

# POW CAMPS REVISITED

by  
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Some 70 years ago, the United States entered World War II. To most Americans, now, it's something that happened "over there" and is far removed from home. We frequently read books and see movies about our soldiers in Japanese or German prisoner-of-war camps, but few members of the younger generation realize that between 1942 and 1946, the United States held almost 400,000 German, more than 50,000 Italian, and 5,000 Japanese soldiers in P.O.W. camps right here in the United States.



I've been a Military collector ever since I entered the hobby, but my interest was really drawn to P.O.W. camps during a game of bridge many years ago. Our opponents, an elderly couple, had actually met and fallen in love in a Japanese P.O.W. camp in the Philippines. Fascinating! And so are P.O.W. camp covers.

There were over 500 such P.O.W. camps in America during the war. One of them was right down the road from here, in Stockton, CA. Not surprisingly, most were located in the western and central states that had wide-open spaces: California, Texas, Idaho, Arizona, Nebraska, Kansas, Wyoming, etc. Although, there were a few in places like Maryland, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

As with most World War II U.S. installations, there are a variety of covers from these P.O.W. camps, although they are definitely scarce compared to the number of camps that existed. I currently have 7,767 U.S. Military covers, but only know of some 7 that actually identify themselves as

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P.O.W. camps. There are also a number of covers that were issued by such camp locations that don't have any such ID on them, representing, instead, the larger military installation of which the P.O.W. camp was just one portion. [*Indiantown Gap Military Reservation covers, for example*] For such covers, you'd have to already be aware that those particular locations were P.O.W. centers, and to that end I'm including here a listing of at least the major sites.

As shown here, most of the P.O.W. covers seem to have been 40-strikes. That size was quite common for U.S. military installations during the war, as they doubled as postcards. Whatever the size (and there are some 20-strikes, as well), you could go through your entire collecting career and not see any. Anyone coming across one of these gems would probably be inclined to hang onto it as a curiosity, whether interested in the category or not.

How could you start a collection? First, you have to be a glutton for punishment, because you're probably not going to have much luck...it's going to be s-l-o-w going. I've only seen P.O.W. covers offered once at convention auctions, where just about everything in the hobby goes on the block eventually, and I don't think I've ever seen them offered in club auctions.

Establishing a trading relationship with a Military collector who has considerable trading stock is your best route, but don't be surprised if he wants your first born in return!

We'll take a look at Internment Camps in our next issue.

## Major POW Camps

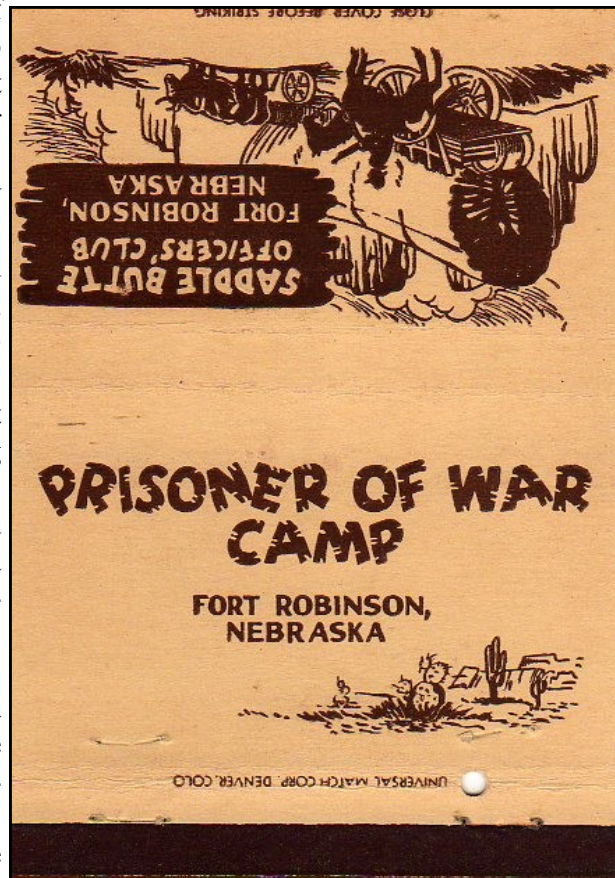
Camp Algoma, ID  
 Camp Aliceville, AL  
 Camp Alva, OK  
 Camp Angel Is., CA  
 Camp Ashby, VA  
 Camp Ashford, WV  
 Camp Atlanta, NE  
 Camp Atterbury, TN  
 Camp Barkeley, TX

Camp Como, MS  
 Camp Concordia, KS  
 Camp Cooke, CA  
 Camp Croft, SC  
 Camp Crossville, TN  
 Camp Crowder, MO  
 Camp David, MD  
 Camp Dermott, AR  
 Camp Douglas, WY  
 Camp Edwards, MA  
 Camp Ellis, IL  
 Camp Evelyn, MI  
 Camp Fannin, TX  
 Camp Farragut, ID  
 Camp Florence, AZ  
 Camp Forrest, TN  
 Camp Gordon

Johnston, FL  
 Camp Frant, IL  
 Camp Gruber, OK  
 Camp Hale, CO  
 Camp Hearne, TX  
 Camp Hood, TX  
 Camp Houlton, ME  
 Camp Howze, TX  
 Camp Hulen, TX  
 Camp Huntsville, TX  
 Camp Indianola, NE  
 Camp Jerome, AR  
 Camp Lee, VA

Camp Livingston, LA  
 Camp Lordsburg, NM  
 Camp McAlester, OK  
 Camp McCain, MS  
 Camp McCoy, WI  
 Camp McLean, TX  
 Camp Mackall, NC  
 Camp Maxey, TX  
 Camp Mexia, TX  
 Camp Monticello, AR  
 Camp New Cumberland  
 PA

Camp Ogden, UT  
 Camp Opelika, AL  
 Camp Papago Park, AZ  
 Camp Peary, VA  
 Camp Perry, OH



Camp Beale, CA  
 Camp Blanding, FL  
 Camp Bowie, TX  
 Camp Brady, TX  
 Camp Breckinridge, KY  
 Camp Butner, NC  
 Camp Campbell, KY  
 Camp Carson, CO  
 Camp Chaffee, AR  
 Camp Claiborne, LA  
 Camp Clarinda, IA  
 Camp Clark, MO  
 Camp Clinton, MS

Camp Phillips, KS	Camp Wheeler, GA	Fort Niagara, NY	Hampton Rds Port of Embark., VA
Camp Pickett, VA	Camp White, OR	Fort Oglethorpe, GA	Holabird Signal Depot, MD
Camp Pima, AZ	Camp Wolters, TX	Fort Ord, CA	Indiantown Gap Mil. Res., PA
Camp Polk, LA	Fort Ben. Harrison, IN	Fort Patrick Henry, VA	McCloskey General Hosp., TX
Camp Popolopen, NY	Fort Benning, GA	Fort Reno, OK	Memphis General Depot, TN
Camp Pryor, OK	Fort Bliss, TX	Fort Riley, KS	New Orleans Port of Embark., LA
Camp Reynolds, PA	Fort Bragg, NC	Fort Robinson, NE	Olmsted Field, PA
Camp J.T. Robinson, AR	Fort Crockett, TX	Fort D.A. Russell, TX	Pine Bluff Arsenal, AR
Camp Roswell, NM	Fort Curtis, VA	Fort Sam Houston, TX	Richmond ASF Depot, VA
Camp Rucker, AL	Fort Custer, MI	Fort Sheridan, IL	Tobyhanna Military Res., PA
Camp Rupert, ID	Fort Devens, MA	Fort Sill, OK	
Camp Ruston, LA	Fort Dix, NJ	Fort F.E. Warren, WY	
Camp Scottsbluff, NE	Fort Dupont, DE	Edgewood Arsenal, MD	
Camp Shelby, MS	Fort Eustis, VA	Elgin AAF, FL	
Camp Sibert, AL	Fort Gordon, GA	Glennan General Hosp. OK	
Camp Somerset, MD	Fort Greely, CO	Halloran General Hosp. NY	
Camp Stewart, GA	Fort Jackson, SC		
Camp Stockton, CA	Fort Kearny, RI		
Camp Sutton, NC	Fort Knox, KY		
Camp Swift, TX	Fort Leavenworth, KS		
Camp Tonkawa, OK	Fort Leonard Wood, MS		
Camp Trinidad, CO	Fort Lewis, WA		
Camp Van Dorn, MS	Fort McClellan, AL		
Camp Wallace, TX	Fort Meade, MD		

### Known POW Camp Covers

- -2 from Camp Douglas
- -1 from Aliceville POW Camp
- -1 from Camp Robinson
- -1 from Fort Robinson
- -1 from Clinton POW Camp
- -1 from Trinidad POW Camp

These are the ones that say 'POW'.

### Special Note

I'd like to acknowledge the late Stuart Bergman, as well as Mike Samuels and James Willard for their help in researching the covers in this topic. Also, special thanks to Arthur D. Jacobs, Major, USAF retired, for his help in sorting through background material on camps.

If anyone has any not listed above, please send me a scan. I also don't have the two from Camp Douglas, WY. I could use scans of those, as well. Any help would be appreciated.

Internment Camps in our next issue!

