/4/1918 and confirmed as a POW on the 31st August.

24083 Pte Sidney Albert Welch

Sidney Welch of West Illsley was mentioned in the report of Pte J W Carver (421) of the 13th East Yorks. Carver was at Parchim Camp between the 30th May and 29th December 1917. (WO161/100 Page 2419)

Welch had served with the 1st Battalion and was emaciated when he arrived at Parchim Camp- He was one of five men, including Carver, who had been certified for exchange to England. He had suffered badly from rheumatism but on arrival he was told he was going to Switzerland for internment and at this he seemed to give in to despair. He lingered on and died at Parchim aged 39 on the 12th August 1917.

The other four left Parchim on the 29th December 1917 for repatriation to England via Aachen and Holland.

45023 LCpl W H Watchram

Watchram's report is not printed but just listed on page 3332 of WO161/100. He served with the 5th battalion

