

Granville Charles Schuch – May 8, 1943 – June 12, 1945

Part 4 – Managing the Masses

As the Allies swept across North Africa they began to deal with a new problem. It was not unanticipated, but the pace and magnitude with which it grew soon overwhelmed the conquering forces.

In the North African Theater of Operations, U.S. Army forces experienced their first massive commitments in World War II. From the landings at Casablanca, Oran, and Algiers on 8-10 November 1942 to the liberation of Tunis on 13 May 1943, the American soldier experienced a very rough apprenticeship in mid-20th century warfare. It was full of severe trials, unexpected complications, and lessons for all arms and services. In its final victorious phase, it included the sudden capture of masses of enemy prisoners of war. More than a quarter of a million Italian and German soldiers were captured within about a week, producing conditions in which practicalities often transcended planning and demands well exceeded resources. These conditions presaged events which were to occur later in other theaters.

Actually, two campaigns were fought in Northwest Africa during this period: "Operation TORCH which swiftly liberated French North Africa from Vichy French control, followed by a longer Allied effort to destroy all the military forces of the Axis powers in Africa. The latter concentrated in Tunisia, where the front at one time extended more than 375 miles, and fighting progressed from scattered meeting engagements to the final concentric thrust of American, British, and French ground and air forces against two German and Italian armies massed in the vicinity of Bizerte and Tunis." Following the breakthrough, the cleanup was so complete General Dwight D. Eisenhower could later write that, "except for a few stragglers in the mountains, the only living Germans left in Tunisia were safely within prison cages."

Granville Charles Schuch would be assigned to the daunting task of managing the conditions of those prison cages and their inmates, leading teams of soldiers inexperienced in prisoner of war operations to be recognized for their extraordinary and distinguished service.

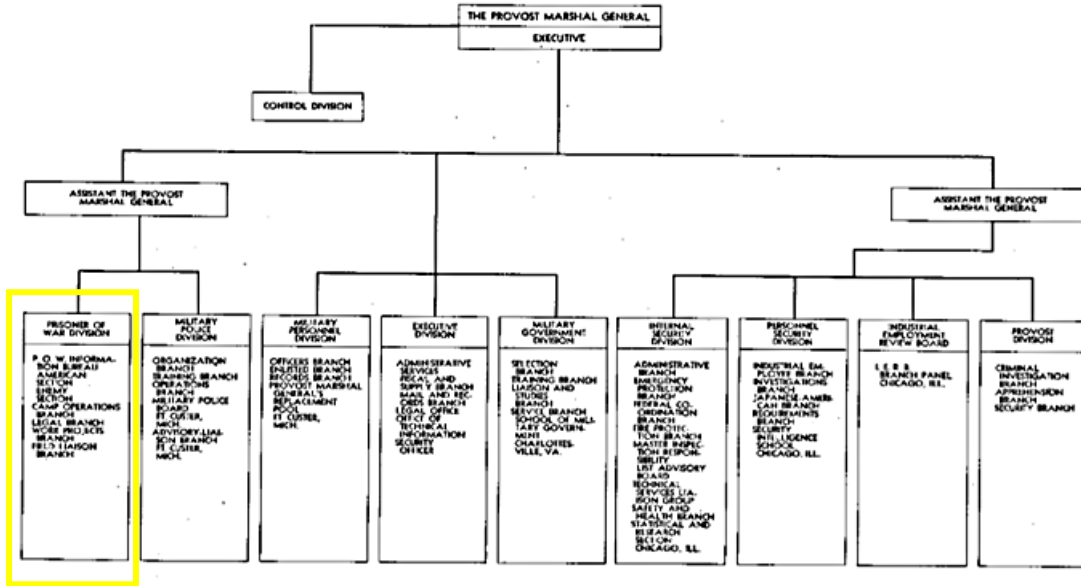
The Preparation – A Very Slow Start

On 9 March 1942, a reorganization of the Army had taken place. Under the reorganization the War Department General Staff assisted the Chief of Staff in the direction of the field operations of the Army of the United States. It was specifically charged with the duty of providing subordinate commanders with such broad basic plans as would enable them to prepare and execute detailed programs. In the discharge of its duties, the new organization was directed to use all judicious short cuts in procedure to expedite the war's operations.

Before the reorganization, Personnel Division, G-1, had been responsible for prisoner of war planning and policy determination, and the Office of The Provost Marshal General for their execution. The new plan, however, did not list this PW responsibility as a duty of G-1; it was assumed that it had been transferred, along with the operations of The Provost Marshal General, to the new Command. Four months later, a revised Army Regulation again gave the responsibility back to G-1, but it did not fully exercise this authority until April of the following year. In practice, therefore, prisoner of war matters were generally referred to the Provost Marshal General for staff action despite his remote position

under the new Army organization. If done correctly, this was both tedious and prolonged, and if a referral was made direct, as sometimes occurred, it was usually uncoordinated. Thus, planning for the tidal wave of prisoners of war was greatly handicapped.

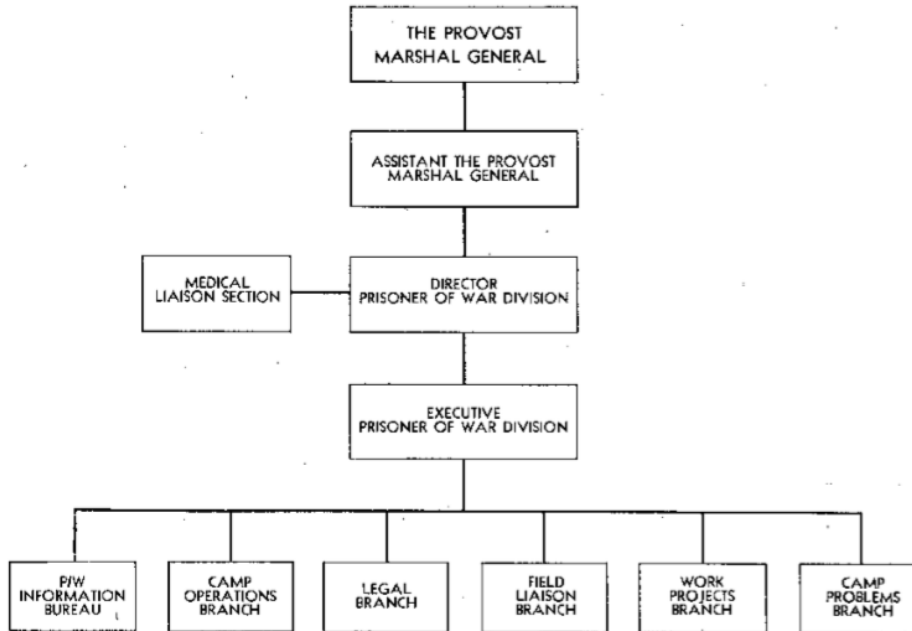
Chart 3. Office of The Provost Marshal General, April 1944



EARLY POLICIES

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Chart 6. Organizational Chart of Prisoner of War Division, Office of The Provost Marshal General, June 1944



The Task

Captures of German and Italian prisoners by the Allied Task Force as it fought its way from Casablanca to Tunis were few in number. Of this period, General Omar N. Bradley wrote:

“... we had counted ourselves fortunate in capturing a dozen of them at a time.”

After 1 January 1943, in Tunisia, the captures increased sporadically. Expressing the figures in round numbers, it was reported that the British took 7,000 prisoners of war at the Mareth Line on 29 March and another 7,000 at Akarit wadi on 7 April, and that the French took 1,000 at Kairouan on 10 April. The **U.S. 1st Infantry Division** captured 700 prisoners at El Guettar and the 1st Armored Division another 700 at Maknassy Pass, during the period 17-25 March. The total number of enemy prisoners of war captured on all fronts in North Africa from 20 March to 14 April 1943 was estimated to be 28,000 (6,000 Germans and 22,000 Italians). Most of these prisoners were evacuated to incompletely constructed and inadequately sanitized enclosures, cages, or camps located along the Mediterranean coastal area in the vicinities of headquarters of Atlantic, Mediterranean, and Eastern Base Sections. It was a time when there were shortages of supplies and confusion in distribution of supplies for U.S. troops. It was to be expected that enemy prisoners of war would be subjected to the same fateful deficiencies. Initially, not as much was done as might have been done to provide more nearly adequate support including preventive medicine services for these prisoners.

With a clear foresight of coming events and problems, Lt. Col. (later Col.) Perrin H. Long, MC, Chief Consultant in Medicine, Allied Force Headquarters, and North African theater, wrote a vigorous memorandum for the theater surgeon, Brig. Gen. Frederick A. Blessé, on 18 March 1943. Colonel Long pointed out that the coming battle in Tunisia would put a heavy strain upon existing medical and sanitary arrangements and facilities in the U.S. Army, because in addition to the care of the sick and wounded, the Army medical service would be charged with the prevention of disease among captured enemy troops. The burden was expected to fall mainly upon the U.S. Army component of the Allied Task Force because the current plans called for the evacuation of prisoners of war along American lines of communication. This plan was changed somewhat in the first part of May 1943, when, in the battle for northern Tunisia, initial responsibility for supervision of prisoners of war was placed upon the British.

Unfortunately, this enlightened advice was frustrated by neglect or could not be carried out in some instances because of the swift capture of many thousands of prisoners whose mere numbers swamped all facilities. Colonel Long records that “by some accident of fate, instead of their [my memorandums] being returned to the surgeon's office they were buried in the records section of the Adjutant General's Office, AFHQ, and no action was taken upon the recommendations made in them. By May 1943, the battle for northern Tunisia was well under way [as well as the season for flies and mosquitoes], and prisoners of war began to stream in by the thousands.”

Prisoner-of-War Enclosure at Mateur

The most famous, and notorious, prisoner-of-war enclosure in northern Tunisia was located just north of Mateur (captured on 3 May 1943) on the farmyard plain at the foot of Djebel Achkel. The photograph to the right of the crowding there on the unsheltered sand on 9 May is more expressive than many words. These men were a large portion of the 275,000 prisoners that were captured by the Allies in the last week of the fighting in Tunisia.



FIGURE 32.—Aerial view of German prisoner-of-war enclosure west of Mateur, Tunisia North Africa, 9 May 1943. (U.S. Army photograph.)

In spite of the overflow of defeated Axis soldiers, some efforts to manage the situation were made, even in the teeming barbed wire enclosure at Mateur. General Bradley, who watched the scene unfold, wrote, as follows:

“... We anticipated 12,000 or 14,000 PWs. By nightfall, however, the Germans had overrun our cages. German engineers were conscripted under their own noncoms to expand the enclosure. We doubled and soon tripled that original compound.

For two days, as far as one could see, a strange procession of PWs trailed up the road from Mateur as though on a holiday junket.

Some came in long convoys of GMC's guarded only by an occasional MP ... atop each cab with a rifle. [As in the European theater, most of the prisoners were so docile that they did not need guards, but guides to the enclosures.] Others traveled in giant sand-colored Wehrmacht trucks bearing the palm-tree markings of the Africa Korps. On bicycles, farm carts, motorcycles, gun carriages, even burros, they trailed contentedly toward the cages. By the time this flow thinned down we had counted 40,000.”

A carnival air soon pervaded the Italian cages as the PWs squatted round their fires and sang to the accordions they had brought in with them. In contrast, the Germans busied themselves in tidying up the compound. Noncoms issued orders and soon colonies of camouflaged ponchos mushroomed on the desert floor. The men were formed into companies, latrines excavated, cooking areas assigned them, and water rationed from Lyster bags. German quartermasters trucked tons of their own rations into the cages.

However, the latrines could not be covered and protection against flies and mosquitoes was feeble. Soon dysentery, hepatitis, and malaria became major causes of sickness, which under the circumstances could not be prevented.

When General Eisenhower saw something of the handling of hordes of enemy prisoners of war in the European theater later on in 1945, he recalled:

"...the time in Tunisia when the sudden capture of 275,000 Axis prisoners caused me rather ruefully to remark to my operations officers, Rooks and Nevins:

'Why didn't some staff college ever tell us what to do with a quarter of a million prisoners so located at the end of a rickety railroad that it's impossible to move them and where guarding and feeding them are so difficult.'"

It is fair to say that Eisenhower was correct. While all the disease-producing conditions associated with prisoners of war, enclosed as herds and evacuated in droves, could not have been prevented, their frequency could have been reduced by more imaginative forecasts, clearer planning, and sharper indoctrination at all levels, including the Army War College—the postgraduate school of the Army.

From May to July 1943, the evacuation of prisoners of war captured in Tunisia continued westward slowly along the coastal roads, highways, and railroads from the Eastern Base Section in the Constantine area. By the first week in June, they were arriving by the thousands in the ill-prepared compounds in the Mediterranean and Atlantic Base Sections.

Invasion of Sicily

During this period, the Mediterranean theater was preoccupied not only with rehabilitation after the Tunisian Campaign, but also with the enormous task of planning and preparing for the invasion of Sicily. Under the North African theater, the planning for this campaign (Operation HUSKY), to be based in North Africa, began in February 1943. Even before the end of the fighting in Tunisia, and continuing to the taking of Messina on 17 August 1943, the area of the North African theater, particularly along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea, became a very large and busy training ground for air and amphibious assault and the storage arsenal for much of the ground, air, and naval equipment and supplies. Naturally, these matters took precedence over some considerations of full support for enemy prisoners of war already in the theater.

After a brief period of regrouping and reequipping, Allied forces invaded the key island of Sicily on 10 July 1943. The need for labor was soon felt, and on 13 July AFHQ instructed the U. S. Seventh Army and the British Eighth Army to retain the maximum number of PW's who would be administratively useful and yet would be harm- less to operations. German PW's, Italian Fascists, and all officers (other than medical officers and chaplains) were to be evacuated.

At the beginning of the Sicilian Campaign, the preparations for the reception and handling of prisoners of war evacuated to the Eastern Base Section were still primitive and the number of new prisoners of war multiplying the existing problems. According to a report to the Surgeon, North African theater, by the Chief Consultant in Medicine, on 25 August 1943:

"... When the first prisoners of war arrived, the stockades were half completed, latrine pits not dug, latrine boxes not flyproofed, kitchen facilities and waste disposal were primitive, water and rations were short, delousing facilities were lacking, medical supplies were short, one medical officer was in the area, and a battalion of the 135th Infantry had to be used to guard prisoners because but a handful of the P.M. [Provost Marshal] representatives were available. The POW (especially the Italians) arrived exhausted and ill with dysentery and malaria. Scabies was

frequent and venereal diseases were not uncommon. They were herded off the LST's (on which water was frequently short), lined up in the hot sun, and then marched along the main roads to the POW compound... En route many fell out from heat exhaustion or from other causes. On one occasion a large group of POW burst through their road guards like a bunch of wild animals and practically threw themselves into a badly contaminated well, so great was their thirst. Such conditions [of stress] were undoubtedly responsible for the lighting up of chronic malarial infections in the prisoners, with the result that they took up hospital beds in the Bizerte-Mateur area which otherwise would have been available for use by American soldiers."

From September 1943 to the end of the year, the handling and treatment of enemy prisoners of war detained in North African base sections constantly improved.

During the Sicilian Campaign, the most notable event that affected the status of Italian prisoners of war was the fall of Mussolini on 25 July 1943 and the surrender of Italy announced by General Eisenhower on 8 September 1943. Thereafter, when some prolonged and difficult negotiations with the new Italian leadership had been completed, Italy was recognized as a cobelligerent with the Allies, and her captured military personnel became organized into Italian Service Units. The members of these units were eligible for all of the rights and privileges provided by the Geneva Conventions of 1929, as if they were still in the status of prisoners of war. On the other hand, they had considerable freedom. These units rendered valuable services in labor, agriculture, and industry, and assisted in specialized activities, such as the care of the sick and wounded in hospitals and as sanitary police in prisoner-of-war camps.



FIGURE 33.—Italian prisoners of war captured by the 3d U.S. Infantry Division, Seventh U.S. Army, in Sicily, waiting in line for water at a prisoner-of-war enclosure, 8 August 1943. (U.S. Army photograph.)

Italian Service Units

In October 1943 the Secretary of War suggested that Italian prisoners in the United States be used in labor companies to assist in the war effort. The Provost Marshal General worked on the following assumptions:

- all Italian prisoners of war in the United States would be released to the Italian Government;
- of these, all Fascist prisoners of war would be segregated and confined as military prisoners by the Italian Government;
- the remainder would be organized as Italian service units to be attached to and placed under the command of the U. S. Army.

Therefore, the plan included these features:

- Italian prisoners would be organized into numbered Italian service companies consisting of 5 officers and 177 enlisted men.
- Pending release to the Italian Government the units would work under parole.
- Approximately 20 companies would be activated progressively.
- An Italian service unit headquarters would be established under ASF and would be commanded by an American officer.
- Initially, the units would be employed to further the United States war effort, with work on military installations receiving first priority.
- The plan also included provisions for the chain of command, uniforms and equipment, pay and allowances, work schedules, and discipline.

When the Combined Chiefs of Staff submitted this plan to General Eisenhower, Commander in Chief, Allied Forces, North Africa, for comment, he immediately objected to it. Both American and British forces in North Africa had already committed themselves to a policy of employing the Italians in a prisoner of war status. With total respect for General Eisenhower and to keep the policy uniform, the War Department adopted a new plan similar to the one in effect in North Africa; that is, the prisoner of war status was retained. However, because of possible international complications, the War Department directed that the units be used only in the continental United States or in the Mediterranean Area.

NATOUSA (North Africa Theater of Operations United States Army) organized volunteer Italian prisoners of war into service units using tables of organization (TOE's) patterned after appropriate War Department TOE's. Needed specialist units were organized first, and the remaining unskilled PW's were organized into labor companies of 250 men each. Each unit was staffed with Italian officers and NCO's (supervised by an American or Allied officer), who were responsible for administration and discipline. Each labor company was required to perform any labor required by the base section. At first, it was planned that unit organization would be concurrent with screening; however, the urgent need for PW labor precluded any intensive screening.

The PW's had previously been classified in one of three categories: A-secure, B-doubtful, or C-insecure. Class C prisoners were held in close confinement until transportation was available for evacuation. Under the new setup, Allied commanders simply examined one or two Italian officers for each unit, and if they were satisfactory held them responsible for the security control of the PW's in their company.

The Italian officers could recommend the removal of any undesirable prisoners. Meanwhile, American personnel continuously observed each unit to detect any insecure personnel. Later, G-2 security teams went to all main PW camps and subcamps and interrogated each prisoner of war separately. Approximately 11,000 Italian PW's were screened in the Eastern Base Section alone, from Constantine, Algeria, to Tunis, Tunisia.

2601st Prisoner of War Administrative Company

S Sgt. Charles Schuch had been relieved of combat duty on 7 May, 1943, and after victory in North Africa was convalescing in a hospital from multiple shrapnel wounds and shell shock after six months of constant movement and combat under fire. 1st Infantry Division resources were building for the immediate invasion of Sicily from North Africa but there was no way **Charlie** or many of his comrades would be ready for an early July invasion. Fresh troops were needed and many were en route following training in the US – the same exhaustive preparation that he had undergone. The 1st Infantry Division would again lead the drive into Italy – and once again do it under the command of General Patton.

S Sgt. Schuch was assigned to the **2601st Prisoner of War Administration Company** to take on responsibility for the formation and administration of all Italian Service Units in the Eastern Mediterranean Base Section. During the final phases of the North African campaign and with the ultimate surrender of Italian and German forces at Tunisia in May 1943, 252,415 Axis prisoners of war were taken. Consequently, Allied prisoner of war installations became overtaxed. To alleviate the situation, PW processing was increased to segregate those who could be retained for labor. German PW's were evacuated to the United States, but the Italian PW's were segregated into secure (good security risk) and insecure (poor security risk) classes - the secure classes to be retained in North Africa for labor. Generally, Italian service units performed work similar to that done by their American counterpart. Ports of embarkation units, stevedoring units, quartermaster depot units, laundry and bakery units, ordnance and automotive maintenance units, signal construction units, and others performed labor normally at a premium in an active theater of operations.

From the capitulation of Italian forces in September of 1943 through the end of 1944 the **2601st** housed, equipped, fed, administered, screened, disciplined, and organized the labor of approximately 60,000 Italian Prisoners of War. While this was a daunting task, it contributed greatly to the Allied success in Europe by freeing support resources that could be focused on the front lines.



FIGURE 34.—Approximately 10,000 prisoners of war waiting to be fed
(U.S. Army photograph.)

The 2601st, later designated the 6829th Prisoner of War Administration Company, was specifically recognized for its contributions to this effort for the period from 1 January through 30 June 1944, with a Meritorious Service Unit Commendation.



Army Meritorious Unit Award



Description: The Meritorious Unit Commendation emblem worn to represent award of the Meritorious Unit Commendation is 1 7/16 inches wide and 9/16 inch in height. The emblem consists of a 1/16 inch wide Gold frame with laurel leaves which encloses a Scarlet 67111 ribbon. The previously authorized emblem was a Gold color embroidered laurel wreath, 1 5/8 inches in diameter on a 2 inches square of Olive Drab cloth.

Criteria: Units are awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation for a minimum of six months of extraordinarily meritorious conduct in performance of outstanding services during the time of military operations against an armed enemy taking place on or after 1 January 1944. It is not required that the service be in a combat zone, however it must be directly involved in the combat effort.

CONUS and other units outside of the area of operation are excluded from this award.

The unit receiving the award must have shown devotion and superior performance of extremely complex tasks that set their unit above and beyond other units under similar circumstances with similar missions. The degree of accomplishment required is equivalent to that which would justify award of the Legion of Merit to an individual. Rarely will a unit larger than a battalion meet the qualifications for award of this decoration.

Awards are made to units for services conducted during World War II if performed between 1 January 1944 and 15 September 1946. The Meritorious Unit Commendation was authorized for units and/or detachments of the United States military for exceptionally meritorious conduct in performance of outstanding services for at least six continuous months in support of military operations. This service must relate to combat support activities and not be activities performed by senior headquarters, combat, or combat support units.

Components: *The current components of the Meritorious Unit Commendation are the emblems awarded to members of the unit and the streamer for display on the unit flag/guidon.*

- *Meritorious Unit Commendation Emblem: MIL-D-3943/32 (frame) and MIL-R-11589/92 (ribbon). NSN 8455-00-964-4210.*
- *Streamer: MIL-S-14650/5. Manual requisition in accordance with Chapter 9, AR 840-10.*

Background:

- *The Meritorious Service Unit Plaque was established by War Department Circular No. 345, dated 23 August 1944. The circular provided that military personnel assigned or attached to an organization were entitled to wear the Meritorious Service Unit Insignia on the outside half of the right sleeve of the service coat and shirt, four inches above the end of the sleeve. Additional awards were to be indicated by a gold star to be placed on the plaque. War Department Circular No. 54, 1946, provided that additional awards would be indicated by placing a golden numeral inside the wreath.*
- *DF, D/PA, Subject: Proposed AR 260-15, Unit Awards, dated 12 December 1946, stated "In order to enhance the prestige of an award to a meritorious service unit, the present Meritorious Service Unit Plaque has been eliminated, and in lieu thereof a Meritorious Service Unit Commendation has been established on a plane comparable to the Navy Unit Commendation and may be awarded to any type of unit for meritorious service during military operations which, if performed by an individual would warrant the award of a Legion of Merit.*
- *In April 1947, D/PA approved a new design of the Meritorious Service Unit emblem that replaced the sleeve insignia to be effective 1 January 1949. On 11 April 1949, TAG advised D/PA that the stock position was such that it would not be exhausted prior to 1959. By Comment 2, 1 March 1960, DCSPER stated that for planning purposes the new Meritorious Service Unit emblem would be authorized for wear on or after 1 January 1961, with wear of the old one prohibited for wear after 30 June 1962. However, the stock level was still so high that it was not introduced into the supply system until 14 July 1966.*
- *AR 260-15, dated 16 May 1947, announced the Meritorious Unit Commendation, provided for wearing of the Meritorious Unit Commendation emblem, and provided for the display of the Meritorious Unit Commendation streamer, which was scarlet with the name of the applicable theater of operations in white letters.*
- *The emblem is worn by all members of a cited organization and is considered an individual decoration for persons in connection with the cited acts and may be worn whether or not they continue as members of the organization. Other personnel may wear this decoration while serving with an organization to indicate the unit has been awarded the Meritorious Unit Commendation.*
- *Order of precedence and wear policy for unit awards is contained in AR 670-1. Policy for awards, approving authority, and supply of the unit award emblem is contained in AR 600-8-22. The policy for display of unit awards on guidons and flags and supply of streamers is contained in AR 840-10.*

HEADQUARTERS
CONTINENTAL ADVANCE SECTION
Office of the Commanding General
APO 667, U.S. Army

25 November 1944

AG 330.13 (CBSGA)

SUBJECT: Meritorious Service Unit Plaque.

TO : Commanding Officer, 6829th Prisoner of War Administrative Company (NTO), APO 667, U. S. Army.

The following award is made under the provisions of Circular No. 345, War Department, 1944:

The 6829th Prisoner of War Administrative Company (NTO) (then designated 2601st Prisoner of War Administrative Company (Ovhd) is awarded the Meritorious Service Unit Plaque for superior performance of duty in the accomplishment of exceptionally difficult tasks for the period 1 January to 30 June 1944. During the period stated this unit was charged with the formation and administration of all Italian Service Units in the Mediterranean Base Section. The housing, equipping, messing, administering, screening, disciplining, and utilizing of approximately 60,000 Italian Prisoners of War were accomplished by the 2601st Prisoner of War Administrative Company (Ovhd) in an outstanding manner despite the constant novel problems which resulted from the undertaking of a unique and unprecedented project. The exceptional diligence, resourcefulness, and superior accomplishment of duty reflect great credit to this unit and exemplify the highest standard of the military service.

"CERTIFIED A TRUE COPY"

/s/ Arthur R. Wilson,
ARTHUR R. WILSON,
Major General, USA,
Commanding.

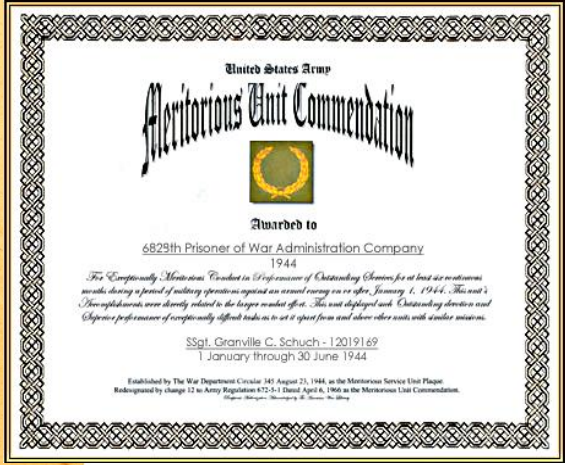
E. H. Weeks
E. H. WEEKS,
1st Lt., C.M.P.,
Ass't Adjutant.

1st Ind. JSG/whp
HEADQUARTERS 6829 (POW) ADMINISTRATIVE COMPANY, APO 667, U.S. ARMY. 23
December 1944.

To: All Present and Former Members of 6829 (POW) Administrative Company.

1. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. May the new year bring to us the Thing we so ardently desire.
2. The basic communication above is not a Christmas gift, for Christmas gifts are unearned offerings. You earned this above in superbly executing one of the most unique undertakings in the history of the United States Army. My appreciation and congratulation to everyone of you.

Joseph S. Goldware
JOSEPH S. GOLDWARE,
Major, Infantry,
Commanding.



POW Tsunami

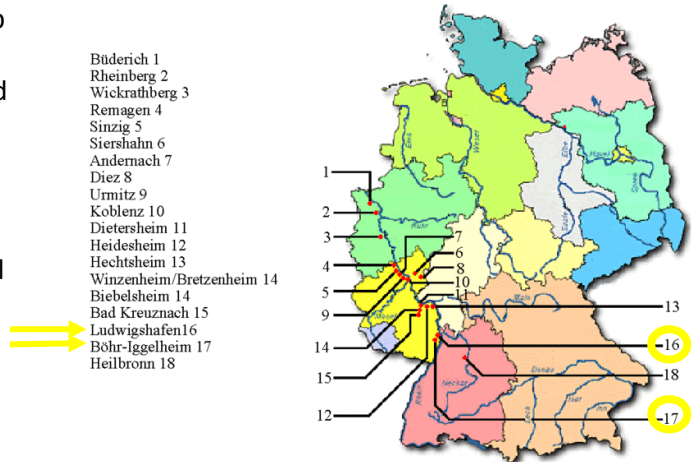
As the Seventh Army advanced across Europe and the German forces began to collapse, the prisoner of war program exploded. An emergency situation occurred and **S/Sgt Granville Charles Schuch** was temporarily assigned on Detached Service to the 6853rd Prisoner of War Administrative Company at Prisoner of War Enclosure (PWE) No. 460 at Worms, Germany, during the period 3 April 1945 to 14 April 1945. In those eleven days the camp would see the operational reception and disposition of prisoners taken by the Seventh Army in greater numbers and many days prior to anticipated plans.



Within twenty-four hours after establishment of the camp 17,000 prisoners of war were received. During the eleven day period, in excess of 46,000 prisoners were received, of whom over 25,000 were evacuated to Communication Zone central enclosures in France. **S/Sgt Schuch**, displaying immense

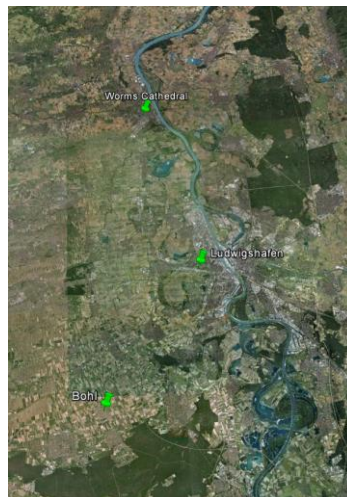
The Rheinwiesenlager

(English: Rhine meadow camps), were a group of 19 camps built in the allied-occupied part of Germany by the U.S. Army to hold captured German soldiers at the close of the Second World War. Officially named Prisoner of War Temporary Enclosures (PWTE), they held between one and almost two million surrendered Wehrmacht personnel from April until September 1945. Prisoners held in the camps were designated Disarmed Enemy Forces not POWs. This decision had been taken in March 1943 by SHAEF commander in chief Dwight D. Eisenhower because of the logistical problems adhering to the Geneva Convention of 1929. By not classifying the hundreds of thousands of captured troops as POWs, the problems associated with accommodating so many prisoners of war according to international treaties governing their treatment was negated. (Incidentally the *Wehrmacht* employed a similar strategy with imprisoned Italian soldiers following the surrender of fascist Italy in 1943. Italian prisoners were deemed *Militärinternierter* [English: Military Internees] and used as forced labor.)



By early 1945 half of almost all German soldiers taken prisoner in the West were held by U.S. forces, while the other half were taken by the British. But in late March 1945 as Allied forces struck into the heart of Germany after crossing the Rhine at Remagen, the number of German prisoners being processed caused the British to stop accepting any more prisoners in their camps. This forced the U.S. Army to take immediate action and establish the *Rheinwiesenlager* in the western part of Germany.

Subsequent to 14 April at Worms, S/Sgt Schuch was again on Detached Service to the 6953rd as Chief Provost Sergeant of PWTE C1 and later PWTE C2 which were established respectively in Bohl and in Ludwigshafen, Germany. The administrative personnel charged with the operating of these two camps comprised a group of some 38 officers and 1,000 enlisted men, none of whom had had previous Prisoner of War administrative experience. S/Sgt Schuch in each case was assigned a section of these enlisted personnel for provost work. It was necessary for him to train the personnel assigned to him in the intricate procedures involved in the interior administration and operation of prisoner of war enclosures. It was further complicated by the fact that the reception of large numbers of prisoners had already begun.



On 7 May 1945, the problem got even bigger.



During the six week period 14 April to 24 May at Prisoner of War Transient Enclosures C1 and C2 over 175,000 prisoners were received, segregated, and maintained. In addition, over 60,000 prisoners were prepared for and evacuated to the Communication Zones in France. In his 25 May 1945 commendation, **S/Sgt Schuch**'s superior officer, Major Joseph S. Goldware, stated that **S/Sgt Schuch** accomplished this:

"with a minimum of experience enlisted personnel to assist him, so efficiently performed his mission of teaching the personnel assigned to him and at the same time supervising the actual operations involved, as to singularly contribute to the highly successful accomplishment of the tasks assigned to his unit."

The exceptional qualities of organization and initiative which he displayed were in accord with the highest traditions of military service. For his actions, **S/Sgt Granville Charles Schuch** was awarded the Bronze Star.

"Granville C. Schuch, Staff Sergeant, Infantry, while serving with the Army of the United States, for meritorious service in connection with military operation not involving participation in Aerial flight against an enemy of the United States, while serving as Chief Provost Sergeant of PWE No. 460, and PWTE C1 and C2, Continental Advance Section, in Germany, during the period 3 April 1945 to 24 May 1945:

Staff Sergeant Schuch, exercising exceptional initiative and competence, supervised the establishment of stockades, and their interior management thereof, which successfully handled the emergency reception and disposition of over 46,000 prisoners of war at Worms, Germany, during an eleven day period. Subsequently, supervising entirely untrained personnel, he successfully directed provost operations at two Conad transient enclosures which handled over 175,000 prisoners of war, and the evacuation of 60,000 of these prisoners, within a six week period. His assiduous labors and his ever-present qualities of initiative and devotion to duty contributed greatly to successful accomplishment of the mission of his unit."

RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL

RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL

Office of the Provost Marshal

200.6

RECOMMENDATION FOR AWARD OF THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Award of Bronze Star Medal.

TO: Commanding General, Continental Advance Section, APO 667, U.S. Army.

1. It is recommended that GRANVILLE C. SCHUCH, 12019169, Staff Sergeant, Infantry, 6888 Prisoner of War Administrative Company, be awarded the Bronze Star Medal. Staff Sergeant Schuch is presently a member of the 6888 Prisoner of War Administrative Company, and is on detached service with the 6557 Central Postal Directory, Continental Advance Section.

2. Staff Sergeant Schuch was serving in the grade of Staff Sergeant in the capacity of Chief Provost Sergeant, and was assigned to the 6888 Prisoner of War Administrative Company, and on duty at Prisoner of War Enclosure No. 460, Continental Advance Section, and POW CI and C2, Continental Advance Section, at the time of the service for which this award is recommended.

3. Name and address of nearest relative: Mrs. Barbara M. Schuch, wife, 59 Willets Street, Bayside, New York.

4. Entered the military service from: New York, New York.

5. Decorations previously awarded: Silver Star.

6. The entire service of Staff Sergeant Schuch has been honorable since the rendition by him of the service upon which this recommendation is based.

7. A similar recommendation for this individual has not been previously submitted.

8. The undersigned officer recommending this award has personal knowledge of the service upon which this recommendation is based.

9. GRANVILLE C. SCHUCH, Staff Sergeant, Infantry, while serving with the Army of the United States, distinguished himself by meritorious service in connection with military operations not involving participation in aerial flight against an enemy of the United States, in Germany, during the period 3 April 1945 to 24 May 1945.

10. Staff Sergeant Schuch was the Chief Provost Sergeant of Prisoner of War Enclosure No. 460, Continental Advance Section, at Worms, Germany, during an eleven day period from 3 April 1945 to 24 May 1945, in which the camp accomplished the urgent operational reception and disposition of prisoners taken by the Seventh Army in greater numbers and many days prior to anticipated plans. Within twenty-four hours after establishment of the camp

Criteria: A U.S. Armed Forces individual military decoration and the fourth-highest award for bravery, heroism or meritorious service. Awarded to a member of the military who, while serving in or with the military of the United States after December 6, 1941, distinguished him or herself by heroic or meritorious achievement or service, not involving participation in aerial flight, while engaged in an action against an enemy of the United States; while engaged in military operations involving conflict with an opposing foreign force; or while serving with friendly foreign forces engaged in an armed conflict against an opposing armed force in which the United States is not a belligerent party. Awards may be made for acts of heroism, performed under circumstances described above, which are of lesser degree than required for the award of the Silver Star. Awards may also be made to recognize single acts of merit or meritorious service. The required achievement or service while of lesser degree than that required for the award of the Legion of Merit must nevertheless have been meritorious and accomplished with distinction. To be eligible for the Bronze Star Medal, a military member must be getting hostile fire/imminent danger pay, during the event for which the medal is to be awarded. The Bronze Star Medal is typically referred to by its full name (including the word "Medal") to differentiate the decoration from bronze service stars which are worn on campaign medals and service awards.

17,000 prisoners of war were received. During the eleven day period, in excess of 46,000 prisoners were received, of whom over 25,000 were efficiently and properly evacuated to Communications Zone central enclosures in France.

Sgt Schuch, displaying an immense capacity for work, high organizational ability, and extraordinary initiative met up the necessary standards to provide for this large influx of prisoners. He supervised the initial counting and receipting for prisoners, their segregation by rank and class, and their assignment to the proper stockades. He supervised the organization of the interior administration of all stockades by which was accomplished in orderly fashion, all of the daily necessities of life for the prisoners held therein. He arranged for the formation of standard groups of prisoners in each stockade, each under the supervision of an appropriate and authorized German non-com, or officer in the case of the officer's stockade, which afforded ready control, efficient handling, and speedy evacuation. He supervised the system by which prisoners were prepared for evacuation, were taken from the stockades, and were transported to the train or truck motor in rapid and coordinated fashion. His exceptional competence and initiative played a major part in the efficient and successful accomplishment of the emergency mission performed by this enclosure.

Subsequent to 14 April, Sgt Schuch served as Chief Provost Sergeant of POW CI and later POW C2 which were established respectively in BMM and Ludwigshafen, Germany. The administrative personnel which was charged with the operating of these two camps comprised a group of some 38 officers and 1,000 enlisted men, none of whom had had previous Prisoner of War administrative experience. Sgt Schuch in each case was assigned a section of this enlisted personnel for provost work. It was necessary for him to rapidly and efficiently train and teach the personnel assigned to him in the intricate procedures involved in the interior administration and operation of prisoner of war enclosures. It was further necessary that this task be accomplished after the actual reception of large numbers of prisoners had begun. During the period of 14 April to 24 May over 175,000 prisoners were received, properly segregated, and maintained, in the prisoner of war camps at which Sgt Schuch was Chief Provost Sergeant. An efficient evacuation of 60,000 prisoners was prepared for, and then promptly and efficiently evacuated to the Communications Zone. Sgt Schuch with a minimum of experienced enlisted personnel to assist him, so efficiently performed his mission of teaching the personnel assigned to him and at the same time supervising the actual operations involved, as to significantly contribute to the highly successful accomplishment of the tasks assigned to his unit. The exceptional qualities of organization and initiative which he displayed were in accord with the highest traditions of the military service.

Proposed citation:

Granville C. Schuch, Staff Sergeant, Infantry, while serving with the Army of the United States, for meritorious service in connection with military operations not involving participation in aerial flight against an enemy of the United States, while serving as Chief Provost Sergeant of POW No. 460, and POW CI and C2, Continental Advance Section, in Germany, during the period 3 April 1945 to 24 May 1945.

Staff Sergeant Schuch, exercising exceptional initiative and competence, supervised the establishment of stockades, and the interior

management thereof, which successfully handled the emergency reception and disposition of over 46,000 prisoners of war at Worms, Germany, during an eleven day period. Subsequently, supervising entirely untrained personnel, he successfully directed provost operations at two Canal transient enclosures which handled over 175,000 prisoners of war, and the evacuation of 60,000 of these prisoners, within a six week period. His untiring labors and his ever-present qualities of initiative and devotion to duty contributed greatly to the successful accomplishment of the mission of his unit. Entered the military service from New York, New York.

JOSEPH S. GOLDWASSER,
Major, Infantry,
Initiating Officer.

By June 1945 things had begun to settle down in Europe to more controlled chaos. With the war in the Pacific continuing manpower and resources were being consolidated to focus on that theater of operations. S/Sgt Schuch would be returned from his 6953rd DS assignment (Detached Service) to his former 6829th Prisoner of War Administrative Company in France but not before being recognized once again for the magnitude of his contribution.

HEADQUARTERS CONTINENTAL ADVANCE SECTION
Office of the Provost Marshal
APO 667

12 June 1945

SUBJECT: Commendation.

TO: Granville C. Schuch, S/Sgt, 12019169, 6829 PW Administrative Company,
APO 667, U.S. Army.

1. You are one of a group of fifty men from the 6829 PW Administrative Company who have been on DS with the 6953 PWTE for the last two months. This unit with which you have been serving contained, with its attached units, approximately 1000 men, none of whom had had previous experience in prisoner of war operations or administration, and who were nevertheless charged with receiving, maintaining, and evacuating approximately 240,000 prisoners of war.

2. Your small group of 50 experienced soldiers proved to be the "backbone" in the successful achieving of the immense prisoner of war operation involved. It was your "know-how", your energy and persistence, and above all your dependability, which made possible the great accomplishments of the past two months. Your long hours, your painstaking efforts, and your devotion to duty, merit high praise.

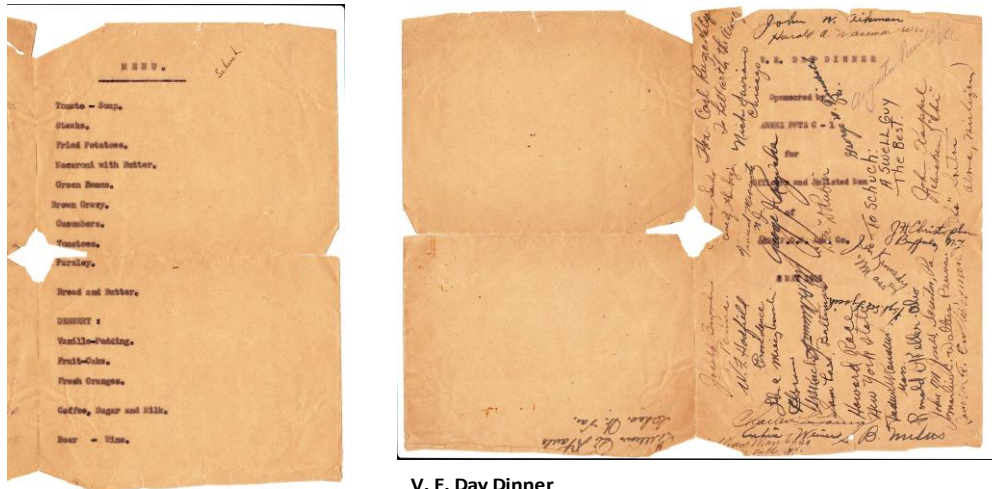
3. You will shortly return to your unit in France. You will go back with the knowledge that you have done a big job in superior fashion, and that your departure will be regretted by the officers and men who remain. I, personally, have been associated with most of you for a long time, in the 2601 Prisoner of War Administrative Company and in the 6829 Prisoner of War Administrative Company, which I formerly commanded. I am sure that there is no finer group of men in the United States Army.

4. An additional signed copy of this commendation is being forwarded under separate cover to your Commanding Officer with the request that it be incorporated in your service record.

FOR THE PROVOST MARSHAL:

J. S. Goldware
J. S. GOLDWARE,
Major, Infantry,
P/1 Division.

Amidst all of this chaos the soldiers of the 6829th celebrated in their own way on the evening a V. E. Day dinner for the officers and enlisted men. Thirty-one of the men would sign the menu that remained one of S/Sgt Charles Schuch's keepsakes for the rest of his life.



V. E. Day Dinner
Sponsored by Annex PWTE C-1
for Officers and Enlisted Men
6829 P.O.W. Adm. Co.
8-May-45

"To Schuch - A Swell Guy. The Best"

<u>NAME</u>	<u>HOME</u>	<u>S/N</u>	<u>COMMENT</u>	<u>Menu</u>
John W. Aikman	Pittburgh, PA	1307661		
Harold A. Manerna	Wisconsin			Tomato Soup
Augustus Panillo	Virginia			Steaks
J. H. Christopher	Buffalo, NY			Fried Potatoes
Jim Kennedy	Massachusetts			Macaroni with Butter
Stanislaus B. Milus	Massachusetts	32136028		Green Beans
Charles L. Larsen	Salt Lake City, Utah	39835639		Brown Gravy
Richie Weiner	Albany, NY	32858359		Cucumbers
William Montagna	Little Falls, NJ	32165704		Tomatoes
William N. De Paulo	Lakes, WV	35137116		Parsley
Joseph Bryszieki	Pennsylvania			Bread and Butter
W. F. Hadfield	Providence, RI	31292945		
Flis A. Mieczlewski	Kansas			Dessert
S. M. Leech				
Sam Lare	Baltimore, MD	33191164		Vanilla-Pudding
Howard Race	New York	12056318		Fruit-Cake
Frederick Rouiellis	Massachusetts			Fresh Oranges
Ronald I. Keller	Ohio	35330664		Coffee, Sugar and Milk
John M. Jones	Scranton, PA	33348381		Beer - Wine
Marlin C. Walters	Pennsylvania	33499875		
Joseph A. Crottier	Massachusetts			
"Isa" Sartor	Alma, Michigan	36413090		
John Kappel	Chicago, IL	36018868	(chicken "Chi")	
George W. Traubath	Pennsylvania			
"Doc" S. Rubin	North Carolina	34123846		
George J. Ruzicka	Illinois	36019458		
Vincent Mercanto	New Jersey	13053057		
Thomas Sardo	New York	12021635	One of the Boys	
Hon. Carl Ruzceka, Esq.			To Hell with the army	
Nick Saviano	Chicago, IL	36006581		
S/Sgt S. A. Lyscik	Pennsylvania	33266300		