

Introduction

Captivity has always featured in war. Servicemen can hold a military, economic or political value and consequently they have sometimes been disarmed and detained rather than killed by their enemy. In antiquity the captured were enslaved; medieval prisoners of war (POWs) were ransomed; and prisoners in the early modern period were subject to mutual exchanges via cartels. Changes in attitudes and practices towards POWs came in the eighteenth century with the rise of professional standing armies and the development of 'enlightened' legal theories. Henceforth the primary purpose of capturing servicemen was to incapacitate them from the fighting,¹ the captor being legally and morally bound to care for their captives. The First World War, however, marked a watershed moment due to the scale, range and duration of war captivity. Recent estimates place the number of servicemen held captive across the globe by the end of that conflict at up to 9 million.² What was more, this war witnessed the doctrine of incapacitation extended to include non-combatant, civilian 'enemies'. Hence, prior to a man even taking up arms, his capacity as a potential enemy combatant was realised and reacted to. Of all the belligerents it was Germany who held the highest share of captives, over 2.5 million at the end of the war, for the longest duration.

This book investigates the experiences of the around 185,329 British military servicemen held in German custody during the conflict.³ It uses

¹ Richard B. Speed III, *Prisoners, Diplomats, and the Great War. A Study in the Diplomacy of Captivity* (London: Greenwood Press, 1990), pp. 1–2.

² Heather Jones, *Violence against Prisoners of War in the First World War: Britain, France, and Germany, 1914–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 2.

³ Figures cited from Speed III, *Prisoners*, p. 76, and Wilhelm Doegen, *Kriegsgefangene Völker: Der Kriegsgefangenen Haltung und Schicksal in Deutschland* (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer (Ernst Vohsen), 1919), Table G, pp. 28–9. Caution must be exercised with Doegen's data for his appraisal of POWs in Germany was commissioned by the Prussian Ministry after the war and was impacted by post-war political and cultural agendas which worked to largely defend Germany's prison system. Moreover, his figures play down or omit data relating to the deployment of POWs in the occupied 'war zones'.

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British sources, including material produced by the captured servicemen, to explore how these men, as men and as servicemen, were challenged by wartime captivity. Moreover, it assesses if, how and with what effects they were able to respond. In so doing it offers an original insight into the mentalities and perceptions of British servicemen in German captivity, concentrating on their experiences in the camps inside Germany, as opposed to their experiences in POW labour units behind the front lines in the occupied parts of France, Belgium and Russia.⁴

Therein the concept of power is deployed as a useful analytical tool, encompassing important subthemes such as order, control, discipline, authority and identity in captivity. The concept also informs the structure and methodological approach offered as I seek the multiple and oft-competing power relationships that existed behind the wire. British captivity experiences are therefore analysed in the multiple. The history offered develops conventional ‘top-down’ approaches, which have focused on the power relationship of captor *over* captive, within experiences from the ‘bottom-up’, asking if and how the captive could re-assert degrees of power, influence and control. Nuances, embracing resistance, subversion and the remobilisation of apparently well-defined power hierarchies, traceable in the camps emerge manifold as multiple power loci are identified and explored across the captivity landscape.

The brief history of war captivity sketched above reveals some of the many power claims to which the captive has been historically subjected. He has traditionally been seen and treated as a disempowered figure, albeit one who holds value for the captor in military, economic or political terms. The experiences of the British POWs considered in this book reveal that he continued to be used as a ‘commodity’ in these ways during the First World War. Captivity has therefore understandably been associated with a gross imbalance of power held by the captor over his charge. Heather Jones notes that First World War captivity threatens to produce a history of victim versus perpetrator, and it is as a victim to German ‘frightfulness’ that the POW was culturally represented in Britain both during and immediately after the conflict.⁵ Jones contends that such representations resulted in new extremes of violence becoming permissible and practised against POWs. The result was a disempowerment of the POW on a number of levels: he was a victim to government policies dictated by political, economic and military needs; he was a victim in government and media discourses that fed the development of ‘war cultures’; and he then became a victim to further, culturally legitimated violence meted out by guards. In fact, as will be shown, violence

⁴ The dual system of captivity is explained in Chapter 2. ⁵ Jones, *Violence*, pp. 3–4.

constituted only one of many physical trials that a British serviceman would have to endure in captivity. Hand in hand with these came psychological challenges, including those mounted to a captured serviceman's military status, to his patriotism, and to his masculinity, all of which could be experienced as deeply disempowering. Moreover, the figure of the POW, and especially the First World War British POW, appears to have been disempowered by history itself.

Their experiences have usually been conceived of and studied only as 'side shows', their distinct war narratives marginalised and their histories largely forgotten in the broad history of the conflict. Moreover, First World War captivity experiences have been overshadowed by the Second World War. Peter Pastor, for example, has suggested that First World War captivity, due to the ethnic discrimination, ideological conversions and forced labour policies it evidences, served as a prototype for later Nazi concentration camps and Russian Gulags.⁶ Plotting such correlations is indicative of the temptation to interpret First World War captivity through the prism of the later conflict.⁷ As Matthew Stibbe has summarised, 'the horrors of the Nazi concentration camps have overshadowed everything that came before'.⁸ Yet 'back-shadowing' runs the risk of creating an anachronistic interpretation. English-language monographs dealing with POWs in the Great War on their own terms are minuscule when compared with the weight of material on the conflict as a whole.⁹ Only in recent years with the excellent research led by Jones,¹⁰

⁶ Peter Pastor, 'Introduction', in Samuel Williamson and Peter Pastor (eds), *Essays on World War I: Origins and Prisoners of War* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1983), pp. 113–17.

⁷ For the most balanced interpretation of this nature see Heather Jones, 'A Missing Paradigm?: Military Captivity and the Prisoner of War, 1914–18', *Immigrants and Minorities*, 26, 1/2 (2008), pp. 19–48.

⁸ Matthew Stibbe, *British Civilian Internees in Germany: The Ruhleben Camp, 1914–1918* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2008), p. 17.

⁹ Speed III, *Prisoners*; Desmond Morton, *Silent Battle. Canadian Prisoners of War in Germany 1914–1919* (Toronto: Lester Publishing Limited, 1992); Robert Jackson, *The Prisoners 1914–18* (London: Routledge, 1989); John Yarnall, *Barbed Wire Disease. British and German Prisoners of War, 1914–18* (Stroud: The History Press, 2011).

¹⁰ Heather Jones: *Violence*; 'Encountering the "Enemy": Prisoner of War Transport and the Development of War Cultures in 1914', in Pierre Purseigle (ed.), *Warfare and Belligerence. Perspectives in First World War Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 2005), pp. 133–62; 'The Final Logic of Sacrifice? Violence in German Prisoner of War Labour Companies in 1918', *The Historian*, 68, 4 (2006), pp. 770–92; 'The German Spring Reprisals of 1917: Prisoners of War and the Violence of the Western Front', *German History*, 26, 3 (2008), pp. 335–56; 'A Missing Paradigm?', pp. 19–48; 'International or Transnational? Humanitarian Action during the First World War', *European Review of History*, 16, 5 (2009), pp. 697–713; 'Imperial Captives: Colonial Prisoners of War in Germany and the Ottoman Empire', in Santanu Das (ed.), *Race, Empire and First World War Writing* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), pp. 175–93; 'Prisoners of War', in

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Stibbe,¹¹ Alon Rachamimov,¹² Panikos Panayi¹³ and Brian K. Feltman,¹⁴ together with some international scholarship,¹⁵ has this deficit begun to be redressed. Further in roads have been made into specific aspects of First World War captivity, with civilian internees and deportees receiving due attention alongside captured military personnel.¹⁶ However, this relative lack of academic attention has left representations and interpretations of captivity open to popular historians, memoirists, film directors and television producers.¹⁷ Therein, some popular historians have attempted to bring the British POWs of the First World War into the limelight, notably Richard Van Emden with his book and accompanying Channel 4 documentary, *Prisoners of the Kaiser*.¹⁸

Jay Winter (ed.), *The Cambridge History of the First World War. Volume II. The State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), pp. 266–90.

- ¹¹ Matthew Stibbe: *British Civilian Internees; 'A Community at War: British Civilian Internees at the Ruhleben Camp in Germany, 1914–1918'*, in Jenny Macleod and Pierre Purseigle (eds), *Uncovered Fields. Perspectives in First World War Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 2004), pp. 79–94; 'The Internment of Civilians by Belligerent States during the First World War and the Responses of the International Committee of the Red Cross', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 4, 1 (2006), pp. 5–19; 'Introduction: Captivity, Forced Labour and Forced Migration during the First World War' and 'Civilian Internment and Civilian Internees in Europe, 1914–20', *Immigrants and Minorities*, 26, 1/2 (2008), pp. 1–18 and pp. 49–81; 'Gendered Experiences of Civilian Internment: A Forgotten Dimension of Wartime Violence', in Ana Carden-Coyne (ed.), *Gender and Conflict since 1914: Historical and Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2012), pp. 160–78.
- ¹² Alon Rachamimov: *POWs and The Great War. Captivity on the Eastern Front* (Oxford: Berg, 2002); 'Arbiters of Allegiance: Austro-Hungarian Censors during World War I', in Pieter M. Judson and Marsha L. Rozenblit (eds), *Constructing Nationalities in East Central Europe* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2005), pp. 157–77; 'The Disruptive Comforts of Drag: (Trans)Gender Performances among Prisoners of War in Russia, 1914–1920', *American Historical Review*, 3, 2 (2006), pp. 362–82.
- ¹³ Panikos Panayi, *Prisoners of Britain. German Civilian and Combatant Internees during the First World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2012).
- ¹⁴ Brian K. Feltman: *The Stigma of Surrender. German Prisoners, British Captors, and Manhood in the Great War and Beyond* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2015); 'Letters from Captivity: The First World War Correspondence of the German Prisoners of War in the United Kingdom', in Jennifer D. Keene and Michael S. Neiberg (eds), *Finding Common Ground. New Directions in First World War Studies* (Leiden: Brill, 2010), pp. 87–110; 'Tolerance As a Crime? The British Treatment of German Prisoners of War on the Western Front, 1914–1918', *War in History*, 17, 4 (2010), pp. 435–58.
- ¹⁵ Uta Hinz, *Gafagen in Großen Krieg. Kriegsgefangenschaft in Deutschland, 1914–1921* (Essen: Klartex Verlagsges, 2006); Rainer Pöppinghege, *Im Lager unbesiegt. Deutsche, Englische und Französische Kriegsgefangenen-Zeitungen im Ersten Weltkrieg* (Essen: Klartex Verlag, 2006).
- ¹⁶ See special edition of *Immigrants & Minorities*, 26, 1/2 (2008).
- ¹⁷ Joan Beaumont, 'Review Article. Prisoners of War in the Second World War', *Journal of Contemporary History*, 42, 3 (2007), p. 535.
- ¹⁸ Richard Van Emden, *Prisoners of the Kaiser. The Last POWs of the Great War* (Barnsley: Pen and Sword, 2009); *Prisoners of the Kaiser* (2000), Channel 4, 31 Aug, 1hr. 30 mins.

More recently there have been attempts to frame First World War POWs as the original ‘great escapers’, tapping into the escape genre perpetuated in British popular culture in the aftermath of the Second World War.¹⁹ Yet First World War captivity experiences have so far failed to capture the public’s imagination in the same way as those of the Second World War,²⁰ and, in any case, these works only serve to bolster a mythologised, largely officer-centric escape narrative which does not represent the majority experiences of captivity during the First World War.

This book challenges that historiographical ‘side-lining’ while changing the emphasis of the analysis. It is not a study of escape, although escapes do feature. Nor is it primarily about the political wrangling or economic mobilisation surrounding British POWs. Rather this is a book about the British servicemen who experienced captivity during the First World War. Using British source material it traces what these men went through and it further seeks evidence of if, and how, they were able to cope with captivity. Accordingly it enhances understanding of how individuals, families and communities directly affected by war captivity were able to make sense of, and influence, what was happening to them.²¹ By focusing on the experiences of those who were captured I aim to write the British POWs back into the history of the First World War.

Part I

The disempowerments brought about due to surrender provide a starting point. Alongside the act of surrendering, with its inherent dangers, the opening chapter considers the anguish of capture as experienced by British servicemen during the First World War. Therein, the main themes of the book are established, for capture reveals both the physical and psychological insecurities endemic in captive life while also illuminating the initial reactions of captured servicemen. Assessment of the captivity landscape, encompassing the *Stammlager* (parent camps) in Germany, the myriad satellite working camps containing British POWs across the ‘host’ country and the working camps established behind the firing lines in France and Belgium, comprises the body of Part I. To do so I have adopted Erving Goffman’s concept of a ‘Total Institution’ as a base

¹⁹ Neil Hanson, *Escape from Germany. The Greatest POW Break Out of the First World War* (London: Doubleday, 2011); *The First Great Escape* (2014), Channel 5, 23 Mar, 1hr.

²⁰ S.P. Mackenzie, *The Colditz Myth. British and Commonwealth Prisoners of War in Nazi Germany* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 2.

²¹ Stibbe, ‘Introduction’, p. 14.

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interpretive framework,²² broadening his definition by the incorporation of Michel Foucault's assessment of disciplinary technologies of power in 'complete and austere institutions'.²³ These frameworks enable the identification of a set of criteria, ideas and principles, which indicate how authority and control might operate within captivity and especially within the structure of a POW camp. Chapters 2, 3 and 4 assess how authority and control actually functioned in these contexts. Collectively the section offers an overview of captivity, providing insight into the nature of the so-called 'omnipresent systems of power' governing the lives of British POWs in the camps while also revealing crucial nuances both within and between captivity contexts.²⁴ Therein the challenges that subjection to these systems presented to British POWs are identified. Importantly, however, ongoing opportunities for POWs to respond are simultaneously highlighted, illuminating the scope for captured servicemen to retain varying degrees of autonomy and agency.

There has never been a dedicated study of this nature focused solely on British military POW camps under German control. This is despite the pioneering work offered by Gerald H. Davis, who set an agenda for such a study via his exploration of life in Russian POW camps during the First World War.²⁵ In doing so he set out an analysis of the structures characteristic of POW camps. Richard B. Speed took this further, providing a comparative analysis of POW camps established by the main belligerent powers during the conflict.²⁶ Speed, however, is at pains to politicise conditions behind the wire in order to bolster his thesis that, despite the pressures of 'Total War' that led European belligerents to violate many traditional restraints, when it came to the treatment of their prisoners all the powers remained committed to a humanitarian spirit as defined in pre-war international law.²⁷ Others have offered enquiries into parallel captivity contexts,²⁸ including British civilian internment at Ruhleben camp, located two miles west of Berlin.²⁹

I expand on these studies by focusing specifically on British military captivity contexts and by concentrating analysis on how those

²² Erving Goffman, *Asylums. Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* (London: Penguin, 1991).

²³ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish. The Birth of the Prison*, Alan Sheridan (trans.) (London: Penguin, 1991).

²⁴ Jones, *Violence*, p. 3.

²⁵ Gerald H. Davis: 'The Life of Prisoners of War in Russia, 1914–1921', in Williamson and Pastor (eds), *Essays on World War I*, pp. 163–98; 'Prisoner of War Camps as Social Communities: Krasnoyarsk 1914–1921', *East European Quarterly*, 21, 2 (1987), pp. 147–63.

²⁶ Speed III, *Prisoners*, pp. 61–38. ²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 3.

²⁸ Feltman, *The Stigma of Surrender*, pp. 43–72.

²⁹ Stibbe, *British Civilian Internees*, pp. 52–78.

British servicemen within perceived of themselves as a result of capture and captivity. To this end I draw on theoretical insights offered by Goffman,³⁰ Foucault³¹ and Giorgio Agamben,³² together with the contemporary insights offered by Dr A.L. Vischer and the ‘deprivation theory’ formulated in the 1960s by sociologists studying civil penitentiaries.³³ In addition, I seek out the unique deprivations experienced by servicemen because of capture. In this regard, Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker have proposed that captured soldiers during the First World War faced a ‘double exile’; capture exiling them from their country and, moreover, from their country which was *at war*.³⁴ This can be pinpointed as the root of considerable psychological anxiety for many captured British servicemen. The cause of such anguish, and how this affected the performance of men’s civilian roles (as husbands, fathers, sons and so on) and their male roles as defined by the war, particularly their warrior, combatant, role, is explored as a recurrent theme.³⁵

As a result, the study contributes to understandings of military masculinities,³⁶ illuminating hegemonic conceptions of manhood in wartime, unveiling how masculinities can be challenged by war experiences and how they can nevertheless be preserved. The pioneering collection of essays edited by Paul R. Higate is indicative of the scholarship in this area, although the military man in captivity is notably absent therein.³⁷ Feltman’s recent study of German servicemen captured by the British during the First World War is the only thoroughgoing attempt to redress this omission. He establishes the military and social expectations of manhood as attached to, and understood by, German soldiers who fought during the conflict. He is therefore able to chart the corresponding stigmas attached to surrender, the impact of such notions on those German servicemen who found themselves in enemy hands and the

³⁰ Goffman, *Asylums*, pp. 23–43. ³¹ Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, pp. 170–94.

³² Giorgio Agamben, *Homo Sacer. Sovereign Power and Bare Life*, Daniel Heller-Roazen (trans.) (California: Stanford, 1995), pp. 119–88.

³³ A.L. Vischer, *Barbed Wire Disease: A Psychological Study of the Prisoner of War* (London: John Bale, Sons and Danielson Ltd., 1919); Gresham M. Sykes, *The Society of Captives. A Study of a Maximum Security Prison* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), pp. 64–78; Richard Sparks, Anthony Bottoms and Will Hay, *Prisons and the Problem of Order* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), p. 38.

³⁴ Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *14–18 Understanding The Great War*, Catherine Temerson (trans.) (New York: Hill and Wang, 2003), p. 81.

³⁵ The notion of a ‘double emasculation’ is adapted from Stibbe’s discussion in ‘Gendered Experiences of Civilian Internment’, p. 161.

³⁶ Michael Roper and John Tosh (eds), *Manful Assertions. Masculinities in Britain since 1800* (London: Routledge, 1991); R.W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).

³⁷ Paul R. Higate (ed.), *Military Masculinities. Identity and the State* (Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2003).

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attempts they made to ‘redeem’ themselves from such negative implications.³⁸ I place British servicemen’s perceptions of captivity against the similar preconditioning of the British soldier-cum-prisoner with a hegemonic conception of masculinity based ultimately on the figure of the idealised warrior. The inculcation of British men with such ideas can be located to their schooling, exposure to popular culture, formative pre-war industrial discipline and military service.³⁹ As early as 1860 ‘the soldier had become the “quintessential figure of masculinity” [in British culture], an idealised figure who represented . . . the epitome of national identity, a chivalric and Christian Warrior’.⁴⁰ Hence, in the psyche of the generation who fought the First World War the soldier was clearly a ‘powerful icon of masculinity’.⁴¹ It was against this image, albeit one that evolved during the war, that many British men were perceived and, crucially, how many measured their own war experiences.⁴² Only by contextualising the British prisoners’ experiences against these pervading ideas of manhood in British civilian and military culture can the challenges posed by captivity be fully comprehended. The inability to perform one’s perceived wartime role as a ‘warrior’, coupled with a series of other deprivations enforced by war captivity, including the denial of autonomy of action, of self-determination and of heterosexual outlets, took on a heightened importance. In such regards, the experience of captivity further parallels other experiences of contested masculinity in wartime.⁴³ How such contestations manifested themselves amongst captured British servicemen, as well as the ways in which these men sought to respond, is a central theme of this book.

Methodologically, the study offered here is based upon English-language source material. Part I draws on numerous official documents,

³⁸ Feltman, *The Stigma of Surrender*, *passim*.

³⁹ Rachel Woodward, ‘Locating Military Masculinities: Space, Place, and the Formation of Gender Identity in the British Army’, in Higate (ed.), *Military Masculinities*, pp. 43–55; David H.J. Morgan, ‘Theatre of War. Combat, the Military and Masculinities’, in Harry Brod and Michael Kaufman (eds), *Theorizing Masculinities* (London: Sage, 1994), pp. 165–6.

⁴⁰ Michael Paris, *Warrior Nation. Images of War in British Popular Culture, 1850–2000* (London: Reaktion Books Ltd., 2000), pp. 43–4.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, p. 44. Also see Peter Parker, *The Old Lie. The Great War and the Public School Ethos* (London: Constable, 1987); Graham Dawson, *Soldier Heroes: British Adventure, Empire and the Imagining of Masculinities* (London: Routledge, 1994).

⁴² A parallel situation existed for German servicemen. See Feltman, *The Stigma of Surrender*, pp. 22–25.

⁴³ For example Conscientious Objectors, on which see Lois Bibbings: ‘Conscientious Objectors in the Great War: The Consequences of Rejecting Military Masculinities’, in Higate (ed.), *Military Masculinities*, pp. 125–41; *Telling Tales About Men: Conceptions of Conscientious Objectors to Military Service during the First World War* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).

notably reports on the German camps compiled by neutral inspectors (initially American and, after 1917, Dutch), which were transmitted in English to the British government. Many of these reports, with accompanying diplomatic correspondence, were published in British Parliamentary Papers (BPP). These, together with the legal framework set out in the *Prisoners of War Annexes to the Laws and Customs of War on Land* – Hague II (1899) and the *Laws and Customs of War on Land* – Hague IV (1907),⁴⁴ allow a reconstruction of the captivity landscape that developed, including details of the location, categorisation and material condition of the camps. They reveal the routines and regimes implemented behind the wire together with the attitudes and policies adopted towards key issues such as work and discipline. They also allow consideration of the provisions made for the feeding, clothing and medical care of prisoners. Thirty-two relevant parliamentary papers have been cross-referenced with the reports transmitted to the British Foreign Office (FO) accessible in the National Archives at Kew (TNA, FO 383). That series contains further material, including investigations into conditions in the camps, complaints about prisoner treatment and Anglo–German political negotiations. There are 557 FO 383 files relating to First World War prisoners, arranged chronologically and categorised by country of incarceration. These include eighty-six relating to Germany. Additional information on the political context, as well as further data on the camps, is available through the Hansard records of British Parliamentary Debates. Here, searches have been conducted for the First World War period using the terms: ‘Prisoner of War’, ‘Prisoners of War’ and ‘POW’. In conjunction with that I have incorporated material from non-governmental agencies, including a number of published International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) reports, as well as unpublished reports located at the ICRC Archives in Geneva (mostly written in French).⁴⁵ Young Men’s Christian Association (YMCA) reports, as an organisation involved in POW war work within the camps of interior Germany, are also accessible in nineteen issues of the association’s journal.⁴⁶ Further published accounts are available by officials involved in POW work, including

⁴⁴ Leon Friedman (ed.), *The Law of War. A Documentary History – Volume I* (New York: Random House, 1975), pp. 221 and 309.

⁴⁵ For example, Comité International de la Croix-Rouge, *Documents publiés à l’occasion de la guerre de 1914–1915. Rapports de MM. Ed. Naville et V. Van Berchem, Dr. C. de Marval et A. Eugster sur leurs visites aux camps de prisonniers en Angleterre, France et Allemagne* (Geneva, 1915). ICRC reports were also communicated to the British Government and are available in The National Archives, London [hereafter TNA], FO 383 series.

⁴⁶ *For Millions of Men Now Under Arms* (1915–1921). Only numbers one to fifteen are relevant to British POWs during the First World War; the later issues consider post-war Association work in Eastern Europe.

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James Gerard,⁴⁷ Daniel J. McCarthy,⁴⁸ Carl P. Dennett⁴⁹ and Conrad Hoffman.⁵⁰ These sources allow a framework of captivity and life across the different categories of camps to be constructed. Yet the goal of the section is to elucidate the challenges that captivity presented to British servicemen. This necessitates reference to prisoners' diaries, letters, debrief reports, personal testimonies, POW magazines, memoirs and so on, which are outlined in detail below. If the official material sketches what the prisoners faced, it is material produced by those held captive that colours the view.

Part II

Much of the available historiography on First World War POWs has been focused 'from below', with scholars seeking out prisoners' 'voices' in order to recount their experiences. The precedent for this approach can be traced to the 1931 Austrian publication *In Feindeshand* edited by Hans Weiland and Leopold Kern, which drew heavily on prisoners' personal recollections. The rationale was that former POWs, as living sources, should be afforded a platform to record their experiences before they died or their memories faded.⁵¹ A handful of scholars, concerned specifically with the experiences of British POWs, have emulated this approach. Robert Jackson's *The Prisoners 1914–18* identified central elements of captivity experiences such as the rules of war, treatment, charitable relief, work and escape, fleshing out each area with extracts from unpublished personal narratives of British POWs held in the Imperial War Museum (IWM).⁵² Michael Moynihan, meanwhile, provided no such skeleton structure, instead editing a mixture of hitherto unpublished memoirs with minimal analysis and allowing British prisoners to 'speak for themselves'.⁵³ The most recent example of this approach is the work

⁴⁷ The American Ambassador in Berlin. James Gerard, *My Four Years in Germany* (New York: Gosset and Dunlap, 1917).

⁴⁸ An American inspector working in Germany in 1916. Daniel J. McCarthy, *The Prisoner of War in Germany. The Care and Treatment of the Prisoner of War with a History of the Development of the Principle of Neutral Inspection and Control* (New York: Moffat, Yard and Company, 1918).

⁴⁹ An American Red Cross Deputy Commissioner in Switzerland. Carl P. Dennett, *Prisoners of the Great War. Authoritative Statement of Conditions in the Prison Camps of Germany* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1919).

⁵⁰ A secretary of the International Committee of the YMCA in charge of POW work in Germany. Conrad Hoffman, *In the Prison Camps of Germany. A Narrative of 'Y' Service among Prisoners of War* (New York: Association Press, 1920).

⁵¹ Rachamimov, *POWs and The Great War*, pp. 1–3. ⁵² Jackson, *The Prisoners*.

⁵³ Michael Moynihan (ed.), *Black Bread and Barbed Wire* (London: Leo Cooper, 1978).