

POST-GREECE

Trooper Fred Begley, 3rd Royal Tank Regiment, Royal Armoured Corps

From Ian Brown's "Stalag 18A" website:

Work Camp 266 L



Location: Schloss Brunsee

Type of work: Farmwork

Man of Confidence: Cpl H.G. Reed

Number of Men: 16 approx.

Known to be present:

Forename	Surname	Rank	Unit	POW	Comments
W.	Ball				
William Frederick	Begley	Tpr	RAC	8133	
W.B.	Epps	Pte	2/4 Inf. Bn.	3847	Australia
L.	Hague				
L.A.	Hintz	Pte	2/8 Inf. Bn.	3929	Australia
W.	Kemp				
T.H.	Mellors	Sgt	RASC	8232	
J.E.	O'Donnell				
H.G.	Reed	Cpl			MOC
C.	Vickers				
L.F.	White	Pte	RAVC	4635	



International Red Cross: Date of visit: 23 February 1943

General Description

The British prisoners of war in this district are generally lodged in farmhouses where they occupy one or two rooms.

Interior arrangement

Overcrowded

Bathing and washing facilities

The bathing facilities are non-existent but generally the men can get hot water in the farms where they work for their ablutions. Running water is found nowhere. The supply has to be fetched at the pump and carried on the rooms where the men live.

Toilet facilities

Special latrines exist.

Food and Cooking

The men eat with the farmers where they work and the food is not refined nor very plentiful. But the private food can be cooked in the room where they sleep.

Medical attention and sickness

In case of need a civil doctor is available in Mureck. For dental treatment, the prisoners of war are allowed to go to a civil dentist in Mureck who does extractions and fillings.

Clothing

As soon as it can be arranged, it will be possible to have some order and speed in the issue of the new and the exchange of the working uniforms.

Laundry

The laundry is generally well done in the farms where the men work.

Money and Pay

Regular and in order.

Canteen

Religious activity

The religious activity is regulated in principle, i.e. the padre from Stalag 18A/Z Wagna is supposed to visit the different work camps, but practically this has only been done for the camps in short reach of the Stalag. As the padre has to be accompanied by an interpreter the visiting trips can only be arranged very seldom.

Mail

The mail question is much complained about. As the issue is now concentrated in Stalag 18A there is hope very real amelioration. There was difficulty with the outgoing mail as official forms (letters or cards) had not been distributed in sufficient quantity. This however is now straightened out.

Complaints

The main complaint was that the working hours could not be fixed and that not sufficient time was given for the midday meal. In agriculture it is not possible to fix the work to so many hours per day. It varies from day to day and those of the prisoners of war who are farmers themselves understood the difficulty even if the peasants' methods in this country differ from the work in England or Australia. The time for the midday meal was fixed to half an hour for the whole district.

General impression

On the whole the conditions of life for the prisoners of war in these camps can be called good. The stay behind barbed wire is reduced to the sleeping hours mainly. So the time when they are working in the fields represents some likeness of freedom.