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# Oflag VII-B

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Coordinates: 48.88306°N 11.20720°E

**Oflag VII-B** was a **World War II German prisoner-of-war camp** for officers (*Offizierlager*), located in **Eichstätt, Bavaria**, about 100 km (62 mi) north of **Munich**.

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## Camp history [edit]

The camp was built in September 1939 to house **Polish** prisoners from the German **invasion of Poland**. The first prisoners arrived there on 18 October 1939.

On 22 May 1940 all 1,336 Polish prisoners were transferred to **Oflag VII-A Murnau**, and were replaced with **British**, **French** and **Belgian** officers taken prisoner during the **battle of France**.

In the summer of 1941 **Australians** and **New Zealanders** captured in Greece and Crete during the **Balkans Campaign** arrived in the camp.

In Rommel's **second offensive on Tobruk** in June 1942, most of the **South African 2nd Division** was captured. Many of these soldiers were interned at Oflag VII-B.

On 31 August 1942 Canadian officers captured during the **Dieppe Raid** arrived. Soon after their arrival the senior Canadian officer, Brigadier W.W. Southam, convened a conference which compiled an **after action report** on the Raid. This was recorded in **shorthand** in a notebook labelled "Shorthand Reading Exercises. O. Henry's Short Stories", which after the war was donated to the archives of the Historical Section of the Canadian Army HQ.<sup>[1]</sup>

In September 1942, British officers from **Oflag VI-B Dössel**, were transferred to VII-B after a mass escape (the "Warburg Wire Job"). Within months two officers from Dössel, Lieutenant **Jock Hamilton-Baillie** and Captain Frank Weldon, proposed digging a tunnel north from Block 2's latrine to a villager's **chicken coop** about 30 m (98 ft) away. Work began in December 1942, but the rocky ground made digging difficult. The Germans found spoil from the tunnel and searched the camp, but failed to find it. The tunnel was completed in May, and on the night of 3/4 June 1943 sixty-five men escaped. Most of them headed south, towards Switzerland, sleeping by day and travelling by night. Eventually, all 65 were recaptured, but had occupied over 50,000 police, soldiers, home guard and **Hitler Youth** for a week. After two weeks detention in nearby Willibaldsburg Castle, the escapees were sent to **Oflag IV-C at Colditz Castle**.<sup>[2]</sup>

In spring of 1943 **American** and British (C company) personnel captured in the **Tunisia Campaign** arrived.

On 14 April 1945, as the **U.S. Army** approached, the officers were marched out of the camp. Unfortunately, only a short distance from the camp the column was attacked by American aircraft, who mistook it for a formation of German troops. Fourteen British officers were killed and 46 were wounded. In 2003 a memorial plaque was erected by local German authorities at the site.<sup>[3]</sup>

The camp was liberated by the U.S. Army on 16 April 1945. The POWs were repatriated to their home countries. For the British this meant a march begging for food from farmers until transport reached them.

As of 2012 the site of the camp is occupied by the barracks and training school of *II. Bereitschaftspolizeiabteilung* ("2nd Riot Police Division") of the **Bavarian State Police**.<sup>[4]</sup>

## See also [edit]

- Oflag**
- List of prisoner-of-war camps in Germany

## References [edit]

### Notes

- ↑ "Canadian Military Headquarters Historical Officers Report No. 142"  (PDF). *rangersatdieppe.com*. 2012. Retrieved 18 April 2012.
- ↑ Rutherford, Dianne (October 2010). "An officer's first duty" . *Wartime* (Canberra: Australian War Memorial) (52). Retrieved 18 April 2012.
- ↑ Askew, Peter (2012). "Oflag VIIb, P.O.W. Camp, Eichstätt, Germany" . *sites.google.com*. Retrieved 18 April 2012.
- ↑ "Bayerische Polizei - Bereitschaftspolizei II. Abteilung Eichstätt" . *polizei.bayern.de*. 2012. Retrieved 18 April 2012. (German)

### Bibliography

- Polish genealogy POW site  (Polish)
- Canadians from Dieppe raid  <sup>[*dead link*]</sup>
- Times-on-line article (subscription required)

## External links [edit]

- Anthony Lister : Tales of a POW at Oflag 7B
- John Kenneth Clark : Life as a POW

Oflag VII-B	
<span>Eichstätt, Bavaria</span>	
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<span></span> <div>Eichstätt, Germany (pre-war borders, 1937)</div>	
Type	Prisoner-of-war camp
Coordinates	<span><span><span><span><span>48.88306°N</span> <span>11.20720°E</span></span></span></span></span>
In use	1939–1945
Controlled by	<span><span><span></span></span></span> <b>Nazi Germany</b>
Occupants	Polish, then British and Commonwealth officers

Stalag Luft VI Heydekrug Stalag Luft I Barth Stalag Luft IV Gross Tychow Stalag III-A Luckenwalde Stalag IV-B Mühlberg Oflag IV-C Colditz Castle Stalag VII-A Moosburg  
**Oflag VII-B Eichstätt** Stalag VIII-A Görlitz Stalag 344 Lamsdorf Stalag VIII-B Teschen Stalag Luft III Sagan Stalag Luft 7 Bankau Stalag IX-C Bad Sulza  
Stalag X-B Sandbostel Marlag und Milag Nord, Westertimke Stalag XI-A Altengrabow Stalag XI-B Fallingbosten Stalag XIII-C Hammelburg Stalag XIII-D Nürnberg  
Stalag XX-A Thorn Stalag XX-B Marienburg Stalag XXI-D Posen Oflag 79 Brunswick See also - The March (1945)



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