



3-2004

MS-056: World War II German Prisoners of War Collection

Keith R. Swaney
Gettysburg College

Follow this and additional works at: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/findingaidsall>

 Part of the [European History Commons](#), [German Language and Literature Commons](#), [Military History Commons](#), and the [United States History Commons](#)

Share feedback about the accessibility of this item.

Swaney, Keith R., "MS-056: World War II German Prisoners of War Collection" (March 2004). Special Collections and College Archives Finding Aids. Special Collection and College Archives, Musselman Library, Gettysburg College.

This finding aid appears in Gettysburg College's institutional repository by permission of the copyright owner for personal use, not for redistribution. Cupola permanent link: <https://cupola.gettysburg.edu/findingaidsall/52>

This open access book is brought to you by The Cupola: Scholarship at Gettysburg College. It has been accepted for inclusion by an authorized administrator of The Cupola. For more information, please contact cupola@gettysburg.edu.

MS-056: World War II German Prisoners of War Collection

Description

Major Laurence C. Thomas directed the German POW camp on the Emmitsburg Road in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and a camp in Pine Grove Furnace, about fifteen miles north. Members of the intelligence corps apparently confiscated the items written in German from the prisoners of war.

The World War II German POW Collection consists of those confiscated materials from the prisoners. It is composed of two series: I. Materials likely confiscated by the intelligence corps and II. Miscellaneous newspaper clippings.

Special Collections and College Archives Finding Aids are discovery tools used to describe and provide access to our holdings. Finding aids include historical and biographical information about each collection in addition to inventories of their content. More information about our collections can be found on our website http://www.gettysburg.edu/special_collections/collections/.

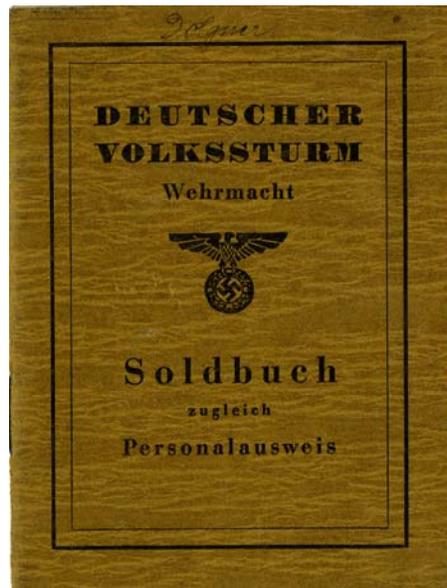
Keywords

World War II, WWII, German soldier, German POW, POW, Intelligence Corps, POW camp, P.O.W., Pine Grove Furnace, contraband

Disciplines

European History | German Language and Literature | History | Military History | United States History

**Guide to the
World War II German Prisoners of War
Collection**



**Gettysburg College, Musselman Library
Special Collections & College Archives**

**Processed by Keith Swaney
March 2004**

MS-056: World War II German Prisoners of War Collection

*Processed by: Keith Swaney
March 2004*

Provenance:

Musselman Library acquired these materials from a gift of A. Joan Thomas, daughter of Major Laurence C. Thomas. Major Thomas directed the German POW camp on the Emmitsburg Road in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania and a camp in Pine Grove Furnace, about fifteen miles north. Members of the intelligence corps apparently confiscated the items written in German from the prisoners of war. Subsequently, they ended up in Major Thomas's possession.

Scope and Content:

The World War II German POW Collection consists of one box of processed materials, encompassing .3 cubic feet. It is composed of two series: I. Materials likely confiscated by the intelligence corps and II. Miscellaneous newspaper clippings.

Series I--Materials Likely Confiscated by the Intelligence Corps

With the exception of the last subject file of this series, these materials are in the German language. One atlas fragment in the seventh folder, however, is in Dutch. In order to acquaint the researcher with the content of each document, notes have been included, some of which are translations of titles and/or excerpts of text. These materials offer the researcher a glimpse into the life of a German soldier who served in the Third Reich's armies. Identification papers, military and travel passes, service manuals, and a personal journal allow the researcher to accomplish this task. Additionally, the series consists of propaganda documents, many of which attempt to describe the proper behavior of a German soldier in Hitler's armies.

Series II--Miscellaneous Newspaper Clippings

This series of the collection consists of miscellaneous newspaper articles—in both English and German—about the Nazi party, the Second World War, and German POWs. One of the clippings is an editorial that warns local citizens in Ardmore, Pennsylvania about the sly nature of German prisoners: “If farmers or others who think only of cheap labor and war profits bring any Nazis near you tell Dad to keep his duck gun well-oiled AND LOADED. Shoot first and call the cops after.”

Inventory, 4pp.

Folder Number (to the left)

Series I--Materials Likely Confiscated by the Intelligence Corps

- 1 *Deutscher Volkssturm, Soldbuch Zugleich Personalausweis*-no date, autographed document signed, 15pp. (original)

The identification papers of Albert Dölgner. Contains a photograph; personal information, such as eye/hair color and appearance (“Gestalt”); a list of clothing and accoutrements; as well as a list of rules that explain the use of the “Soldbuch.”

Organisation Todt, Dienstbuch-no date, autographed document signed, 49pp. (original)

Literally, a “service book.” Contains a photograph of the soldier to whom it belonged, Otto Engel; personal information, including height, hair/eye color, and family information; a chart of personal materials and clothing; a list of where he was transported and performed service (“Ernennungen und Beförderungen”); and a description of the duties of a soldier (“Pflichten der deutschen Frontarbeiters,” p. 26).

- 2 *Vater, ich rufe Dich!* by Karl Keding-no date, 33pp. (original)

Discusses the nature and importance of prayer for German servicemen. Contains a prayer by Theodor Körner-“Führ mich zum Siege, führ mich zum Tode. . . .” (Lead me to the victory, lead me to death).

- 3 *Taschenbuch für den Kraftfahrer im Winter-7/10/43*, handwriting on the cover, 33pp. (original)

Literally, a “paperback for drivers in the winter.” Explains the various parts of the motor and provides directions for servicing vehicles.

Panzerbeschuss-Tafel und Regeln für die Bekämpfung von Feindpanzern-7/1/44, 2pp. card (original)

Lists seven rules for fighting against enemy tanks; e.g. “Tarnen!” (camouflage) and describes munitions and their proper use.

- 4 *Merkbuch*-1945, handwritten journal of Erich Neutschmann, 104pp. (original); Also contains a list of historical commemoration days (“Geschichtliche Gedenktage”) on pages 101 to 104.

- 5 *10 Gebote für Paris!* (“Ten Commands for Paris!”) & map-no date, 4pp. (original & photocopy). Also contains descriptions of these commands; e.g. “Bei Alarm begib Dich auf schnellsten Wege zur nächsten militärischen Dienststelle. . . .” (During an alarm go to the next military “service station.”). Much of this document describes what servicemen should do during emergencies and air raids.

6 Passes (originals & photocopies maintained)

Leave passes, entitled *Urlaubsschein-4/15/37*, autographed document signed, 2pp. (original) & *Kriegsurlaubsschein*-no date, stamped in lower left corner, 2pp. (original).

Eisenbahn (railway) passes, *Teil I* and *Teil II*-no dates, stamped in lower left hand corner, 2pp. each (originals)

Pass for Martin Sclöfer (?) -4/9/43, autographed document signed, 1p. (original)

Aufenthaltsbescheinigung für Gross-Paris-1944, autographed document signed, 2pp. (original)

7 2 World Atlas Fragments-no dates; one in German, 28pp. (original) and one in Dutch, 30pp. (original)

Map of the Third Reich, with shaded region in the northwest-no date, 1p. (original and copy)

8 Miscellaneous Items (1 of 2 folders)

Der Kavalier schweigt, und der Soldat auch-no date, handwritten name (W. Fircher) on the front side, 2pp. (original & copy). Mentions that one can only relate names and ranks during times of war. Orders the soldier to be silent and do his duty as a German.

Food Stamps, *Reichskarte für Urlauber*-no date, 1p. (original & copy)

Safe Conduct-no date, 2pp. (original & photocopy). To be used by German soldiers who wish to surrender. The Allied forces promise that they are to be “disarmed, to be well looked after, to receive food and medical attention as required. . . .”

An die Offiziere und Mannschaften der 183. und 59. Volksgrenadier Divisionen!-no date, 2pp. (original & photocopy). Disseminated by the 84th U.S. Infantry “Railsplitter” Division to the 183rd and 59th “Volksgrenadier” Divisions. The 84th requests the surrender of these German units and declares, “Besser Gefangen Als Gefallen” (Better to be imprisoned than dead).

3 Unused Postcards-no dates, 1 side each (originals & photocopies). Hitler’s picture is in the upper right hand corner. “Der Führer kennt nur Kampf, Arbeit und Sorge” is written in the lower left corner (The Führer knows only battle, work and care).

9 Miscellaneous Items (2 of 2 folders)

Paris Metropolitan-no date, 2pp. (original). Map of Paris-in French.

A Word from the Chief, by Franklin D. Roosevelt & “As a Man Should Fight”, by Sgt. George E. Lord-no date, 2pp. card (original & photocopy)

PW: My Way to America-no date, 17pp. folio (original)

Series II--Miscellaneous Newspaper Clippings

10 2 newspaper clippings re: German POWs-no dates, 2pp. (copies)

[?]-*Mainische Zeitung, Organ der NSDAP für den Gau Hessen-Nassau*-3/16/45, 2pp. (copies)

The Birmingham Age-Herald, Headline: “21 Districts in Berlin Captured”-4/23/45, 2pp.

The Latest News [on the Second World War], disseminated in both English and German-3/13/45, 2pp. (copy) & 3/20/45, 2pp. (copy)

“Fichte und der Nationalsozialismus,” from *Die Wochenpost*-no date, 2pp. (copy)

“The Old Folks at War Work” & “Frisco Conference Will Create Charter for United Nations,” from *Tomorrow*-3/1/45, 2pp. (copies)