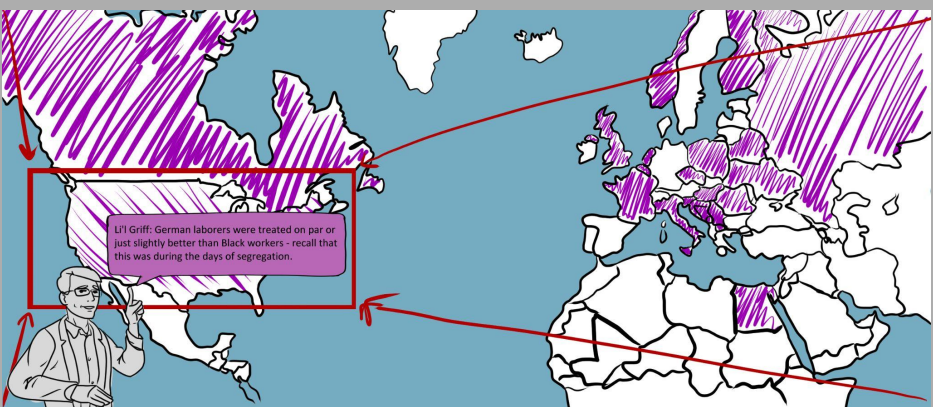
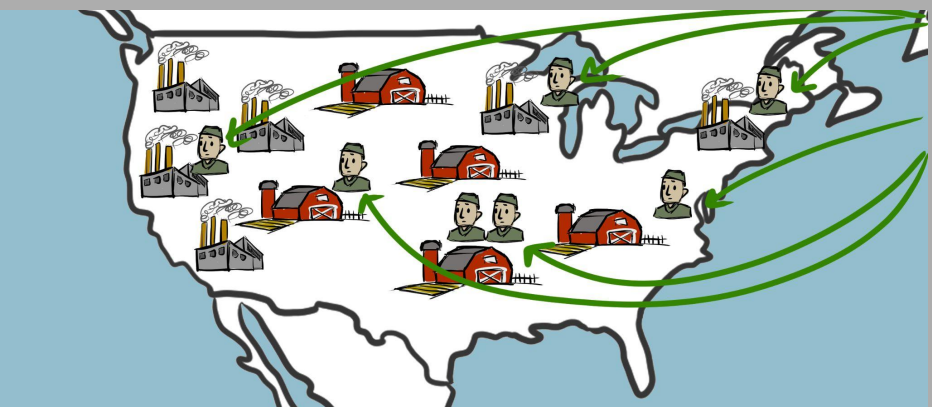


German Soldiers After WW2

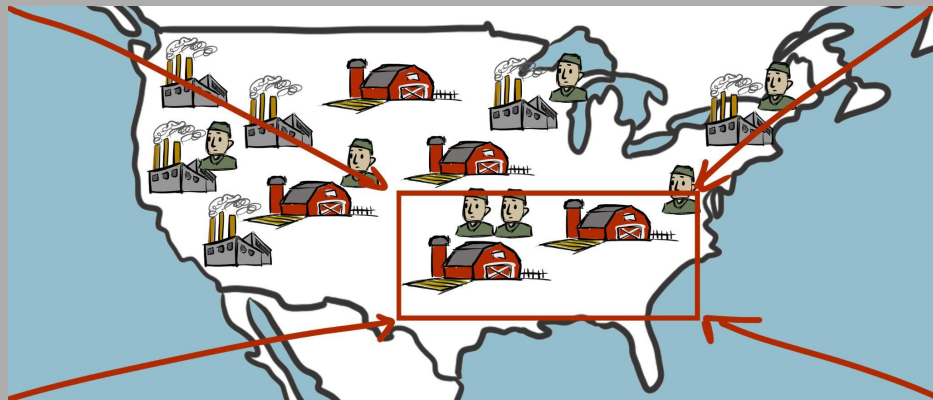
By Gabriella Santiago
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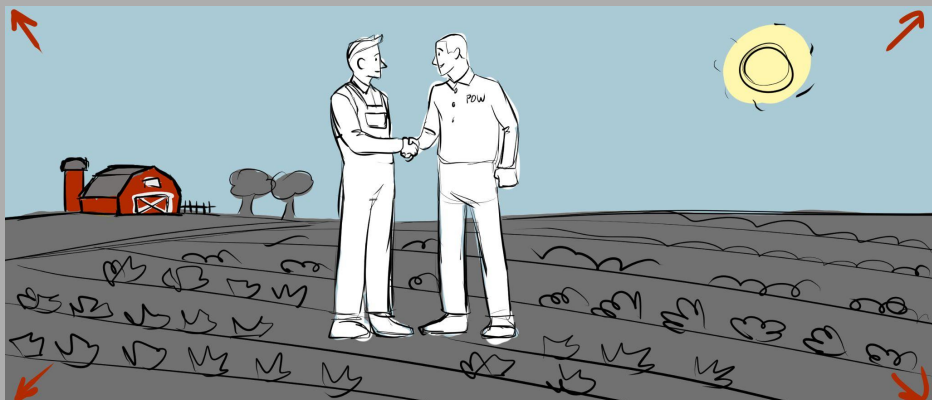
During the war years, German prisoners were imprisoned in roughly twenty countries around the world, including in the continental United States.



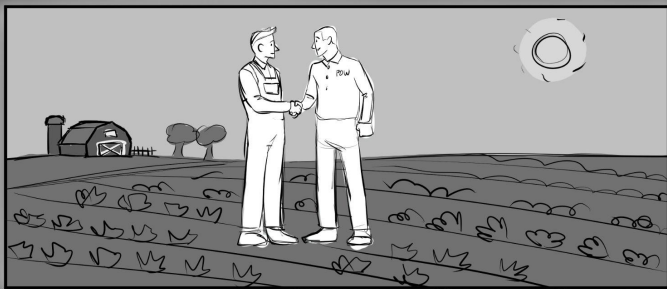
While stateside, many German prisoners were leased out to farms or factories to serve as laborers, providing additional hands to make up for the workers lost to the draft.



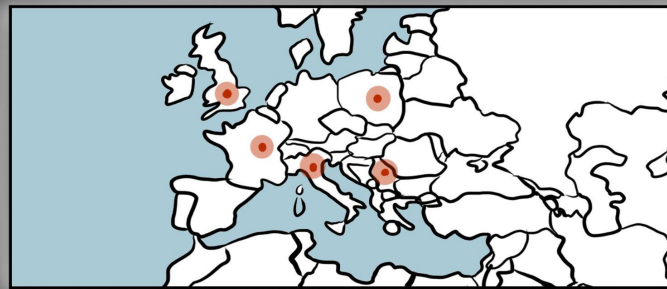
A hotbed of this leasing activity was the Southern US, where German POWs



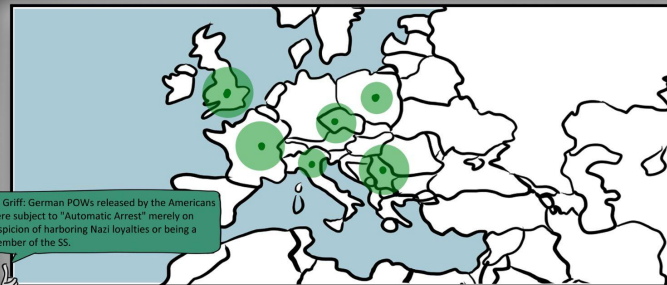
befriended American citizens and watched Hollywood films during their off-hours.



Overall, POWs sent to the US were treated humanely, and deaths of Germans in American custody were low at 491.

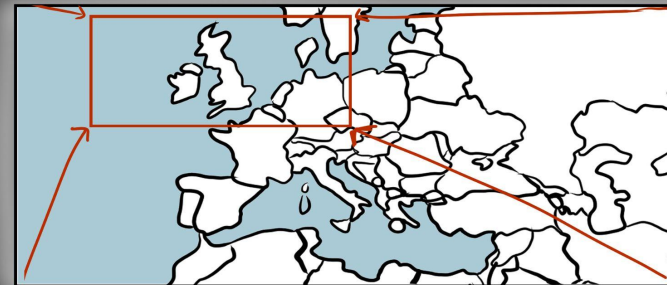


Things were different in the internment camps in Europe, where American estimates for POWs who died in custody lie in the low thousands,

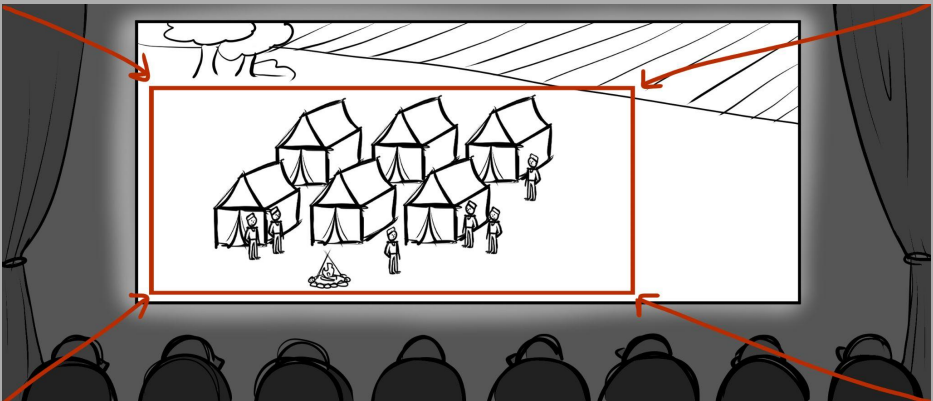


L! Griff: German POWs released by the Americans were subject to "Automatic Arrest" merely on suspicion of harboring Nazi loyalties or being a member of the SS.

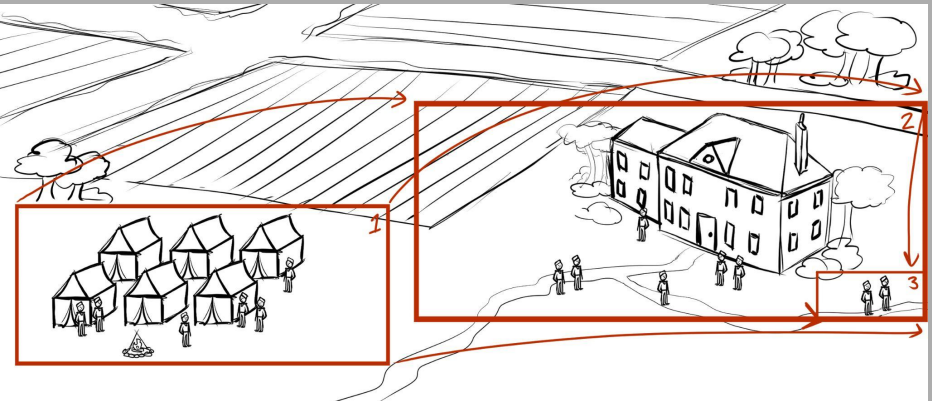
while German tallies claim up to 40,000 fatalities in American custody. The Americans' early release of many prisoners complicates attaining an exact number.



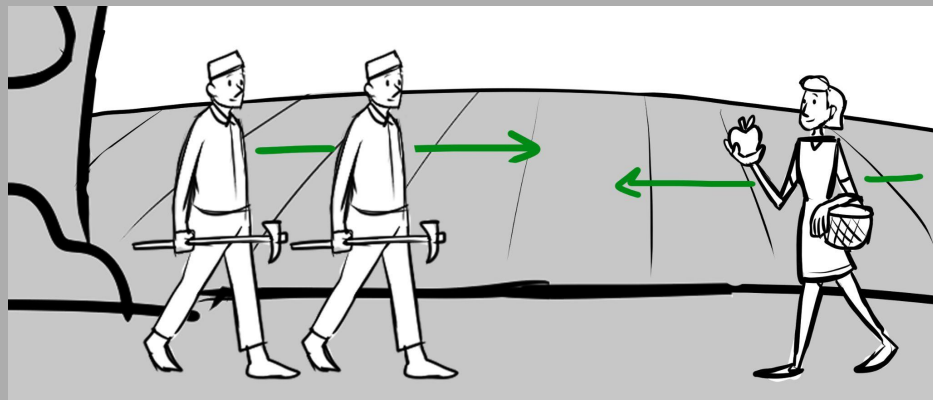
For their part, the British Empire managed the fate



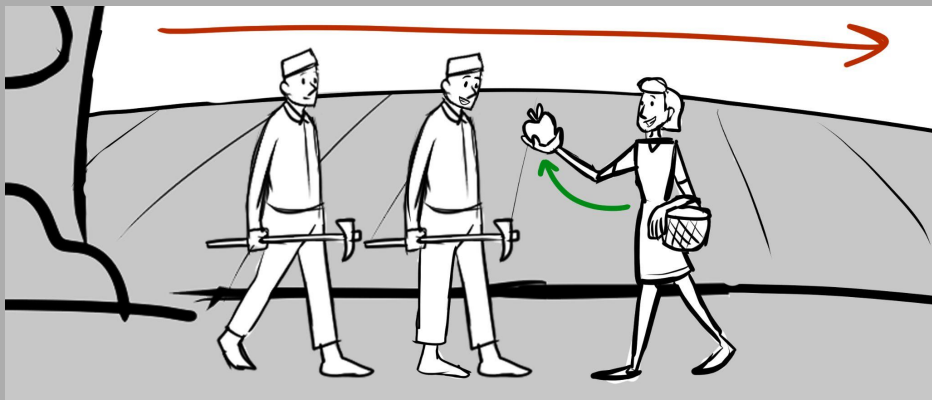
of up to 2.5 million German POWs by war's end. Germans kept in Great Britain could be housed in anything from tents set up in a pastoral field



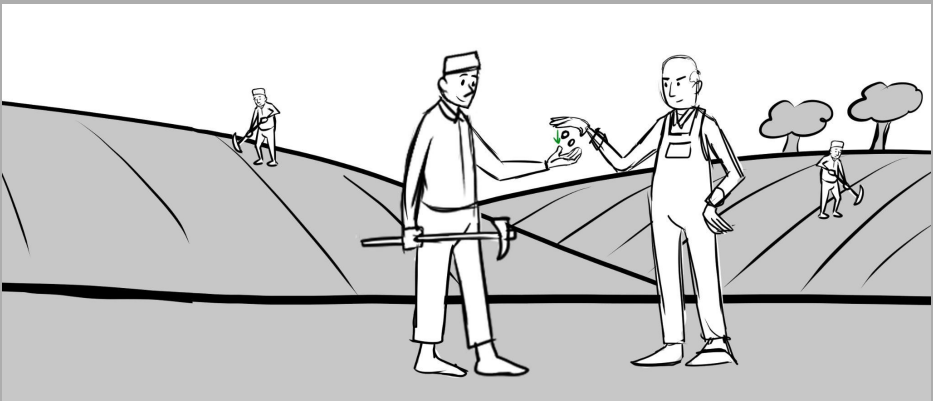
to elegant manor houses repurposed as surprisingly posh prisons.



Similar to their comrades in the US, German POWs in Britain enjoyed a cordial relationship with British civilians, who gave them money and foods that they were not usually fed.



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Germans in Britain could also be put onto a labor detail, for which they were paid a respectable two shillings per day of work. The number of German POWs who died in British custody was 1254.



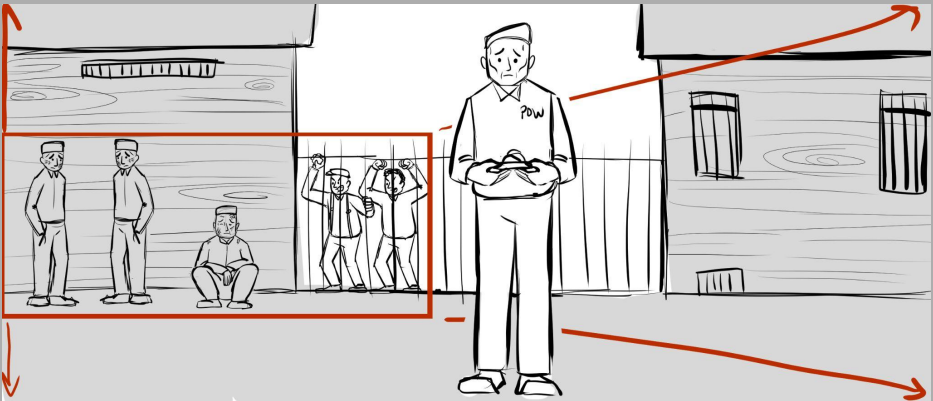
British soldiers, as well as American, are also reported to have engaged in torture when interrogating Germans suspected of committing war crimes, often leading to confessions extracted under duress.



But this was far from the worst a German captured on the Western Front could expect. That dubious dishonor lies with France.



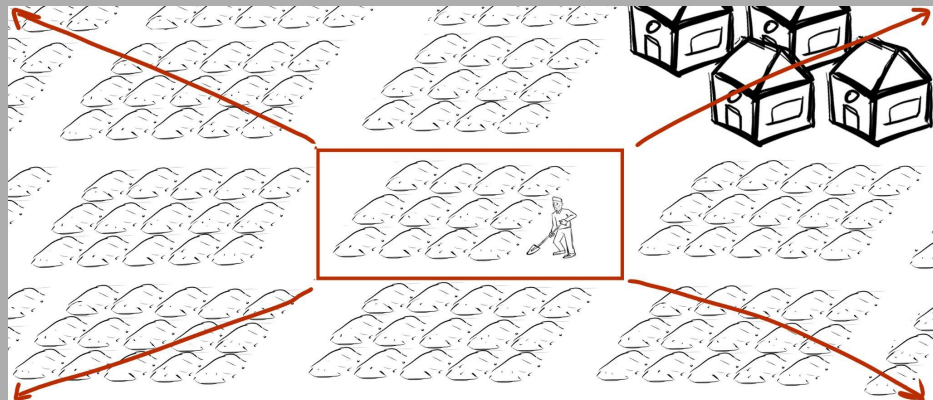
German soldiers captured during the Liberation of France, as well as a number relocated there from American custody, faced abysmal conditions and vengeful civilians. French citizens would verbally harass or assault German prisoners, stoning or beating them, sometimes to death.



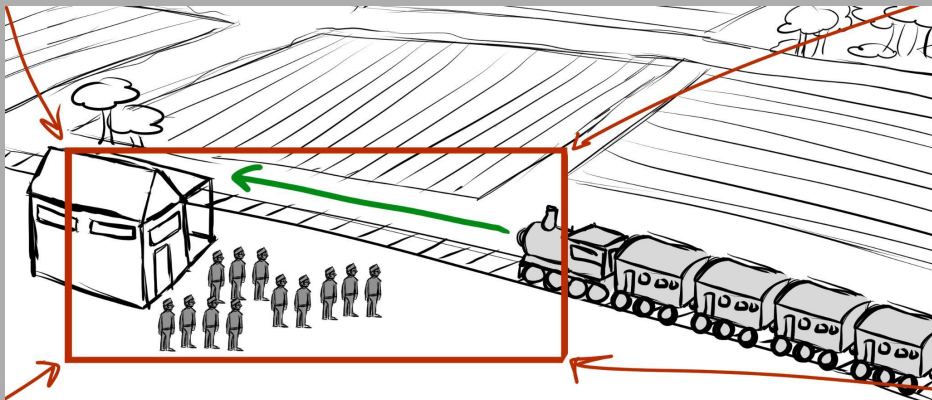
Some POW camps seemed designed for extermination rather than detention: a French camp in the Sarthe gave its inmates only 900 calories worth of rations per day;



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An average of 12 POWs died daily at the Sarthe camp, and shortly after VE Day the Red Cross reported that almost 200,000 German soldiers in French custody faced imminent starvation.



The United States was forced to halt any further shipments of POWs to France and mandate their adherence to the Geneva Convention... an act that, in practice, was largely symbolic.