

Traitors in Khaki

Every Allied prisoner-of-war camp in Germany was a potential source of vital information to the Germans during the war. New prisoners knew of recent Allied weapons and equipment, of transfers and postings indicating future plans. Older prisoners knew of constant efforts to escape within the camps.

The Germans constantly tapped at this deep well, but seldom succeeded in getting what they wanted, because neither hunger nor ill treatment could break the spirit of prisoners whose hopes never faded despite continuing Allied setbacks and the long years of waiting for invasion of Europe. Yet a handful did succumb to German wiles or cruelty.

The Weakest Few: Last week the first treason trial of former Allied prisoners opened in England. Pvt. John G. Galaher, 34, of Windsor, Ont., a veteran of the ill-fated raid on Dieppe became the first Canadian soldier (and the first Canadian since Louis Riel, French-Canadian hanged in 1885 for leading the Northwest Rebellions of 1870 and 1885) ever to be tried for treason. His trial was held in camera, lasted four days, and ended with the bare announcement that findings would be announced later.

Two other members of Galaher's regiment (the Essex Scottish of Windsor) faced similar charges in open courts-martial: Pvt. G. Hale, 25, a native of Windsor whose address is Vassar, Mich., and Pvt. E. B. Martin, Windsor. Evidence at Hale's trial was that he had become friendly with a German under officer to get more food, had then obtained other privileges, and had sold information obtained from other prisoners for money deposited in his name in a neutral country.

Meanwhile evidence was given at the treason court-martial of Raymond D. Hughes, Royal Air Force warrant officer, that a Canadian traitor, identified only as "Corporal Martin," had interrogated Allied prisoners at Luckenwalde, Germany, claiming he was "one of the Big Six" of a "British Free Corps" organized to fight the Russians. "Corporal Martin" was also said to have sold information.



Civvy Kilt: Even with veterans given priority in civilian clothes, Harry Filion of Vancouver, who served almost six years with a Canadian Scottish regiment, couldn't find trousers big enough to fit his 6-foot, 225-pound frame when the army discharged him. Discouraged, he decided to stick to his kilt.

Newsweek

September 3, 1945: p. 48

OldMagazineArticles.com