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AXIS INVASION OF THE AMERICAN WEST:  
POWS IN NEW MEXICO, 1942-1946

JAKE W. SPIDLE

ON A FLAT, virtually treeless stretch of New Mexico prairie, fourteen miles southeast of the town of Roswell, the wind now kicks up dust devils where Rommel's *Afrikakorps* once marched. A little over a mile from the Orchard Park siding of the Chicago, Rock Island and Pacific railroad line, down a dusty, still unpaved road, the concrete foundations of the Roswell Prisoner of War Internment Camp are still visible. They are all that are left from what was "home" for thousands of German soldiers during the period 1942-1946. Near Lordsburg there are similar ruins of another camp which at various times during the years 1942-1945 held Japanese-American internees from the Pacific Coast and both Italian and German prisoners of war. The Axis prisoners held in New Mexico were part of the more than 425,000 enemy captives transported to the continental United States in the course of the Second World War. There is little information available in print about these involuntary New Mexicans of the war years, and in general American historians have paid little attention to the presence of enemy POWs in the United States. However, in all the states where POW camps were located—eventually every state except North Dakota, Nevada, and Vermont—the POWs were of considerable interest and concern to Americans engaged in an all out war effort, and the POWs, by their labor, contributed directly and indirectly to the hard struggle against the Axis. The experience of New Mexico as a prisoner of war camp site during 1942-1946 provides an interesting case study of the various ramifi-

cations of the Army's extensive POW operations within the continental United States and provides an unusual chapter in the state's history.

Prior to the American entry into the Second World War in December 1941, the War Department had made few plans for the confinement of enemy POWs captured in the course of action. It apparently operated under the tacit assumption that they would remain the concern of the military men in the theaters of operation, as had been the case during America's participation in World War I.<sup>1</sup> A few naval POWs had been interned in the continental United States in 1917-1918,<sup>2</sup> but in 1941 there were no plans to repeat that experience. Preliminary arrangements had been made, however, in July 1941, for the internment of enemy aliens resident in the forty-eight states in the event of American involvement in the struggle against the Axis powers. By the terms of that understanding the War Department accepted responsibility for the construction of three internment camps within the continental United States. Funding, however, did not become available until December 8, 1941, the day after the shock of Pearl Harbor. On that day the Office of the Provost Marshal General authorized construction of not three, but nine internment camps for enemy aliens.<sup>3</sup> Both Roswell and Lordsburg, New Mexico, were on the classified list of future camp sites.<sup>4</sup>

In selection of the sites for alien internment camps, the War Department gave primary consideration to maximum security and felt it necessary that camps be located away from population centers and sensitive military and industrial installations. Moreover, economy dictated sites where construction and operating costs could be kept as low as possible. While all of the southern states fit the latter criterion, southwestern states like New Mexico readily suited all the government's major requirements. Consequently, they played prominent rôles as prison sites during the Second World War.<sup>5</sup>

Throughout the first six months of 1942, many New Mexicans were agitated by the swirl of unconfirmed rumors that large numbers of enemy aliens were going to be incarcerated within the

state. Most of the concern stemmed from fears that Japanese-Americans from the west coast were going to be removed to New Mexico. Editorials and letters to the editors of newspapers around the state vividly demonstrated those fears. A resident of Las Cruces, for example, wrote:

Furthermore, if these Japanese aliens can't be trusted on the coast, how can we trust them here? Why not put them in a concentration camp for the duration of the war, and feed them rice and sauerkraut? Why waste good American food on them that we need for our soldiers?<sup>6</sup>

Nor was the position of the editor of the *Roswell Daily Record* at all ambiguous:

Japanese are not wanted in New Mexico whether they were born in Japan or in America. We have enough of a racial problem in the state as it is, not to complicate it any further. Those who are opposing the settling of any people of Japanese ancestry in this state are acting in the interest of the people of the state, now and in the future. Keep the Japs out!<sup>7</sup>

Rumor had it that almost all of the state's Civilian Conservation Corps camps were going to be taken over as internment centers for the Japanese-Americans.<sup>8</sup> The rumors that New Mexico would serve as a giant penal colony for Japanese aliens were given added currency on February 1, 1942. That day Congressman Clinton Anderson announced that he had been informed by the War Department that it intended to begin immediate construction of a three thousand-man cantonment in Lordsburg.<sup>9</sup>

As the winter ebbed, many New Mexicans began to view the whole question more calmly. The potential boost to local economies, for example, began to interest some businessmen around the state.<sup>10</sup> The overreaction of January-March cooled and by early summer a mood of reluctant acquiescence in the Federal government's judgment replaced it.<sup>11</sup> That mood of acceptance came none too soon, for in late June of 1942 the Lordsburg installation began operations. By the middle of July six hundred and thirteen Japanese

internees had arrived at the camp.<sup>12</sup> New Mexico's four-year experience as an aliens and POW camp center had begun.<sup>13</sup>

At the same time, government officials in Washington began to consider the possibility of transporting Axis prisoners of war from the various war theaters to internment camps in the United States. By the late summer of 1942, a decision to undertake such an operation had been made,<sup>14</sup> and six camp sites still in the planning stages were designated as prisoner of war camps—among them the camp in Roswell, New Mexico.

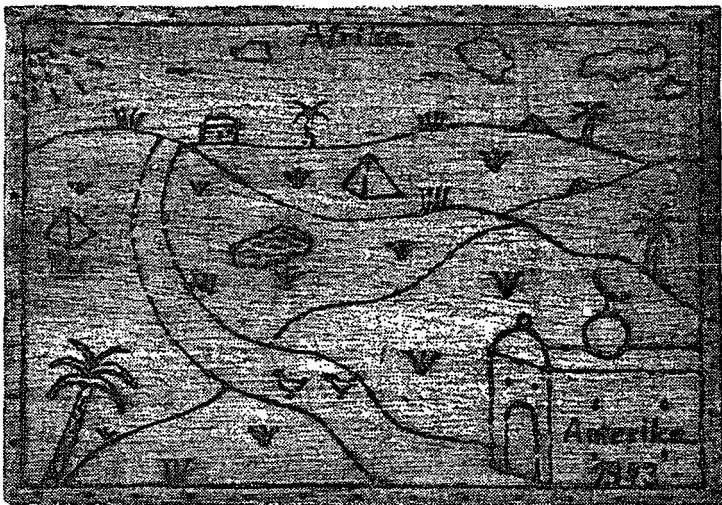
Even before they had adjusted to the disquieting reality of the Japanese internment camp at Lordsburg,<sup>15</sup> New Mexicans began to worry anew. This time speculation centered on the possibility that German and Italian prisoners were going to be forced upon them. The townspeople of Roswell were particularly nervous. They had good reason, for late in the spring the Army had begun construction of an installation southeast of the town, the purpose of which remained a mystery. It had been generally assumed that the camp was to house Japanese internees. On August 13, 1942, however, giant banner headlines—"German Internment Camp Here!"—resolved all uncertainty.<sup>16</sup> Though the idea of having Hitler's Aryan warriors in the neighborhood prompted some fear and alarm, most people in Chaves County were confident that the Army could handle the unwelcome visitors.<sup>17</sup>

On September 7 Army guard detachments arrived at the new camp, and on November 26 the first load of German POWs, about 250 men, were unloaded at Orchard Park siding while a curious but orderly crowd looked on.<sup>18</sup> By the end of 1942 both the Lordsburg and Roswell camps were fully operational, but only partially filled. Each had a capacity of 4,800 men, but Lordsburg housed only 1,500 Japanese-American internees and Roswell only 350 German POWs.<sup>19</sup> Until the summer of 1943 those numbers remained stable and the presence of the internees and the POWs within the state was easy to ignore. In the entire United States there were no more than 5,000 enemy prisoners interned;<sup>20</sup> the entire operation was still in its infancy.

Beginning in May 1943, however, more than 175,000 German and Italian soldiers, almost all of them captured in North Africa, streamed into the United States. The two large camps in New Mexico became the destinations for about 8,000 prisoners. Four thousand German POWs moved into Roswell between July 15 and August 15 and another 3,900 Italians arrived in Lordsburg during the same period. From the summer of 1943 until repatriation began in 1945, both camps were almost continuously filled to their 4,800-man capacities.<sup>21</sup> The total number of POWs and internees held in the state fluctuated substantially with transfers and new shipments, but on almost any given day between July 1943 and June 1945, there were well over ten thousand Axis soldiers in New Mexico, plus approximately 2,000 Japanese-American internees in the Santa Fe camp.<sup>22</sup> Of the 155 base camps eventually established all over the country, the New Mexico camps were consistently among the ten largest.<sup>23</sup>

About a third of the 379,000 Germans transported to the United States during the war were captured in the North Africa campaign of 1942-1943. One hundred and thirty-five thousand of them, then, were from the famed *Afrikakorps*, Rommel's men. They made up an elite corps within the German army, and their defeat in battle had not broken their spirit. Moreover, they were captured relatively early in the war, when Nazi chances for victory still looked good. This set them apart from the large number of post-Normandy prisoners (*Westfrontgefangenen*) who came after them in the late summer of 1944. Throughout their imprisonment the *Afrikakorps* maintained their pride, their military discipline and bearing, and (for many) their faith in National Socialism.<sup>24</sup> By contrast the post-Normandy prisoners were a heterogeneous group, including old men and young boys from army units hastily organized as the Nazi star began to wane. Their basically civilian orientations and the defeatism prominent among them made this later group of prisoners quite different from Rommel's men, and presented different problems to the men who ran the camps.<sup>25</sup> New Mexico's camps held both types of German POWs, but Rommel's

men predominated. A woodcut in the possession of a former guard at the camp tells their story: On the left half of the piece is a desert scene labeled "Nordafrika" with a trail of footprints to the right side where a second desert scene is labeled "Amerika."<sup>26</sup> Among New Mexico's *Afrikakorps* POWs were many who could be considered hard-bitten Nazis, including a number of SS men,<sup>27</sup> but after camp authorities initiated segregation procedures, relatively little "political" trouble was encountered in either Roswell or Lordsburg.<sup>28</sup> For a ten-month period in 1943-1944 four thousand soldiers from Germany's Axis partner, Italy, were held at Lordsburg, but New Mexico's camps were mainly used to hold Germans.<sup>29</sup>



The base camp at Roswell was a plain, straightforward operation.<sup>30</sup> It was divided into three compounds, each approximately 100 by 400 yards, containing wooden barracks housing 1,600 men. Adjacent to the compounds was a large recreation field primarily used for soccer games and general exercise, but also containing three tennis courts.<sup>31</sup> Surrounding the entire camp were two high fences topped with barbed wire. The camp buildings themselves were "solidly built and comfortable . . . [with] screened porches

on all the main buildings and screened galleries on the compound hospital.”<sup>32</sup> Both the later reports of the POWs and those of the various inspecting bodies noted that its accommodations were completely acceptable in every respect and gave no cause for complaint.<sup>33</sup> The grounds were carefully landscaped and tended by the prisoners and contained “well-planned drives and walks . . . [and] wild prairie flowers, retained and carefully tended, [which] brighten every available bit of space around the buildings.”<sup>34</sup> In general, contemporary documents present a surprisingly attractive picture of the Roswell camp. A 1943 visitor noted “it did not seem to fit into a picture of an enemy prisoner camp as we have come to think of such things.”<sup>35</sup>

The internal life of the camp was almost as attractive as its external appearance. The United States government, a signatory of the 1929 Geneva Convention concerning the treatment of prisoners of war, made a commendable record in abiding by its provisions. The Geneva agreement regulated housing standards, food, health care, discipline and punishments, working conditions, recreational and morale programs, and a host of other matters vis-à-vis prisoners of war. It was unquestionably the foundation for government policy in treatment of the POWs.<sup>36</sup> German POWs reporting after the war, various inspecting agencies, and German historians have unanimously affirmed the good faith of the American authorities in following the Geneva Convention standards.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, the POWs were treated so well that some domestic critics accused the army in late 1944 and early 1945 of “coddling” them.<sup>38</sup>

All indications point to the conclusion that both the Roswell and Lordsburg camps were run in strict adherence to the stipulations of the Geneva Convention. Swiss legation officials, International Red Cross and International YMCA representatives, and inspectors from the Provost Marshal General’s Office all found little cause for complaint in the operation of the New Mexico camps.<sup>39</sup> Their reports did cite some minor grievances; the prisoners groused, for example, about such things as tardy mail delivery, leaky roofs, and supply shortages in work gloves and stationery.<sup>40</sup> There were also occasional charges of beatings administered by the American



guards or other forms of abuse.<sup>41</sup> Much more typical, however, was the observation of one Swiss Legation inspector that in his estimation the only legitimate complaint possible with respect to the Roswell camp might be made by the American commanding officer concerning the generally uncooperative attitude of the prisoners themselves.<sup>42</sup>

The inspection reports referred to above, the testimony of former prisoners, guards, and officers of the camps, and other materials provide a reasonably clear picture of life inside the barbed wire. As already suggested, given the circumstances it seems to have been a relatively comfortable existence. Physically, for instance, the POWs were unquestionably well cared for. Not only was housing satisfactory and the environment of the camps as pleasant as possible, but the health care and food were superior by any objective standards. The camp at Roswell, for example, had

one of the most complete and modern 250-bed hospitals to be found anywhere in the country. The operating and x-ray rooms are equipped with every modern facility for surgery, and there is also a modern six-chair dental apartment. . . . The hospital is equipped with sun parlors, sterilizing rooms, and diet kitchens.<sup>43</sup>

Rudolf Fischer, one of the Swiss inspectors, wrote at length of the Roswell medical unit, calling it

a very well equipped and modern hospital. . . . All who visit this hospital are amazed at the facilities which are offered the prisoners of war. No US city of 10-30,000 and only some of 100,000 have such facilities.<sup>44</sup>

Staffed normally by four American army doctors, seven nurses, two dentists, and one optician,<sup>45</sup> who were assisted by a considerable number of German corpsmen and dentists from among the POWs themselves,<sup>46</sup> the camp hospital provided exemplary care for the prisoners. Almost all German historians have praised the health care provided Axis POWs in American hands,<sup>47</sup> and a German doctor, himself a former American-held POW, claimed that the

care of the inmates in American camps was considerably better than that for civilians in Germany at the same time.<sup>48</sup>

The American record in feeding the POWs was also above reproach. The food supplied the inmates of the American camps was, according to the stipulation of the Geneva convention, identical to the Type A field rations served American troops, which included steak, chicken, ham, and the like,<sup>49</sup> and the German POWs were generally very happy with it.<sup>50</sup> Indeed, most of them were pleasantly surprised with their menus, and a diary entry of a Roswell POW—"Die Verpflegung ist vorzüglich!" (The food is first-rate!)—was not exceptional.<sup>51</sup> Not only were the POWs treated with traditional American foods—Thanksgiving dinner of turkey and all the trimmings<sup>52</sup> and Christmas goose washed down with eight hundred gallons of wine specially purchased in Albuquerque<sup>53</sup>—but the American army authorities even went to the extent of establishing Menu Boards with POW representation in an attempt to take into consideration German national food preferences.<sup>54</sup> In New Mexico, for example, the quantity of potatoes supplied to the POWs was increased and that of corn decreased in accordance with their wishes,<sup>55</sup> and rye bread was substituted for white upon their request for "bread which would chew longer."<sup>56</sup> The POWs cooked their own food according to their tastes and proved remarkably thrifty and ingenious at it. For example, they made bread from potato peelings and meat stew from jack rabbits supplied them after successful hunting expeditions by American camp personnel.<sup>57</sup>

Much of the acrimony in the coddling controversy of 1944-1946 hinged on the "overly generous" food served the POWs. An Arizona congressman claimed, for example, to have seen German POWs "as fat as hogs" in one of the Arizona camps.<sup>58</sup> Though the army defended itself by calling attention to the Geneva Convention standards, food rations for the German POWs were cut back considerably in 1945.<sup>59</sup> The public attention focused on the matter played a part in that cutback, but even more important were the outbreak of food shortages in some parts of the nation in 1945 and the revelations, as Allied armies swept into Nazi Germany, of con-

ditions within German concentration camps.<sup>60</sup> For a few months, then, food rations in the American camps were restricted and some POW diary entries for this period (roughly April to August 1945) speak of "Hungerration" (hunger rations).<sup>61</sup> By the fall, however, they were restored to earlier levels and the diary entry of another POW—"Herrgott, wieder einmal seit meiner Rekrutenzeit Mensch sein!" (Dear God! For the first time since my recruit days to feel human again!)<sup>62</sup>—seems the most accurate general summary of food standards. It might also be noted that a survey of one thousand Roswell POWs between June and November 1943, showed that there was an average weight gain of 8.6 pounds per man.<sup>63</sup>

The leisure-time activities at the New Mexico camps also undoubtedly contributed to both the physical and psychological well-being of the POWs. The prisoners had the opportunity to engage in a wide variety of recreational activities. Many took to sport with great energy, and lively soccer games, for instance, were regular events at both camps. In addition, German hand- or fistball, tennis, ping-pong, and chess were all played regularly.<sup>64</sup> Theatrical and musical activities and work in the plastic arts were also well developed, especially at Roswell.<sup>65</sup> Gala theatrical performances—dramas, music, and German-style cabaret—were staged weekly by the prisoners using costumes and props furnished them by the YMCA or purchased from the admission fees charged at the shows.<sup>66</sup> Original plays and skits written by the prisoners themselves frequently shared billing with excerpts or scenes from the plays of such German literary figures as Schiller. In general the drama program was quite prominent throughout the existence of the camp despite the frequent transfers of inmates. The stage shows were supplemented by weekly movies provided by the War Department. Though the films shown were selected by the Army and were almost surely not to the prisoners' preferences—among them "The Adventures of Tom Sawyer," "Abe Lincoln in Illinois," "God Is My Co-Pilot," and "G.I. Joe"<sup>67</sup>—they were well attended. Less appreciated were films specially prepared by the War Department titled "Why We Fight," a part of the slowly developed re-education program.<sup>68</sup>

Even more impressive was the extraordinarily varied music program carried on within the camps, again, especially at Roswell. Despite the difficulties posed by prisoner transfers—how, for example, did one replace a top-notch violinist shipped off to a camp in Como, Mississippi?—the Roswell camp seems always to have had an orchestra of some description and at one time as many as three.<sup>69</sup> Using instruments provided by the YMCA or, more commonly, purchased by the POWs themselves, the Roswell orchestra was a source of pride to everyone connected with the camp. Its repertoire ranged from Mozart and Brahms through Viennese waltzes to American pop songs like “Mama, led die Pistole weg!” more familiarly known as “Pistol Packin’ Mama.”<sup>70</sup> From the ranks of American pop songs, which they learned from the radios allowed in the camp, came the Roswell POWs’ favorite song, a tune which might be called the Alma Mater of the Roswell Prisoner of War Internment Camp: “The Yellow Rose of Texas.”<sup>71</sup> Music quite obviously played a substantial rôle as a morale booster and diversion for the men imprisoned at Roswell. It also provided a bright spot in the social life of the American officers and their wives stationed there, for the POW orchestra provided the music at officers’ club dances.<sup>72</sup> It even put on well-attended concerts, complete with chorus, for the citizens of the town.<sup>73</sup>

The spiritual needs of the camp inmates were ministered to through regular religious services, both Protestant and Catholic, at both New Mexico camps. Attendance was not high—at Lordsburg only about twenty per cent of the POWs attended, and the Roswell percentage was approximately the same. Many of those who attended did so only in order to get out of their own compound and into contact with men from others.<sup>74</sup> The Lutheran Church in America also attempted to contribute to the spiritual nurture of the prisoners by sending German-language Bibles, hymnals, and other religious works to the camps, but its efforts and similar ones made by the YMCA seem to have had little impact. An inspector for the YMCA after a March 1944 visit to Roswell noted that a large shipment of books had recently arrived at the camp from the Lutheran Commission. He observed that the POWs were obviously

grateful for it, but "though they did not really say anything, they thought also that the proportion of religious books was too great."<sup>75</sup>

"Self-improvement" was a major objective of the POWs, and to that end elaborate educational programs operated within the camps. Though hampered by the frequent transfers of "professors," POW students at Roswell, for example, could take courses in English (encouraged by the camp authorities), the natural sciences, mathematics, literature, commerce and bookkeeping, the history of art, and many others.<sup>76</sup> These courses had great importance for the students,<sup>77</sup> and the Roswell education program seems to have been typical of similar programs in virtually all American camps. A German historian has concluded:

When the school systems behind the barbed wire are surveyed, a large number of adult German males in Western Allies' camps can be seen hunched over their schoolbooks. The impression that these men were taking their schooling much more seriously than ever before in their lives is not at all a false one.<sup>78</sup>

At one point in 1945 more than twelve hundred POWs were enrolled in courses at the Roswell camp.<sup>79</sup> And, as a capstone to the education programs, the POWs in New Mexico and elsewhere were allowed to take university-level correspondence courses from some forty-eight American universities, among them such schools as the Universities of California (Berkeley), Michigan, Minnesota, Chicago, Texas, and Virginia.<sup>80</sup> Roswell POWs participated in some of those courses.<sup>81</sup>

Books were readily available to the students, some of them received, after censorship, in packages from Germany, some from local sources, but most of the books in the camps were supplied by the YMCA, Lutheran Church organizations, or the International Red Cross.<sup>82</sup> Magazines and newspapers were also freely available; POWs within the Roswell camp held subscriptions to local papers, the *Christian Science Monitor*, *Life*, *Time*, and no less than twenty-three subscriptions to the *New York Times*.<sup>83</sup> With their radios, books, magazines, and newspapers, the POW inmates in

New Mexico, like those elsewhere in the United States, had great freedom to learn and grow intellectually.<sup>84</sup> The materials available to them were subject to censorship, which as a general rule was not at all restrictive.<sup>85</sup> Further, the POWs were largely free from overt, heavy-handed attempts at "re-education," a euphemism for political indoctrination. The American authorities were, of course, eager to cultivate respect for and interest in democracy among the POWs in their hands, but not until relatively late in the war did re-education programs and special schools become fully operational.<sup>86</sup> Even then the programs touched only relatively small numbers of POWs. More often than not, the Army was criticized for its slow pace in re-education efforts.<sup>87</sup>

POWs in New Mexico also had access to two other important newspapers. One was *Free Word*, a camp newspaper put out by and for the inmates of the Roswell camp.<sup>88</sup> *Free Word*, printed within the camp on mimeograph machines, was completely the responsibility of the prisoners themselves, though it was of course subject to official censorship. General in content, it carried news of camp sporting events, musical and dramatic productions, short surveys of news from Europe (*Die letzte Nachrichten aus Europa*) gleaned from American newspapers, articles about the United States and its political system (undoubtedly inspired or at least encouraged by the camp authorities), articles in German with an English translation underneath to facilitate English language study, and even a joke section.<sup>89</sup> The paper was obviously screened with considerable care by the American authorities and was undoubtedly considered by them a part of the diffuse re-education program. From the reproduction of the Statue of Liberty on its masthead through its "In einer Demokratie" section, which discussed America and its institutions, American control of *Free Word* was evident. Nevertheless, the paper was acceptable to most of the POWs in Roswell, and without doubt played a useful rôle in providing information to the men in the camp and in serving as an intellectual outlet for the pent-up energies of the men who worked on it. The other German-language newspaper available in the New Mexico camps was *Der Ruf* (*The Call*), a nationally cir-

culated newspaper intended for the POWs, which began publication in November 1944 in Fort Philip Kearney, Rhode Island. *Der Ruf* explicitly served the interests of America's re-education efforts and was tightly controlled by the War Department and the army officers who edited it.<sup>90</sup> The German POWs in New Mexico reacted to it as did their compatriots elsewhere in the United State. Some of them read it, but most ignored it, viewing it as an indoctrination tool of the Americans.<sup>91</sup>

Though circumstances within the New Mexico camps as described above—housing, health care, food, recreational diversions, etc.—were clearly within the “tolerable” category, especially when it is remembered that Roswell and Lordsburg were, after all, prisoner of war camps, nevertheless there were attempts at escape. Escape attempts were relatively rare, usually no more than one every three or four months, and almost always involved no more than three or four men.<sup>92</sup> Escape from the main camps was difficult, for security measures were extensive and efficient. In addition to the two tall fences which surrounded the camps with a “dead-man’s strip” of ten to fifteen feet between them, the perimeters were dotted with towers continuously manned by guards armed with machine guns. Searchlights covered the fences, and mounted guards and sentinels on foot constantly patrolled.<sup>93</sup> Hence there were few prisoners who attempted physical break out through the camps’ perimeters. However, various other ruses—holding onto the bottom of delivery trucks, hiding in car trunks or even in the camp garbage, and thereby escaping through the main gates—did achieve success from time to time.<sup>94</sup> Escape from work details or the work camps later established around the state was simpler and therefore much more common. In those circumstances prisoners might simply hide in the fields where they worked and hope that the guard would miss his count, or walk away from an inattentive guard. They might also break through the chicken-wire fence which surrounded the poorly guarded work camps, or, on occasion, overpower the guard or guards assigned to watch them.<sup>95</sup>

Sometimes the escape attempts ended in violence. Two POWs were shot to death while trying to escape from Roswell, for ex-

ample, and others were wounded.<sup>96</sup> In the state's most celebrated escape case, an Artesia rancher shot and killed a German escapee from Roswell and wounded another when he caught them trying to start his truck in the middle of the night.<sup>97</sup> Other POWs were wounded while resisting recapture,<sup>98</sup> but generally escapees submitted without struggle to the posses made up of army personnel, local law officers, and private citizens who ran them to ground.<sup>99</sup> Though escape attempts were relatively infrequent and in no case involved harm to property or citizens of the state other than some car and clothing thefts designed to facilitate flight,<sup>100</sup> they worried and angered some New Mexicans. For example, after four escaped POWs had been rounded up and returned to the detention camp at Fort Sumner by a local posse, the editor of the *Health City Sun* reflected the hard line that some New Mexicans took on the matter:

This gentle gazette is beginning to think that the posses of hard-riding men who rounded up the four Nazi runaways from the detention camp in Southern New Mexico have gone soft on us. How come they brought these guys back to camp alive? If they didn't want to waste ammunition on things like that, they could have contrived some other method of exterminating them. . . .

In spite of the fact that these Nazi enemies in Southern New Mexico are treated with consideration, they are not satisfied. Some of them are continually breaking out, and a posse has to round them up again. If, perchance, the head guard should lean over the fence someday and address his charges like this, we are pretty sure there would be less trouble with runaways. "Listen, boys," he should say, "You birds stay inside that fence, see! The first one who sticks his blankety blank nose from between those wires, will get his blankety blank kotokus shot off!" He wouldn't have to shoot off many, before the rest of them would stay put.<sup>101</sup>

Actually, though there were some "Nazis" who attempted escape in hopes of getting back to Germany to re-enter the fight,<sup>102</sup> more commonly the escapees had other notions. Most acted out of a sense of duty, or to get away from the sheer boredom of camp routine, or for some other basically harmless reason—the desire for



adventure, to cause inconvenience to the "Amis," or "just to see the USA."<sup>103</sup> Few of the escapees felt that it was even remotely possible to get back to Germany. Most of them realized full well where they were and understood the impracticality of fleeing their camps. They could see the rough, inhospitable terrain which surrounded them and they knew that the large cities that might shelter them were long distances from New Mexico. Although the Mexican border was enticingly close and some escapees did get across it, Mexican authorities proved highly efficient and cooperative in rounding them up and returning them to the United States.<sup>104</sup> Indeed, many escapees voluntarily surrendered themselves after a few tough days on the outside. A Swiss Legation inspector who visited Lordsburg in 1944 reported on one such case:

Two prisoners who recently escaped into Mexico sent word through the police of Chihuahua that they wished to return. They had found it most difficult to secure enough to eat, were tired of sleeping in jails and other detention places, and were only too glad when officers sent from Lordsburg arrived to accompany them to the comfort of the prisoner of war camp at Lordsburg.<sup>105</sup>

Most escapees lasted no longer than twenty-four hours on the outside and none escaped permanently from the New Mexico camps.<sup>106</sup> Escapes, then, caused more sensational newspaper stories than damage to New Mexico or the war effort.

In the spring of 1943, the Army's POW operations took on an important new dimension. War Department officials decided to experiment with using the Axis POWs as a labor force in areas of acute labor shortage.<sup>107</sup> Growing manpower inadequacies, especially in agriculture, prompted the Army to revise its earlier policy of simply confining the POWs in internment camps. The Army began by using POW labor on military installations in road work and in general maintenance chores, but soon experimented with hiring out POWs as contract labor to private employers. After security problems with the new policy proved negligible, the program was expanded until by 1945 more than 220,000 prisoners

were working on military bases or in the private economy. During 1944 they performed work estimated at a value of \$102,000,000.<sup>108</sup>

Since New Mexico began to suffer acute labor shortages in late 1942 and early 1943, it was involved in the work program from the beginning. These shortages were especially apparent in the agricultural sector of the state's economy, since so many young men had been absorbed by the military or by the nation's rapidly expanding wartime industrial establishment. Editorials in New Mexico papers called for all patriotic citizens—elderly people, young ones, women—to get out and work in the fields as their contribution to the war effort.<sup>109</sup> Many high school youths and reservation Indians were put to work in the state's fields.<sup>110</sup> Nevertheless, in the spring of 1943, some farmers still found it necessary to plow under their unharvested crops when the new planting season rolled around.<sup>111</sup>

In these circumstances New Mexico farmers and other employers responded rapidly when the Army announced on June 26, 1943, that POWs in the state would be available for contract work, either in agriculture or other sectors of the economy. Within two weeks POWs were performing flood-control work for the city of Roswell,<sup>112</sup> and area farmers were discussing with the Roswell camp commander the guidelines for the use of POWs as agricultural labor. By the end of July over five hundred Germans were at work on Pecos Valley farms,<sup>113</sup> and camp officials were being deluged with requests for POW labor from all over the state.

One of the most obvious barriers to widespread use of the POWs as labor was the problem of distance. How, for example, could Roswell or Lordsburg POWs help the farmers of Bernalillo County? The Army, in setting up the program, anticipated this difficulty and quickly established ground rules for the construction of branch camps around the state wherever the need for POW labor was acute.<sup>114</sup> Thus, over the next three years, branch camps (also called side, labor, or "fly" camps) were put up in almost all corners of New Mexico. Usually located in abandoned CCC camps—though also in school buildings, warehouses, armories, etc.—side camps were eventually set up in Artesia, Dexter, Mayhill, Albuquerque, Melrose, Clayton, Carlsbad, Portales, Santa Fe, Clovis, Las

Cruces, Hatch, Fort Bayard, Deming, Anthony, and Alamogordo.<sup>115</sup> The Army operated on the premise that POWs should be moved to where the work was, and side camps opened and closed according to local demand for labor. Most were relatively small in size, ranging from the thirty to sixty man camp at the Hal Bogle farm in Dexter to the four hundred to six hundred man camp at Las Cruces.<sup>116</sup> Size depended upon the labor needs of the area and the facilities available for holding the prisoners.

As demand for field hands rose, farmers were not slow in approaching the military authorities to request establishment of branch camps in their areas.<sup>117</sup> The Army required conformity with three basic prerequisites before opening up a side camp: formal certification by the county agent and the State War Manpower Commission that other labor was nonexistent; agreement by the employers of the POWs to pay an hourly wage equal to the prevailing minimum wage for free labor in the area; and the availability of adequate facilities for housing the prisoner-laborers.<sup>118</sup> Some groups of farmers pledged to erect adequate facilities at their own cost if that would guarantee the labor they needed.<sup>119</sup> Their pledges testified to the severity of the state's labor problem. When the initial experimentation in New Mexico with POW labor proved successful during the 1943 harvest season, farmers began to make their plans for tapping the same labor pool in succeeding seasons. During the harvest season of 1944 more than 5,500 POWs were engaged in farm labor in the state,<sup>120</sup> and the State Supervisor of the War Manpower Commission requested a total of 7,280 for the 1945 crop year.<sup>121</sup>

The majority of POWs working in New Mexico were employed in agriculture. They tended the vegetable crops along Peñasco Creek in the vicinity of Mayhill; cleared fields and did general cleanup work around Portales; worked the alfalfa fields around Artesia; helped the farmers in the Rio Grande valley to get their crops in; harvested the broomcorn in Curry and Union counties; and chopped and picked cotton at many sites in southern and eastern New Mexico, especially in the Mesilla Valley.<sup>122</sup>

Estimations of their value as agricultural labor varied con-

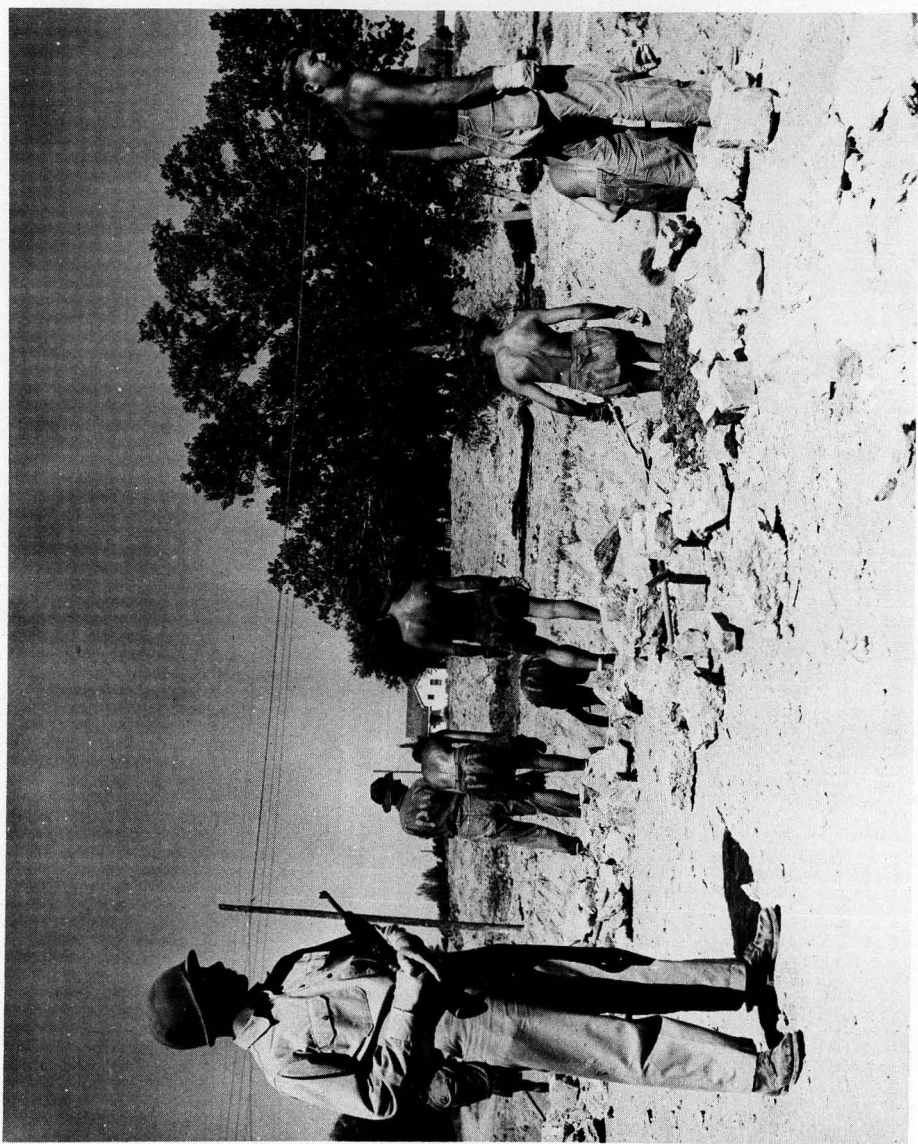
siderably. Some farmers hailed them as good workers who performed their tasks conscientiously and thoroughly.<sup>123</sup> The governor of the state publicly praised their work in the Mesilla Valley cotton harvest of 1943 as "a grand job."<sup>124</sup> Others, however, were more critical. Two Roswell-area farmers who used some one hundred and fifty German POWs between them commented that "they weren't really satisfactory labor, but were a whole lot better than nothing."<sup>125</sup> In the opinion of these farmers the German POWs were "intelligent people" and "we got fond of some of them," but "it took a big bunch to get anything done."<sup>126</sup>

The Axis farm laborers spent a majority of their man-hours in the crop seasons of 1943-1945 in New Mexico's cotton fields. In this kind of labor their value was especially questionable. As with their compatriots, engaged in similar work out of camps located all over the South, they did not like the bending and stooping connected with tending and picking cotton.<sup>127</sup> A diary entry of a POW held at Artesia noted that he and his associates often "wished all the cotton fields of the area to the devil," and characterized the work as "*Schinderei*" or drudgery.<sup>128</sup> The Army even prepared a special illustrated brochure for the German POWs titled "Wie man Baumwolle pflücken muss" (How Cotton Must be Picked),<sup>129</sup> but they proved to be poor students of the subject. A Carlsbad farmer charged that his POW-laborers averaged only 65 to 70 pounds of cotton per day at picking time, while local women and children got 150 to 200 pounds.<sup>130</sup> His dissatisfaction was shared by others.<sup>131</sup> The Army eventually was forced to look into the complaints voiced by cotton farmers and sent an inspector to Roswell where a test competition between POW cotton choppers and local free labor was held. In the competition, 10 civilian laborers chopped 200 rows of cotton, while 14 POWs did 168.<sup>132</sup> The Army argued that the poor performance of the POWs in the cotton fields was the result of inadequate supervision by the farmers using them,<sup>133</sup> but did finally agree to allow payment of lower wages for POW work in the cotton fields until their productivity and efficiency increased.<sup>134</sup>

In evaluating the agricultural labor of their POWs some farm-

ers undoubtedly shared the conviction of the Colorado State Chairman of the Department of Agriculture War Board when he noted that perhaps the POWs should simply be turned over to the Russians: "I think the Russians will know how to get them to work, for a lot of these German prisoners are just loafing on the job."<sup>135</sup> POW labor, however, could hardly be judged by the standards appropriate to free labor. The Axis prisoners working in New Mexico's fields not only lacked experience in farm labor in many cases, but, more important, they possessed virtually no incentive to attempt to reach high standards. Their earnings amounted to no more than eighty cents a day in any case, and their money was limited to canteen scrip useful only in the purchase of a limited number of items in the camps. They were confined under guard when their work was done. They lacked the support and sustenance of family life. Their future was uncertain. Their incentive to work, then, was limited to one thing only—avoidance of disciplinary punishment for failure to work diligently.<sup>136</sup> Most New Mexico farmers understood these things and were grateful for whatever work they got from their POW farm hands. Certainly it is a matter of record that without them New Mexico would have suffered substantial crop losses during the years 1943-1945.<sup>137</sup>

The Axis POWs were also employed at a large number of miscellaneous tasks around the state. As noted earlier, they did chores like working on the city of Roswell's flood-control projects. They helped in the construction of various kinds of buildings, such as the Artesia Servicemen's Club. POWs repaired buildings and planted shrubbery at the State Fairgrounds in Albuquerque. They cleared the ditches of the Middle Rio Grande Conservancy District in Bernalillo County. A few tended the greens and fairways of the municipal golf course in Santa Fe. Some worked at the Dexter Fish Hatchery under State Fish and Wildlife Service supervision. Others did general maintenance work at Bruns General Hospital in Santa Fe.<sup>138</sup> More important, POWs worked in large numbers on the state's various military installations, thereby freeing American service personnel for other work.<sup>139</sup> Though it is





difficult to estimate the total monetary value of the agricultural, military base, and miscellaneous labor performed by POWs in New Mexico, nationally the United States garnered an estimated \$230,000,000 from POW labor by the end of July 1945.<sup>140</sup>

When the European war ended in May 1945, the shipment of Axis POWs to the United States also stopped. In the fall, repatriation began—usually not to Germany but to England or France—and the pace greatly increased in the first months of 1946.<sup>141</sup> Many New Mexicans, especially the farmers who insisted that they still were needed as labor, were sorry to see them go.<sup>142</sup> Both New Mexico base camps and, of course, all the side camps were completely closed down by the beginning of February 1946.<sup>143</sup> The buildings at Lordsburg and Roswell were subsequently sold as surplus property or taken over for use by American military families connected with the air base at Roswell. Some of the Roswell camp buildings are still in use as married-student housing at Eastern New Mexico State University.

Thus a chapter in New Mexico's history closed quietly. It might finally be observed that it is certain that a large number of German POWs, "temporary" New Mexicans, left the state with not unpleasant memories of their experience here. A considerable number of them initiated correspondence with the New Mexicans for whom they had worked.<sup>144</sup> Some wrote their former New Mexico employers and offered to return to recommence their war-time labor if the employer could help in getting immigration documents and in supplying transportation costs.<sup>145</sup> Others returned to New Mexico as tourists in the 1950's and 1960's, and at least a few did come back as permanent residents of the state.<sup>146</sup> The POW whose diary entry for his last day on American soil is quoted below, may well be representative of many of those held between 1942 and 1946 in the New Mexico camps:

Halt, pass auf, jetzt kommt Dein letzter Schritt auf amerikanischem Boden. Vielleicht für immer—vielleicht. 'Wie war es Fremdling, auf meinem Boden?' 'Ach, weisst Du, es war schön und vielleicht werde ich einmal merken, dass ich viel gelernt habe hier—und vielleicht



werde ich einmal Heimweh bekommen nach Dir—vielleicht. Aber weisst Du, jetzt fahre ich heim. Leb wohl und Danke schön—Leb Wohl!<sup>147</sup>

Wait a minute now! You're getting ready to take your last step on American soil. Perhaps for ever—perhaps. 'How was it, stranger, here on my soil?' 'Oh, you know, it was nice and perhaps sometime I'll remember that I learned a great deal here. Perhaps even I'll be homesick for you—perhaps. But, you know, I'm getting ready to travel home now. Stay well and thank you—stay well!

### NOTES

1. United States, Department of the Army, Office, Chief of Military History, Historical Services Division, "History of the Prisoner of War Operations of the Provost Marshal General's Office," p. 3. A microfilm copy of this work, done in 1945-46, is available through the National Archives. (Hereafter cited as "POW Operations.")
2. Maxwell S. McKnight, "The Employment of Prisoners of War in the United States," *International Labour Review*, vol. 50 (1944), pp. 47-48.
3. "POW Operations," pp. 51ff.
4. Hermann Jung, *Die deutschen Kriegsgefangenen in amerikanischer Hand—USA* (Munich: Ernst und Werner Gieseking, 1972), p. 20. This work, which is vol. X, part 1 of the comprehensive series *Zur Geschichte der deutschen Kriegsgefangenen des Zweiten Weltkrieges* (edited by Erich Maschke and published under the auspices of the Wissenschaftliche Kommission für deutsche Kriegsgefangenengeschichte) is by far the most extensive study of the German POWs held in the United States during the period 1942-46. My thanks are due to Professors Maschke and Jung for providing me an advance copy of this rich source work.
5. "POW Operations," pp. 96-97 and 51ff. and McKnight, p. 48.
6. *Las Cruces Sun-News*, Feb. 19, 1942, clipping contained in New Mexico State Records Center and Archives, War Services Library, World War II, vol. 73: "Social Effects; Aliens and Internment Camps; Vice and Delinquency; Population Movements." This collection, hereafter cited as WS Lib., vol. 73, is a newspaper clipping collection covering the state's history during WW II.

7. *Roswell Daily Record*, April 15, 1942, p. 2. For other negative reactions to the whole question, see *Albuquerque Journal*, March 5, 1942, pp. 1-2; *Las Vegas Daily Optic*, Feb. 24, 1942 (WS Lib., vol. 73); and the *Socorro Chieftain*, March 20, 1942 (*ibid.*). For a convenient survey of the intense antipathy felt around the nation toward the Japanese, see Allan R. Bosworth, *America's Concentration Camps* (New York, 1967), especially pp. 60-61.

8. See, for example, *Albuquerque Journal*, Feb. 26, 1942, p. 4; *Roswell Daily Record*, Feb. 27, 1942, p. 4; *Las Vegas Daily Optic*, Feb. 24, 1942 (WS Lib., vol. 73).

9. *Roswell Daily Record*, Feb. 2, 1942, p. 2.

10. *Las Cruces Sun-News*, July 6, 1942 (WS Lib., vol. 73).

11. Pleas for accomodation to the nation's needs in this matter began as early as March. See *Albuquerque Journal*, March 1, 1942, p. 1, and *Roswell Daily Record*, April 23, 1942, p. 6.

12. United States, National Archives, Microfilm Publication Number 66-538, Office of the Provost Marshal General, Prisoner of War Operations Division, "Weekly and Semi-monthly Reports on Prisoners of War, June 1942-30 June 1946." Hereafter cited as NA microfilm, "Weekly reports on POWs."

13. Technically that experience had begun about a year and a half earlier, in Jan. 1941. About four hundred sailors from the German liner *Columbus* had been interned in the United States after the British sank their ship off the American Gulf Coast in Dec. 1940. After several months at various naval installations on the west coast, they were eventually settled in an abandoned CCC camp at Fort Stanton, New Mexico. For details on their story, see Wilfred McCormick, "Anchors Away," *New Mexico Magazine*, vol. 19 (1941), pp. 9ff., and "A Camp for Aliens," *Newsweek*, Jan. 27, 1941, p. 17.

14. I have not been able to find in any of the literature information concerning precisely when, where, by whom, and how the idea of transporting POWs to the United States originated. The answer can surely be found in the voluminous files of the Office of the Provost Marshal General, currently housed in the Modern Military Division of the National Archives, but those files are still uncatalogued.

15. The only other camp in the state housing Japanese aliens was established at the old CCC camp west of Santa Fe in the spring of 1942.

16. *Roswell Daily Record*, Aug. 13, 1942, p. 1.

17. Colonel Arthur Brosius (US Army, ret.), personal interview, Roswell, Oct. 6, 1972. Brosius was a member of the 340th Military Police Escort Guard Company which opened up the Roswell camp. He was stationed there until it closed in 1946.

18. *Roswell Morning Dispatch*, Sept. 8, 1942, p. 1; *Roswell Daily Record*, Nov. 27, 1942, p. 1; Brosius interview.
19. NA Microfilm, "Weekly Reports on POWs." See also the statistical résumé of the Axis POWs held in the USA in George G. Lewis and John Mewha, *History of Prisoner of War Utilization by the United States Army 1776-1945* (Washington, GPO, 1955), pp. 90ff.
20. *Ibid.*
21. The Lordsburg camp was vacant from May to October 1944. The 4,000 Italian POWs held there were relocated in May, but 4,500 German noncommissioned officers replaced them in October.
22. On the Santa Fe internment camp, see Deborah Melton, "Japanese-Americans in New Mexico During World War II," unpublished manuscript in the possession of the author.
23. NA Microfilm, "Weekly Reports on POWs," and "POW Operations," p. 59. The single largest camp, with close to 10,000 prisoners, was located at Robinson, Arkansas.
24. Jung, pp. 8-9.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 9; Brosius interview; Harry Wells, Jr., personal interview, Albuquerque, Oct. 22, 1972. Wells was an officer at the camp.
26. In the possession of Col. Brosius. Brosius also has several other woodcuts made by German POWs at the camp. Some of them are simply "human": a heart with the name "Dolores" in the middle or an elaborately carved shield with the inscription "Zur Erinnerung an Deinen 23, die Fussballkamaraden" (In remembrance of your 23rd birthday, from your soccer teammates). Others are more ominous: one, for example, depicts a glowering eagle in flight, a swastika clutched in his claws. All illustrations used with this article, courtesy of Colonel Brosius.
27. Brosius interview; Russell Smith, personal interview, Roswell, Oct. 7, 1972. Smith is a Roswell-area farmer who used German POW labor in 1944-45.
28. Wells interview.
29. The only printed material about the Italians in the state other than general references is found in Betty Woods, "Commando Cowboys," *New Mexico Magazine*, vol. 22 (1944), pp. 12ff.
30. Though there is less information available on the camp at Lordsburg than the one at Roswell, most of the evidence concerning it indicates basic similarity to the Roswell installation.
31. Inspection report of Luis Hortal of the International Red Cross of a March 6-9, 1944, visit to Roswell. The report is in National Archives, Modern Military Division, War Department, Records of the Office of the Provost Marshal General, Record Group 389, Enemy Prisoner of War Information Bureau, Subject File 1942-46: Inspection and Field Reports, Box

2671, "Other Inspection Reports Roswell." (Hereafter cited as NA, PMGOFF., and box number.) For a full discussion of the mechanics of the inspections and the rôles played by the Swiss Legation, the International Red Cross, and the YMCA, see John Mason Brown, "German Prisoners of War in the United States," *American Journal of International Law*, vol. 39 (1945), pp. 190-202.

32. Georgia B. Redfield, "Prisoners of War," *New Mexico Magazine*, vol. 21 (1943), p. 19.

33. Jung, p. 31.

34. Redfield, p. 19 and F. H. King, "NMMI Youth Describes Visit to Nazi Prisoner of War Camp," *Albuquerque Journal*, June 12, 1943, pp. 1-2. See also, "Nazis in the U.S.," *Time*, May 1, 1944, pp. 64-65.

35. Redfield, pp. 19-20.

36. For further information, see Brown, "German POWs in the US."

37. See the inspection reports contained in NA, PMGOFF., Box 2671 and Jung, *passim*. See also the published accounts of life in the American camps by former inmates of them, for example, K. H. Bülter, *POW: Erlebnisse eines Seemanns in Amerika* (Berlin: Das Neue Berlin, 1956), E. R. Greulich, *Amerikanische Odyssee* (Berlin: Deutscher Militärverlag, 1967), and Manfred Hornung, *PW: Tatsachenbericht* (Vienna: Wancura Verlag, 1959). Both the Bülter and Hornung books contain specific information about the camps in New Mexico.

38. On the "coddling" crisis, which eventually resulted in Congressional investigation of the matter, see *Newsweek*, May 7, 1945, pp. 58-61; "POW Operations," pp. 286ff.; United States House of Representatives, 78th Cong., 2nd Sess., Military Affairs Committee, Report No. 1992, "Investigation of national war effort, relative to treatment of prisoners of war in the United States and abroad;" and United States, House of Representatives, 79th Cong., 1st sess., Military Affairs Committee, Report No. 728, same title.

39. See the reports held in NA, PMGOFF., Box 2671.

40. *Ibid.*, reports by Dr. Rudolf Fischer of the Swiss Legation (Jan. 13-14, 1944); Luis Hortal of the IRC (March 6-9, 1944); Alfred Cardinaux of the IRC (Aug. 12, 1943); Willi Bruppacher of the Swiss Legation (Sept. 6-7, 1944); Mr. Métraux of the Swiss Legation (April 18-19, 1945).

41. *Ibid.*, especially the report of Verner Tobler of the Swiss Legation (March 17-19, 1945).

42. *Ibid.*, report by Fischer.

43. Redfield, pp. 19ff.

44. NA, PMGOFF., Box 2671, report by Fischer.

45. *Ibid.*

46. Wells interview.
47. Jung, pp. 139ff.
48. *Ibid.*
49. "POW Operations," p. 75; Brosius interview; *Newsweek*, May 7, 1945, p. 58.
50. See Jung's highly complimentary section concerning the feeding of the German POWs, pp. 37-62.
51. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
52. *Las Cruces Sun-News*, Nov. 23, 1943 (WS Lib., vol. 73).
53. NA, PMGOff., Box 2671, report by Fischer.
54. Jung, p. 43.
55. King, p. 1.
56. Redfield, p. 20.
57. Wells interview.
58. *Newsweek*, May 7, 1945, p. 58.
59. See "POW Operations," pp. 76-79.
60. Jung, pp. 48ff.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 48.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
63. NA, PMGOff., Box 2671, report by Fischer.
64. *Ibid.*, reports by Fischer, Cardinaux, and Hortal; Wells interview; Redfield, p. 20.
65. For a lengthy general discussion of such activities within the American camps across the nation, see Kurt W. Böhme, *Geist und Kultur der deutschen Kriegsgefangenen im Westen* (Munich: Ernst und Werner Gieseeking Verlag, 1968), pp. 172-260. This work is volume 14 of the series cited in note 4 *supra*.
66. NA, PMGOff., Box 2671, reports by Cardinaux and Fischer; Wells interview; and *Free Word*, Jan. 7, 1946. *Free Word* was the camp newspaper put out by the POWs at Roswell.
67. Jung, p. 225.
68. *Ibid.*, p. 226.
69. NA, PMGOff., Box 2671, report by Fischer.
70. Almost all the reports in NA, PMGOff. contain references to the camp's music program. See also the various issues of *Free Word*; Wells interview.
71. Wells interview, this information provided by Mrs. Wells.
72. *Ibid.*
73. NA, PMGOff., Box 2671, report by Cardinaux.
74. NA, PMGOff., Box 2671; Jung, p. 151; Wells interview; *Free Word*.

75. NA, PMGOFF., Box 2671, report by Hortal. On religious life in the camps in general, see Jung and Böhme.
76. *Ibid.*
77. Brosius and Wells interviews.
78. Böhme, p. 125.
79. NA, PMGOFF., Box 2671, report by Tobler.
80. Jung, p. 109.
81. Wells interview.
82. Böhme, *passim*; Jung, pp. 94-114.
83. NA, PMGOFF., Box 2671, report by Bruppacher.
84. Böhme, pp. 37ff., 132-33.
85. *Ibid.*, p. 37.
86. On re-education see "POW Operations," pp. 14off.; the cited works of Böhme and Jung; and Henry W. Ehrmann, "An Experiment in Political Education: the Prisoner of War Schools in the United States," *Social Research*, vol. 14 (1967), pp. 304-20.
87. See "No Converts?" *Time*, Dec. 11, 1944, p. 24 and Henry C. Cassidy and James Powers, "What to do with German Prisoners? The Russian Solution, the American Muddle," *Atlantic Monthly*, vol. 174 (1944), pp. 43ff.
88. Only four issues of *Free Word* are still extant, all of them from the month of January 1946, and it is impossible to speculate about its beginning and ending publication dates. The issues still available are in vol. 18 of the *Library of Congress Collection of German Prisoner of War Camp Papers Published in the USA, 1943-1946*, a 56-volume collection. They are more readily available on a microfilm copy of this collection.
89. *Ibid.*
90. On *Der Ruf*, its organization, objectives, and the like, see Böhme's chapter devoted to it, pp. 46ff.
91. *Ibid.*, pp. 60-61; NA, PMGOFF., Box 2671, "PMG Report on Re-orientation Program, Roswell," anonymous, n.d.
92. Wells and Brosius interviews; WS Lib., vol. 73. The New Mexico newspapers for the period are good sources for the history of escape attempts because, for obvious reasons, such things always received considerable newspaper attention.
93. Brosius interview; Redfield, p. 21.
94. *Roswell Daily Record*, Sept. 1, 1944 (WS Lib., vol. 73); Jung, p. 125; Brosius and Wells interviews. On escape attempts in general from the camps all over the nation, see William E. Kirwan, "Escape Tactics of German War Prisoners," *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology*, vol. 35 (1944-45), pp. 357-66.

95. *Roswell Daily Record*, Nov. 1, 1943; *Las Cruces Sun-News*, Aug. 13, 1944, Oct. 1, 1944; *Roswell Daily Dispatch*, Dec. 7, 1944; *Albuquerque Journal*, Dec. 18, 1943 (all WS Lib., vol. 73); Brosius and Wells interviews.
96. Brosius interview; Redfield, p. 21.
97. See *Roswell Daily Record*, Jan. 14, 1943, Jan. 22, 1943, and Jan. 31, 1943. For editorial reaction to this incident, see *Albuquerque Health City Sun*, Jan. 22, 1943, and *Artesia Daily Current-Argus*, Feb. 4, 1943, all in WS Lib., vol. 73.
98. See, for example, *Santa Fe New Mexican*, Nov. 4, 1942, WS Lib., vol. 73.
99. Brosius interview; miscellaneous newspaper reports in WS Lib., vol. 73.
100. Brosius interview; "POW Operations," p. 205.
101. *Health City Sun*, Nov. 6, 1942, WS Lib., vol. 73.
102. *Roswell Daily Record*, Nov. 1, 1943, p. 1.
103. Jung, p. 124; "POW Operations," pp. 201-02.
104. An FBI agent in El Paso was quoted in the *Roswell Daily Record*, Dec. 14, 1944, p. 1, as observing that the assistance of Mexican law officers was "invaluable in capturing escaped prisoners of war." See also, *Albuquerque Journal*, Dec. 10, 1944, p. 1.
105. NA, PMGOFF., Box 2671, report by Dr. Roth of the Swiss Legation on a Feb. 14, 1944, visit to Lordsburg. See also *Las Cruces Sun-News*, Oct. 1, 1944 (WS Lib., vol. 73). *Albuquerque Journal*, Dec. 18, 1943, p. 1, and Brosius interview.
106. As of March 1, 1945, there had been a total of 1,369 escapes from all the camps in the USA and only 12 prisoners were still at large on that day. See Major General Archer L. Lerch (Provost Marshal General of the Army), "The Army Reports on Prisoners of War," *American Mercury*, vol. 60 (1945), pp. 536-47. This report is also a useful general survey of the handling of POWs.
107. See Lewis and Mewha; Brown; McKnight, *passim*; Jung, pp. 105-204; "POW Operations," pp. 101ff.
108. For more detailed information on the work program, see the works cited in the preceding note. A good, popular account of the program is Beverly Smith, "Nazi Supermen Hit the Dirt," *American Magazine*, vol. 140 (1945), pp. 45ff.
109. See *Roswell Daily Record*, June 18, 1943, p. 2.
110. *Albuquerque Journal*, March 5, 1944, p. 4.
111. *Roswell Daily Record*, Feb. 28, 1943, p. 1.
112. *Ibid.*, July 13, 1943, p. 1.
113. *Ibid.*, July 22, 1943, p. 1.

114. "POW Operations," pp. 101ff.
115. NA Microfilm, "Weekly Reports on POWs."
116. *Ibid.*
117. See, for example, *Portales Daily News*, July 27, 1943; *Artesia Daily Current-Argus*, Aug. 5, 1943; *Las Cruces Sun-News*, Sept. 26, 1943; *Albuquerque Journal*, Sept. 4, 1943. Also, Jim Mahill, personal interview, Mayhill, New Mexico, Oct. 7, 1972, with author. Mahill is a Mayhill farmer-rancher who employed POW laborers.
118. See note 108, *supra*.
119. See, for example, *Portales Daily News*, July 27, 1943; *Albuquerque Journal*, Nov. 7, 1943; *Socorro Chieftain*, Aug. 6, 1942, all WS Lib., vol. 73.
120. *Tucumcari Daily News*, March 20, 1945, *ibid.*
121. *Albuquerque Journal*, March 14, 1945, p. 3. The request was eventually trimmed by the army to 3,310, for by 1945 other states were demanding the POW labor which New Mexico had earlier enjoyed in disproportionate measure.
122. Mahill interview; *Artesia Advocate*, Aug. 5, 1943, May 24, 1945; *Roswell Morning Dispatch*, Nov. 23, 1944. WS Lib., vol. 73. *Albuquerque Journal*, March 10, 1944, p. 1; Dec. 31, 1943, p. 4.
123. Mahill, Smith, and Brosius interviews; Carl Clardy, personal interview, Roswell, Oct. 7, 1972; *Albuquerque Journal*, Aug. 11, 1943, p. 1, Oct. 31, 1943, p. 4; *Roswell Daily Record*, Aug. 2, 1943, p. 1.
124. Governor Dempsey in *Albuquerque Journal*, Aug. 24, 1943, p. 2.
125. Clardy and Smith interviews.
126. Smith interview.
127. Smith, "Nazi Supermen," and Clardy, Smith, and Brosius interviews.
128. Jung, p. 182.
129. *Ibid.*, pp. 344-46.
130. *Albuquerque Journal*, Nov. 8, 1944, p. 7.
131. Clardy, Smith, and Brosius interviews.
132. NA, PMGOff., Box 2671, report by Capt. Alexander Adair, n.d.
133. *Ibid.*; *Roswell Daily Record*, June 8, 1945, p. 1.
134. *Ibid.*
135. Cited in *Albuquerque Journal*, May 25, 1945, p. 1.
136. "POW Operations," p. 116.
137. Smith, Clardy, and Wells interviews; *Albuquerque Journal*, Oct. 31, 1943, p. 4; *Roswell Daily Record*, Aug. 2, 1942, p. 1.
138. Brosius interview; *Roswell Daily Record*, July 14, 1943, p. 1; *Artesia Advocate*, Dec. 2, 1943. WS Lib., vol. 73; *Albuquerque Journal*,



April 3, 1945, p. 3, Jan. 12, 1945, p. 2; *Santa Fe New Mexican*, March 15, 1945. WS Lib., vol. 73. *Albuquerque Journal*, Sept. 17, 1943, p. 9, Jan. 24, 1945, p. 2.

139. See the work reports contained in NA, PMGOff., Record Group 389, "Prisoner of War Camp Labor Reports."

140. "POW Operations," p. 119.

141. Jung, pp. 239-57.

142. See, for example, *Albuquerque Journal*, May 23, 1945, p. 6 and "POWs Outbound," *Newsweek*, May 28, 1945, p. 34.

143. The camp at Lordsburg closed in June 1945, and that at Roswell in January 1946. NA Microfilm, "Weekly Reports on Prisoners of War."

144. Clardy, Smith, and Wells interviews.

145. Mahill interview.

146. Brosius, Clardy, and Smith interviews. At least two former POWs now work for the power company in Roswell.

147. Jung, p. 257.