

20: John Robert Davies

Basic Information [as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC]

Name as recorded on local memorial or by CWGC: J. R. Davies

Rank: Private

Battalion / Regiment: (1st Bn.) Cheshire Regiment

Service Number: 6437

Date of Death: 04 March 1918*

Age at Death: 36

Buried / Commemorated at: Neston Cemetery

Additional information given by CWGC: None

* This conflicts with the date stated in the newspaper report of his death, and in his pension documentation, (Thursday 28 February) which suggests that it was his funeral, not his death, which took place on 4 March 1918

John Robert Davies was born 15 August 1882 in New Brighton, the son of general labourer Griffith Davies and Elizabeth.

Griffith Davies married Elizabeth Brillesford St. James' Church, New Brighton, in July / September 1878 and at the time of the 1891 census the family was living in Liscard:

Griffith Davies	Head	33	labourer	born Denbighshire, Llangollen
Elizabeth	Wife	37		born Chester
John R.	Son	8		born New Brighton
Edward	Do	5		born New Brighton

1891 census (extract) – 8 The Avenue, Liscard

Griffith Davies	33	labourer	born Denbighshire, Llangollen
Elizabeth	37		born Chester
John R.	8		born New Brighton
Edward	5		born New Brighton

Ten years later, in the 1901 census, the family (although John had now left to join the army) had moved across the road and was living at 11 The Avenue, Liscard:

Griffith Davies	45	general labourer	recorded as not known where born
Elizabeth	47		recorded as not known where born
Edward	15		born New Brighton
Elizabeth	3		born New Brighton
William	2		born New Brighton

Tucked away in a quiet corner of New Brighton was The Avenue, off Egerton Street, which was a little community. There were 13 houses that were built about 1830 and were homes for lighthouse keepers. By the 1970s the Council wanted the houses demolished, calling them "grim" because of the damp conditions which made the properties inhabitable. A compulsory purchase order was confirmed in 1975 and the houses were all cleared. [http://www.historyofwallasey.co.uk/wallasey/]



The Avenue, Wallasey
[www.historyofwallasey.co.uk]

Griffith Davies died in Birkenhead in late 1905 aged 49.

The family has not been found in the 1911 census but in 1921 it was recorded that John's mother, Elizabeth, was living at 3, Stewart's Place, Birkenhead with his eldest

surviving sister and his eldest surviving brother, Edward, was living at 20, Rodney Street, Birkenhead.

John Davies stated that he was a labourer by trade although, effectively, he was a career soldier. He attested, for 7 years, for the Cheshire Regiment on 10 December 1900 at Chester when he gave his age as 19 years 4 months, although he would have been 18 years 4 months if his birthdate has been recorded correctly.



On mobilisation he was attached to G. Coy. 3rd Cheshire Regiment. It is known that he served in the Transvaal from 5 September 1901 until 26 October 1902 during, and immediately after, the Second Boer War. Nothing is known of this service, credited as being 1 year 2 months, other than that John gained the Queen's South Africa Medal with two clasps, the medal issued to all who served in South Africa up to the end of the war in May 1902.

Following his service in South Africa John Davies returned to Britain for further training - on 1 August 1903 he passed the Mounted Infantry Class - but he was then posted, on 26 October 1903, to the East Indies where he served for a total of 5 years and 89 days until his return on 22 January 1909. Almost nothing is known of this period of his service other than increases, and decreases, in his rate of pay; from 1 April 1904 he was paid 4d per day (Class 2), on 1 January 1906 his pay was raised to 5d per day but on 24 February 1906 he was upgraded (although he remained a Private) to 7d per day (Class 1). However, on 1 June 1917 his pay was decreased back to 5d per day as he had failed to reach the appropriate musketry standard - he regained 7d per day on 25 May 1908. On his return in January 1909 until 11 September 1914 - a period of 5 years 232 days - he was stationed in Britain in the Army Reserve.

On 10 December 1912 he re-enlisted for a further 4 years and it was recorded then that he had served as an Officers' Mess Servant.

His medical records note that John was 5 feet 4¾ inches tall, weighed 124lb (8 stone 12lb / 56.4kg), had a 33 inch chest when expanded, a fresh complexion, hazel eyes and brown hair.

John married Martha Hughes at St Luke's parish church, Lower Tranmere on 22 February 1913 when he would have been 30. Described as a spinster Martha already

had two illegitimate children, Elizabeth Hughes (born 27 April 1909 in Birkenhead) and Leonard Mahon Hughes (born 11 September 1911 in Toxteth Park, Liverpool).

Two children were born following the marriage, Ada Corlett Davies (born 6 February 1913 in Birkenhead) and John Robert Davies (born 28 November 1914 in an unspecified town in Wirral, but known to be Neston, and after John had joined the British Expeditionary Force in France). Although Ada was actually born just two weeks before the marriage she was credited as being legitimate. Although John stated, on one of his many army records, that before the war he lived at Rodney Street, Birkenhead, he was living on Bridge Street, Neston, from (probably) some time in 1915.

John Davies was mobilised at Chester on 5 August 1914, posted to the 3rd Battalion on 8 August, re-posted to the 1st Battalion on 12 September 1914 and despatched to the front on 13 September. On the 15th he was at the 5th Infantry Base Station at St. Nazaire awaiting being moved to the front but, on that date, for misconduct, he was given 10 days Field Punishment No.2 by his Commanding Officer. Field Punishment (FP) was introduced in 1881 following the abolition of flogging, and was a common punishment during World War I. A commanding officer could award FP for up to 28 days, whilst a Court-Martial could award it for up to 90 days, either as FP No.1 or FP No. 2. Field Punishment No. 1 consisted of the convicted man being placed in fetters and handcuffs or similar restraints and attached to a fixed object, such as a gun wheel or a fence post, for up to two hours per day. For FP No. 2, the prisoner was placed in fetters and handcuffs but was not attached to a fixed object and was still able to march with his unit; this was considered to be a relatively tolerable punishment. In both forms of Field Punishment the soldier was also subjected to hard labour and loss of pay.

[See also © **Discipline in the ranks**, pages **91 - 93** of Volume 1 of this work]

Although we know almost nothing of his war service over the following year, John Davies was involved in the fighting at La Bassée in northern France (with D. Coy. 1st Cheshire Regiment, 2nd Corps., 5th Division, 15th Brigade) in October 1914. The fighting around La Bassée, was one of several engagements caused by the so-called "Race to the Sea", with the opposing armies trying to outflank each other to cut off the Channel ports. The action had started on 10 October and, by the 12th, the Cheshires were ordered to take up a long front line covering the village of Festubert. Having achieved its initial objectives the forces moved forwards but were now subject to regular attacks but continued to press forward in an attempt to gain La Bassée on the 19th. This attack only managed to gain some 500 yards; this would be the nearest that Allied troops would get to the town for four years. On 21 October the 1st Cheshires were at the village of Violaines with D Company engaged in digging trenches in front of the village, when it was rushed by a surprise German attack. It was then that John Davies received a rifle wound in the left thigh and was captured by troops of the 92nd German Infantry. John was taken to the Stadpark Hospital in the German POW camp in Göttingen in the Prussian province of Braunschweig (Brunswick), being admitted there on 29 October 1914. Göttingen was considered a 'safe' town; there was an informal understanding

during the war that Germany would not bomb Cambridge and Oxford and the Allies would not bomb Heidelberg and Göttingen. On 6 December 1914 John was moved to another hospital, Göttingen Lager, and whilst he was hospitalised did three months of farm work for which he was paid 30 pfennigs per day. Over the winter of 1914/15 he reported that he had insufficient food and clothing and this led to a lung condition, later diagnosed as pulmonary tuberculosis. His Service Record (8 April 1915) stated that the War Office '*...reports [that Davies is an] unofficial prisoner of war Göttingen, Germany, Barrack 19a*' and that '*This man is receiving parcels and letters each week from Miss Muriel Peach, "Widcombe", Alan Road, Wimbledon SW*'. John Davies is unlikely to have known Muriel Hargrave Peach who, in the 1911 census, is recorded as being 27, single, and living with her mother, Agnes. During the war the British Red Cross and the Order of St John worked together and, through the Central Prisoners of War Committee, they co-ordinated relief for British prisoners of war. Every prisoner would receive an adequate supply of food and clothing; parcels of food, each weighing about 10 pounds, were delivered fortnightly to every prisoner who had been registered. Although no record of her involvement has been found, it is quite likely that Muriel was active in such an organisation.

John Davies, now identified as suffering from tuberculosis, was transferred from Germany to Switzerland on 16 August 1916. At the suggestion of the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Swiss government, Germany, France, Britain, Russia and Belgium signed an agreement in 1914 regarding prisoners of war (PoWs). The agreement stated that captured military and naval personnel who were too seriously wounded or sick to be able to continue in military service could be repatriated through Switzerland, with the assistance of the Swiss Red Cross. The first repatriations were made in March 1915. The next step was the internment in Switzerland of PoWs who, though sick or badly wounded, might still be capable of military work away from the front line, and could therefore make fit soldiers available for serving at the front line if they were repatriated. Internment in Switzerland would aid their recovery without furthering the enemy's war effort. At the suggestion of the ICRC, a reciprocal agreement was signed between Germany and France, the UK and Belgium signing agreements with Germany slightly later. Travelling commissions of Swiss doctors visited PoW camps to select potential internees. Once a PoW had been selected, he would be brought before a board comprising two Swiss Army doctors, two doctors from the country holding him captive, and a representative of the prisoner's own nation. The first internees, 100 German and 100 French PoWs suffering from tuberculosis, arrived in Switzerland in January 1916. By the end of 1916, nearly 27 000 former PoWs were interned there, about half of whom were French, one third German and the remainder mostly British or Belgian. As the internees entered Switzerland, and at stages along their journeys, they were often surprised to be greeted by thousands of Swiss who had turned out to welcome them.

[Adapted from: <http://www.switzerland1914-1918.net/prisoners-of-war-interned-in-switzerland>]

John and Martha Davies at
Leysin, April 1917

John Davies *"...arrived at Leysin December 1916. Felt well until April then had several big haemorrhages. The temperature went to 39°".* Leysin, south east of Montreux, housed internment hospitals treating British servicemen suffering from tuberculosis. [See text box at end of this entry]. In April 1917 he was visited by his wife, Martha, at Leysin. In June 1917 John's medical record at Leysin noted that his leg wounds had healed without any after effect but that *'...the patient is often short of breath and the pulse accelerated'* and that he was receiving regular injections which *'...seem to have a good influence'*.

However, it was recognised that his left lung was severely damaged by tuberculosis, especially at the base, and on the 14 September 1917 he was repatriated as part of the exchange of prisoners of war scheme. Arriving back in Britain John Davies was admitted, on 22 September, to the 1st London General Hospital at Camberwell which had been established in the buildings and grounds of St Gabriel's College in August 1914, the medical and nursing staff being seconded from St. Bartholomew's Hospital. By 1917 the Hospital contained 231 beds for officers and 1038 for enlisted men and it closed in 1919.

On 25 October 1917 John Davies was discharged from the army as a Private (he was never promoted) under King's Regulations 392 stating that he was *'not to be compulsorily posted for service under the Military Service (Review of Exceptions) Act 1917'*. The Army Medical Board, following his examination on 4 October 1917, had determined that John was suffering from pulmonary tuberculosis which had originated at Göttingen in October 1916 as a *'result of service during present war - due to infection and privation as prisoner of war. Permanent, 100%'*.

On his discharge, and the commencement of his pension, John Davies was 36 and it was calculated that he had served a total of 16 years 10 months. Leaving the Camberwell hospital John Davies returned to his home in Neston where he was granted (24 October 1917) a pension of 27s 6d per week, payable for 44 weeks, with an allowance, for 4 children, of 15s per week.

He applied for, and was granted, a Silver War Badge (issued 12 November 1917, Badge N^o. 246961) to confirm that he had served in the army and been honourably discharged.



437
RECEIVED
I am directed by the Minister of Pensions to inform you of the undermentioned decision in the case of a man whose discharge documents have been recently received with the view to having the claim to pension considered.

MINISTRY OF PENSIONS,
THE ROYAL HOSPITAL,
CHELSEA, S.W.3.

I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
MATTHEW NATHAN,
Secretary.
128079/17
141446/H

To the Officer Commanding
Cheshire
1/Bn.

Rank and Regimental Number Pte 6437
Name Davies John
Regiment or Corps Cheshire 1st Bn.
Date of discharge 26/10/17
Address on discharge Eridge St, Neston, Cheshire.
Weekly Pension 27/6 44 wks To be reviewed in 44 wks
Disability Pulmonary Tuberculosis. Attrib.

ENTRY RECORDED
21 OCT. 1917
SHREWSBURY

Death of a Mons Hero.

During the past week Pte. John Davies, one of the heroes of Mons, passed away after a long illness, contracted whilst a prisoner of war in Germany. He belonged to the Cheshire Regiment, and was captured at La Bassée. He was imprisoned at Gottingen, Hanover, where he received cruel treatment, and when it was found that he was completely broken in health, he was transferred to Switzerland. He was ultimately sent home, but he gradually became weaker and passed away on Thursday, February 28th, at Chester-road, Neston. The funeral took place on Monday afternoon, and was of a military character, the coffin being borne by 8 N.C.O.'s, and covered with a Union Jack. Beethoven's "Funeral March," and the "Dead March" in Saul were played en route to the grave, and the Last Post sounded at the close of the service.

Birkenhead News – Saturday 9 March 1918

However, John's health continued to deteriorate, leading to his death in early 1918.

It is interesting that John Davies' 'official' date of death - 4 March 1918 - conflicts with the date stated in the newspaper report of his death and noted by the Ministry of Pensions (Thursday 28 February); it was his funeral, rather than his death, that took place on Monday 4 March and the date on the grave headstone is inaccurate.

The death of John Davies does not quite mark the end of the story because, following his death, his widow and dependants were entitled to an allowance from the Ministry of Pensions.

Before the pension could be paid evidence had to be given as to his marital status and which, if any, dependants formed the basis of this allowance.

Whilst John's married status, and the identity of his two children could be given, the Ministry of Pensions was not so sure about whether the pension allowance should include the two illegitimate children, Elizabeth and Leonard Hughes, that Martha Hughes brought into the marriage in 1913.

The issue revolved around whether John Davies had maintained these two children as his own - in which case they would be entitled to be included in the calculation of the allowance - or whether, presumably, maintenance had been provided by their own father(s). This elicited correspondence between the Ministry, local officials in Cheshire

and Martha Davies.

It appears that Martha Davies was able to provide her marriage certificate and birth certificates for only three of the four children and the outcome was that, from 1 April 1918, she was paid 26s 3d per week for herself and three children, this rising from 1 May 1918 to 29s 7d per week.

Interestingly, the local official of the War pensions Committee, a W.J. Barker of Little Sutton, was clearly not fully satisfied by Martha Davies's claim for a pension, commenting that '*She seems to be a woman who wants watching*'!

Discharge

MINISTRY OF PENSIONS
(Widows and Dependents Branch),
45, GROSVENOR ROAD,
LONDON, S.W. 1.

OFFICER IN CHARGE RECORDS
No. 2 RECORD OFFICE
4- JUL 1918
Quote No. 41
CWSBURY.

Widows—Form 3.

Any further communication on this subject should be addressed to:—
The Secretary,
Ministry of Pensions
(Widows and Dependents Branch),
45, Grosvenor Road,
London, S.W. 1.
and the following number quoted.

No. 1523 *Cheshire (Rev.)*

SIR,

I am directed by the Minister of Pensions to inform you that the widow of No. 1437 *Pte John Davies*
18 Cheshire Regt
(Discharged 25.10.17) Died 28.2.18)
has been awarded a Pension of *26/3* a week, for herself and *three* children with effect from the *1.4.18*.

The Officer issuing Operation Allowance has been informed of the award.

The Pension will be paid from the Pension Issue Office.

The certificates received in support of the application have been returned to the widow.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient Servant,

Matthew Nathan
Secretary.

The Officer in Charge of Records,
Shrewsbury

Some of the Service Records of John Davies, against which his army pension would be based, are reproduced on a following page.

[illegible]

Army Registers of Soldiers' Effects, 1901-1929

John Davies had been formally discharged from the army on 25 October 1917 and any outstanding credit would have been paid at that time. However, a War Gratuity of £18 10s was paid in two instalments to Martha Davies, John's widow.

The total payment, £18 10s, is approximately equivalent to a *labour value* (ie wages) of about £2850 in 2016.

Ada Cortlett(e) Davies, John's daughter, married Ernest Henshaw at Neston Parish Church in late 1932. In the 1939 Register (29 September) they are recorded as living at 15 Harrison's Terrace, Ellesmere Port (actually in Little Sutton, off Rossmore Road West). Ernest (born 28 November 1910) was a builder's plasterer and three lines of the Register are redacted (as of March 2018) although it is believed that they had two children, Kenneth H. (born mid-1933) and Philip J. (born mid-1936). It is not known when either Ada or Ernest died.

The war grave of J R Davies
snr in Neston Cemetery



Name	Corps	Reg. No.	Rank	Date of Discharge	Cause of Discharge
<i>22</i> Davies John	<i>Ches R.</i>	<i>6437</i>	<i>Pte</i>	<i>25.10.14</i> <i>Enlistment Para. 2.B.1</i> <i>10.12.00</i> <i>Sub 392-XVI</i> <i>RR</i>	<i>A.O. 2654/1917</i>
Date of application	(a) Badge	(b) Medal			
No. of File	"	"			
Address of applicant:—					
Action taken <i>Lt J 5/12</i>					
W9749—H5226 200,000 8/17 HWV(P382) H17/1881					

Name	Corps	Rank	Regtl. No.
<i>22</i> DAVIES John	<i>Ches R</i>	<i>Pte</i>	<i>6437</i>
Medal	Roll	Page	Remarks
VICTORY	<i>14/10/18</i>	<i>234</i>	
BRITISH	<i>do</i>	<i>do</i>	
<i>14</i> STAR	<i>1/2/15</i>	<i>72</i>	<i>Disc 25.10.17</i>
Theatre of War first served in			
Date of entry therein <i>12.9.14</i>			

British Army
WWI Medal
Rolls Index
Cards, 1914-
1920

No 7/0/ 6437

The Secretary
L.W.P.S. Committee
Crafnant
Westgate
Hale, Ches.

Re 6437 Pte J. Davies 1st Cheshire Regt Decd.

Will you please be good enough to make enquiries from Mrs M. Davies widow of above as to whether the two children Elizabeth Hughes and Leonard Mahon Hughes born 27-4-09 and 11-9-11 respectively were maintained as members of the above named late soldier's household ^{subsequent} prior to his Marriage.

Mrs Davies resides at address:- c/o Mr W. Hughes Bridge Street, Neston, Cheshire.

Kindly treat this matter as urgent as the information is required for purpose of assessing widows pension.

Capt for Lieut Col.
Officer i/c Infy Records. No 2, No 4 District
The Riding School.
Shrewsbury
6th June 1918.

No 1828 Cheshire W.I.

The Secretary, Ministry of Pensions requests that you will be good enough to return this letter as early as possible, stating whether the children Elizabeth Hughes B27,4,09 & Leonard Mahon Hughes B11,9,11. were maintained by 6437 Pte John Davies 1st Cheshire Regt as a member of his household subsequent to marriage.

Officer i/c Records
No 2 Record Office
No 4 District
SHREWSBURY.

Ministry of Pensions
(widows and Dependents Branch)
45 Grosvenor Rd
London S.W.1.
4- 6-18.

ANSWER.

Reference preceding minute, correspondence is forwarded herewith giving desired information.

Capt for Lieut Col.
Officer i/c Infy Records. No 2,
No 4 District.

The Riding School
SHREWSBURY.

18th June 1918.

MAJORITY AND MILITARY WAR PENSIONS etc ACT 1915.
DISTRICT COMMITTEE

" Westholme"
Little Sutton
Chester.
June 16th 1918.

Dear Sir,

Enclosed please find answer to your enclosed enquiry, sent to me by our visitor (Mrs C Lowe) Pargate Chester). The woman's marriage Lines are at the Pension Office, She seems to be a woman who wants watching.

Yours faithfully.
W.J. Barker.

C/o Mrs Walton
Wellington Street
Shotton Nr Chester.

Mrs Corbett Lowe.

I am answering the enquiry regarding Elizabeth Hughes & Leonard Mahon Hughes, Yes they have always been members of my husband's Household and he as always maintained them prior to the War breaking out any more enquiries I will only be pleased to Answer, yours truly.

(sd) Martha Davies.

SALE & FOLDEN, LTD. PRINTERS, ALDERSHOT.
(HEALD.) WPL 6,225-125 104,025 12/15 W. 25

Note.—These entries are to be made from time to time as they occur, and initialed by the Officer making the entry.

These are some of the Service Records against which the army pension was calculated.

SALE & POLICE, LTD. PRINTERS, ALDERSHOTE.
—AND— 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 64, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 72, 73, 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, 79, 80, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 134, 135, 136, 137, 138, 139, 140, 141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 147, 148, 149, 150, 151, 152, 153, 154, 155, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 183, 184, 185, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196, 197, 198, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 233, 234, 235, 236, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 251, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 258, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 266, 267, 268, 269, 270, 271, 272, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 283, 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 290, 291, 292, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 298, 299, 300, 301, 302, 303, 304, 305, 306, 307, 308, 309, 310, 311, 312, 313, 314, 315, 316, 317, 318, 319, 320, 321, 322, 323, 324, 325, 326, 327, 328, 329, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 336, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 348, 349, 350, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 372, 373, 374, 375, 376, 377, 378, 379, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 388, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 394, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 407, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 413, 414, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 429, 430, 431, 432, 433, 434, 435, 436, 437, 438, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 460, 461, 462, 463, 464, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 485, 486, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492, 493, 494, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 516, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 522, 523, 524, 525, 526, 527, 528, 529, 530, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535, 536, 537, 538, 539, 540, 541, 542, 543, 544, 545, 546, 547, 548, 549, 550, 551, 552, 553, 554, 555, 556, 557, 558, 559, 560, 561, 562, 563, 564, 565, 566, 567, 568, 569, 570, 571, 572, 573, 574, 575, 576, 577, 578, 579, 580, 581, 582, 583, 584, 585, 586, 587, 588, 589, 590, 591, 592, 593, 594, 595, 596, 597, 598, 599, 600, 601, 602, 603, 604, 605, 606, 607, 608, 609, 610, 611, 612, 613, 614, 615, 616, 617, 618, 619, 620, 621, 622, 623, 624, 625, 626, 627, 628, 629, 630, 631, 632, 633, 634, 635, 636, 637, 638, 639, 640, 641, 642, 643, 644, 645, 646, 647, 648, 649, 650, 651, 652, 653, 654, 655, 656, 657, 658, 659, 660, 661, 662, 663, 664, 665, 666, 667, 668, 669, 670, 671, 672, 673, 674, 675, 676, 677, 678, 679, 680, 681, 682, 683, 684, 685, 686, 687, 688, 689, 690, 691, 692, 693, 694, 695, 696, 697, 698, 699, 700, 701, 702, 703, 704, 705, 706, 707, 708, 709, 710, 711, 712, 713, 714, 715, 716, 717, 718, 719, 720, 721, 722, 723, 724, 725, 726, 727, 728, 729, 730, 731, 732, 733, 734, 735, 736, 737, 738, 739, 740, 741, 742, 743, 744, 745, 746, 747, 748, 749, 750, 751, 752, 753, 754, 755, 756, 757, 758, 759, 760, 761, 762, 763, 764, 765, 766, 767, 768, 769, 770, 771, 772, 773, 774, 775, 776, 777, 778, 779, 780, 781, 782, 783, 784, 785, 786, 787, 788, 789, 790, 791, 792, 793, 794, 795, 796, 797, 798, 799, 800, 801, 802, 803, 804, 805, 806, 807, 808, 809, 810, 811, 812, 813, 814, 815, 816, 817, 818, 819, 820, 821, 822, 823, 824, 825, 826, 827, 828, 829, 830, 831, 832, 833, 834, 835, 836, 837, 838, 839, 840, 841,

Originated Oct. 1916 - Göttergren
Result of service during present war - due to infection & privation as prisoner of war
Permanent - 100% *D. Sauerbrunn*

The following is extracted from 'The British interned in Switzerland' by Lieut. Colonel H.P. Picot published by Edward Arnold, London, in 1919. Picot was the British officer in charge of the interned in Switzerland.

"... mounting up by its electric railway, [to Leysin, I] reached the beautiful plateau of meadow lands, on which so many hotels and chalets have been built expressly for the treatment of consumptives. A medical staff of distinguished specialists is maintained there in association with the hotels, the organization as a whole being that of a combined huge hospital. In peace time it is crowded with patients from all quarters of the globe, but at the time of my visit very few civilians remained, and the doctors were busily engaged in adapting its resources to the use of its new military clientele. The doctors had donned their uniforms as officers of the Swiss Army, and the place was rapidly assuming the aspect of a small garrison town. Many of the hotels were already occupied by French and Belgian soldiers, of whom, sad to say, there were already 1,200 in hospital. Swiss soldiers were also in evidence, and I here became aware for the first time of the fact that the Swiss as a people are far from being immune to tuberculosis. Arrangements were already being made for the accommodation of 200 British officers and men, Colonel Hauser having calculated that about that number of consumptives would be likely to arrive with the first party of British. No one could pass through Leysin without being impressed, as I was, by the beauty of the surroundings, the detailed perfection of its organization, and the purposeful construction of its hotels and chalets built so as to receive every ray of sunshine. Nothing struck me so much as the optimistic spirit which appeared to prevail amongst all classes of the sick alike; every one seemed easily moved to joy and laughter, ready to amuse and be amused, and I left with the feeling that of all people none were so brave as the patients of Leysin. Where this spirit prevailed, our men could not help but thrive, and any anxiety I may have had on their account was completely dispelled by my first visit to this sanatorium.

The mortality amongst the British in Switzerland from all causes during the years 1916 and 1917, out of an average of about 2,000 men, amounted to fourteen only, most of whom died of tuberculosis, pneumonia, or accident — a gratifying record as far as Swiss surgeons are concerned, when the sum total of their surgical work is taken into account. Many of the Leysin patients had been sent out of Germany by the Itinerant Commissions on the mere suspicion of tuberculosis, and these men failed to understand that their condition could be in any way dangerous. The restrictions imposed as regards smoking, drinking, and exercise, the lying out in the open in a recumbent attitude, exposed to sun and air for six to eight hours per diem, and the general want of freedom thereby involved, proved extremely trying to them, and they were, I am afraid, often a thorn in the side of the medical officers. On one occasion they persuaded the doctors to give them permission to play a friendly game of football with other enthusiasts of the camp, with results disastrous to certain of their number, who realized, perhaps for the first time, that unusual strain could only lead to haemorrhage or other evils of a cognate nature. A large proportion of the sick were drafted to Chateau d'Oex, or Mürren, as completely cured, after a residence at Leysin from six months to a year. The percentage of incurables was small, and there is no doubt in my mind that the treatment, as practised in the Swiss Sanatoria, is of immense advantage to those not far advanced in the disease."



British POWs interned in Switzerland. A British report compiled in late 1917 found that some camps were not in places suitable for wounded men to recover, that there were insufficient medical staff, and that artificial limbs were not available for men who needed them. This photograph perhaps conveys another problem: the risk of serious boredom, often added to existing psychological effects of having been a prisoner of war for several years.

Source: <http://www.switzerland1914-1918.net/prisoners-of-war-interned-in-switzerland.html>