

up in the Swiss Alps. There, they were placed in stripped-down hotels some of which were dumps while others were adequate. After a week or two in quarantine, they were permitted to be on the streets but had to be in by dusk. There were limits as to where they went and they had better know those limits as they could be shot by the guards if they exceeded them. There were one to three bed checks nightly, depending on where one was assigned.

Food varied according to the hotel they were placed in. All portions were considerably smaller than normal. Monotony was the by-word. Some of the hotels had bad food while in others, the food was palatable.

Pay was doled out in small sums and was controlled. Many received sizeable checks upon their return to the States to settle their payroll accounts. But in 1945 the men received full pay and allowances due them each month.

Some applied for and received paroles to attend Swiss schools, work at the American Legation (Embassy) or with the International Red Cross. There were eleven men granted paroles to construct the American Cemetery at Munsingen. One internee was granted a parole to star in an International Film produced in Switzerland while he was interned. The parole permitted the men to leave the internment camp and participate in the activity selected. However, if one sought to escape and was successful, the US would return him to the Swiss. He would then serve a sentence but not in an internment camp.

Adelboden was the primary camp named Camp Maloney. It was named after Joseph Maloney, the first American to die in Switzerland. In 1944, the enlisted men were sent either to Adelboden or Wengen, just below the Jungfrau and the officers were sent to Davos.

Orders were issued by the American Legation Military Attache (an Army Cavalry Brigadier General) that no one was to try to escape. In spite of this order, many did try to escape, particularly after D-day and the invasion of southern France. If one was caught by the Swiss, he received a Swiss Tribunal sentence to Wauwill or Hunenburg confinement camps.

The confinements were similar to Nazi concentration camps and many said they were worse. The barracks were wood frame with single sided walls. There was no heat and the men slept on straw or on the ground. Only one blanket was given to each man. Sanitary facilities consisted of a two-holer out-house. The compound was surrounded with a fence of two rows of barbed wire. The area was patrolled by guards with guard dogs and was lighted at night. Medical care was non-existent. The food was not edible and was served from slop pails into tin cans. The abominable conditions are only briefly outlined here.

Any small infraction of the rules resulted in solitary confinement for extended periods.

War Crime Reports of the events in these camps were ignored by the U.S. All records of the confinement camps are sealed by the Swiss Government until 1995.

Included in the confinement camps were other Nationals: French English, Polish, Yugoslavs and Russians.

Escape from the internment camps was possible as was escape from the confinement camps. This was not easy and was fraught with risk. It is known that some were wounded while seeking to escape. There was an underground, but it couldn't accommodate all who wanted out. Some took off on their own. There was

a chance some friendly Swiss would help. Civilian clothes, rail tickets, etc., could be obtained along with directions where to go along the route. There was danger in this approach. There were those who were called "Coyotes." They would charge the going rates of \$100.00 to \$800.00 to assist in the escape. They would assure escapees they would get them across the border and as soon as they did, arriving at the place where they were instructed, the Nazis were there waiting for them or they would appear shortly after the Coyotes departed.

One internee had five operations for appendicitis. He escaped with stitches and an oozing incision along with another internee with a leg in a cast. The hospital where they were staying was on Lake Geneva. One night they sneaked out and stole a row-boat then crossed the lake and walked to the French border. Other internees dressed as women and escaped. One Sergeant at Wengen wondered if the guards regarded him as a "ladies man," because he saw so many ladies off on the train.

To walk out of the three main internment sites was difficult. The very steep rock mountains are impassable without special equipment and skill. There was only one road to and from Adelboden, a cog-rail to and from Wengen and the only road through Davos. They were guarded at numerous points. Remember too that every Swiss over eighteen was in the military and had his weapon at home or with him.

Repatriation was possible by exchange for Germans. The exchange ratio was two Germans for one American. We must have been held as hostages. If not, how could we be exchanged?

According to the records, we left behind 61 Americans who were buried at Munsingen cemetery. Checking the official records; One was a civilian American Embassy employee. Yet another was killed in October, 1944 while delivering aircraft parts to repair interned aircraft at Dubendorf. And, two other internees were suicides. If everything was so great, why were there suicides? Therefore, there were 57 Americans who were buried due to combat, crashes (into mountains) and due to the AA and fighter attacks on crippled aircraft. In 1948 the Department of Defense and the State Department disinterred the dead. Some were returned to the States while the remainder were reburied in Epinal, France.

Americans were interned in Sweden, Spain, Portugal, Turkey and even Russia. Was not Russia an ally?

The Swiss Internees Association, Inc. became a non-profit corporation in New Jersey, on February 21, 1986. The statements made in this article and many other facts, not stated here, are documented and a part of our files. These truths refute the statements and innuendos from writers who have utilized their position to further their own interests without regard for the truth concerning combat aircrews who were interned in Switzerland. We abhor these statements and our truths stand! Albeit, we are forty-five years late but the truth is still there.

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