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Vichy Africa

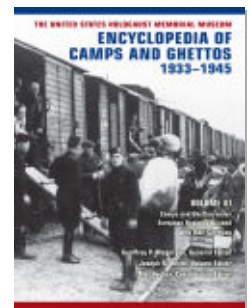
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VICHY AFRICA

As part of the terms of the Franco-German Armistice of June 22, 1940, the German authorities permitted France to retain its colonial empire and, for the purposes of the empire's defense, a portion of its navy.¹ For the Germans, the situation avoided the risk that France would continue the war overseas; for the French, soon to form an authoritarian and collaborationist regime under Marshal Henri-Philippe Pétain, the retention of the colonial empire provided some bitter consolation in the wake of humiliating defeat.

In Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia, and French West Africa (*Afrique occidentale française*, AOF), the Vichy authorities established networks of camps—penal, labor, and internment—for these categories of people: Jewish and non-Jewish European refugees, those already residing in French colonial Africa before the Fall of France, those dispatched from the metropole for forced labor in the Sahara, and Allied prisoners of war (POWs) and civilian internees. (Because of the complicated situation in Tunisia, where the French, German, and Italian authorities simultaneously operated camp systems during World War II, Tunisia and its French- and Italian-run camps are treated as a separate chapter in this volume.)

In terms of territories, cultures, and colonial models, French colonial Africa was extraordinarily diverse. To understand Vichy antisemitic policy in Africa and in the camps, a brief overview of these colonial models is necessary. Algeria was integrated within metropolitan France in 1848 as three departments (*départements*): Algiers, Oran, and Constantine. The French established a settler colony in Algeria, meaning that the metropole encouraged European settlement at the expense of tribal lands. Despite some reform efforts, such as granting French citizenship to favored groups of Muslims, Arabic speakers in Algeria were treated as third-class subjects. In contrast, in Morocco and Tunisia the colonial authorities established protectorates, a form of indirect rule in which the residents-general (*résidents-générales*) governed through local monarchs. Under the Vichy regime, the sultan of Morocco, Sidi Mohammed ben Youssef (succeeded in 1957 by King Mohammed V), walked a tightrope between adhering to Vichy demands and protecting his autonomy. The resident-general was Générale d'armée Charles Noguès. Noguès established camps for foreign Jews in Morocco. In the AOF, which encompassed seven sub-Saharan territories, the French authorities practiced direct rule under a governor general based in Dakar. As of 1940, the territories were Côte d'Ivoire (Ivory Coast); Dahomey (today: Benin); Mauritanie (Mauritania); Niger; Sénégal (Senegal); and Soudain français (French Sudan; today: Mali). A lieutenant governor oversaw each territory. From 1940 to 1943, Pierre Boisson was Vichy's governor general of AOF and was responsible for its internment camps.

ANTISEMITIC POLICY IN VICHY AFRICA

Reflecting the different colonial models found in French Africa, the application of Vichy's antisemitic decrees was uneven, with the most vigorous implementation taking place in Algeria, where the Vichy regime had direct rule. In 1940, the Vichy regime revoked the Crémieux Decree of 1870, which extended French citizenship to Algerian Jews. As a consequence, Jews from Algeria who had migrated to France over the past century and lived in communities in Lyon, Marseille, and Paris suddenly lost their citizenship. Stranded on the Continent, they were among the deportees to Nazi camps. The Jews living in Algeria avoided this particular fate: although they were the victims of the Vichy antisemitic legislation and were potential internees in camps across North Africa, they were not deported to Nazi camps in Europe.

The second Jewish Statute, issued on June 2, 1941, barred Jews from professional life and business in all the colonies. It forbade Jews from working in finance and implemented a *numerus clausus*, which limited the number of Jews per profession (such as doctors, lawyers, and architects). The existence of a relatively large professional class of assimilated Jews in Algeria meant that, among the colonies in North Africa, this decree had a disproportionate impact on them. After Jewish teachers had been forbidden to teach at non-Jewish institutions, the Algerian Jewish community had established its own independent educational system. Run by Jewish teachers, the schools were administered by the Vichy regime. The educational restrictions were imposed partly to prevent the Jewish community from creating its own university. A final antisemitic measure, issued in July 1941, was the "Aryanization" of Jewish property except for private homes; Jewish businesses were awarded to non-Jews. The implementation of Aryanization was most effective in Algeria, where it was administered by the Vichy-established Office of Economic Aryanization.

The implementation of antisemitic decrees was less extensive in Morocco and the AOF. Regardless of Sultan Mohammed's motives, Moroccan Jews did not suffer the full effects of the antisemitic decrees. In particular, Aryanization was never carried out in Morocco. In the AOF, which according to a 1941 census had only 110 Jews of several nationalities, the decrees concerning the employment of Jews in banks, among other fields, proved ineffectual.² Historian Catherine Akpovaché characterized Boisson's implementation of Vichy's antisemitic decrees as "moderate."³

CAMPS IN VICHY AFRICA

During World War II, the Vichy authorities opened a network of camps in North and West African colonies. In all, there

were 67 verified camps in North Africa and 6 in the AOF. By the end of 1940, the Interior Ministry was dispatching foreigners and “undesirables” for internment in Saharan labor camps where they were organized by the Ministry of Industrial Production and Labor (*Ministère de la Production Industrielle et du Travail*) into forced labor groups. Beginning in April 1941, many refugees and displaced people interned in Vichy camps in metropolitan France—mostly men, but also women and children—were transferred to North African confinement centers (*Centres de Séjours Surveillés*, CSSs), labor camps for groups of foreign workers (*Groupelements des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTEs), forced labor camps for autonomous groups of foreign workers (*Groupelements des Travailleurs Étrangers Autonomie*, GTEAs), and forced labor camps for groups of demobilized foreign workers (*Groupelements des Travailleurs Démobilisés*, GTDs), and “volunteers of the French Foreign Legion engaged for the duration of the war” (*Engagés volontaires à la Légion étrangère pour la durée de la guerre*, EVDG). The camps housed former Jewish volunteers of the French Foreign Legion (*Légion étrangère*, LE), Spanish Republicans, and political dissidents. They lived in small brick houses, or tents. The forced laborers were distributed among GTEs in several major camps: Bou Arfa (GTE Nos. 1, 4, 9, and 12); Colomb-Béchar (GTE Nos. 3, 5, 6, and 10); Kenadsa (GTE No. 2); and around Constantine (GTE No. 7). The camps of Djelfa and Berrouaghia were largely reserved for political undesirables.

In North Africa, the camps were organized along railroad axes, in large measure in connection with the Mediterranean-Niger (*Mer-Niger*) railroad project. Members of the GTEs were moved around in times of unrest and uprisings. The camps fell under the authority of French military administrators. For guards, the camp administrations relied on *spabis* (members of the cavalry regiments of the French Army recruited primarily from the indigenous population), Moroccan *goumiers* (military auxiliaries), Senegalese *tirailleurs* (infantry), local *douaïr* (mobilized Muslims engaged in the police auxiliary service), and the paramilitary staff of the Railroads of Eastern Morocco (*Chemin de Fer du Maroc Oriental*, CMO). Although many local Muslim camp guards refused to participate in the torture of internees, a few did take part in enacting some harsh policies toward them.

Military internment camps were set up in southwestern Mali, Guinea, and Senegal. Because the Vichy regime was officially neutral, the prisoners were given internee status. It established three such camps in French Guinea (today: Guinea)—at Conakry, Kindia (Kinda), and Kankan—to hold Allied POWs. In southwestern Mali, the Koulikoro camp was built to intern the captured crews of British, Dutch, Danish, and Greek ships. The Sebikotane camp was established east of Dakar and housed mostly captured Belgian and British merchant sailors. The most remote of the internment camps was at Tombouctou in Mali.

The treatment of detainees held in internment camps was shaped by Vichy’s official neutrality in the war and the French Navy’s seizure of British merchant ships during the

course of the Battle of the Atlantic. Although Allied military personnel were accorded privileges under the 1929 Geneva Convention, the same was not so for Allied merchant seamen, who were not recognized as having belligerent status. Consequently the treatment of Allied internees in West Africa (and at the Laghouat camp in Algeria) varied from tolerable to abysmal.

THE MEDITERRANEAN-NIGER (MER-NIGER) RAILROAD PROJECT

The major construction project that occupied the GTEs in Vichy Africa was building the Mediterranean-Niger (*Mer-Niger*) railroad. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, the French colonial authorities began planning a trans-Saharan railroad between the port of Dakar and the Algerian and Moroccan coastal cities. After many years of military and geographic expeditions that resulted in the French taking political control of sub-Saharan, North, and West African territories, a heated debate erupted between supporters of the railway proposal and advocates of a system of motor roads that would cross the Sahara. Neither plan materialized until the Fall of France. The few railroad lines connecting North African ports with West African and sub-Saharan mines and regions and the need to maintain French colonial power in the region were two key reasons that drove Pétain to authorize construction of the Mer-Niger railway system in March 1941. The Nazi regime supported the Vichy project because Berlin recognized its strategic advantage in transporting Senegalese troops through the Saharan interior, instead of using risky maritime routes.

The major challenge in building such a large railroad system connecting the AOF and North Africa was recruiting a labor force willing to work under extreme Saharan weather conditions. Political prisoners in metropolitan France and, especially, the large number of refugees in France’s North African colonies who were regarded as undesirable provided an answer to this challenge.

RELIEF FOR PRISONERS IN VICHY AFRICA

Jewish and non-Jewish nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) provided some relief to the prisoners in Vichy Africa. The principal Jewish relief agencies were the Hebrew Immigration/Jewish Colonization Association (HICEM) and the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (AJJDC). The main non-Jewish relief organization was the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC). In Casablanca, the AJJDC and HICEM relied on the services of Hélène Cazès-Benathar, a Moroccan female Jewish lawyer who in 1939 had opened an office to support internees in French camps and refugees who were waiting in Casablanca for a visa. Before she began working with the AJJDC, she served as a volunteer for the Red Cross in Casablanca. After Operation Torch in November 1942, Cazès-Benathar was invited to visit every concentration camp established in Morocco and prepare records of their internees.

In 1943 she was appointed the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) liaison for displaced persons (DPs) in Philippeville, Algeria. In 1945 she became a representative of JDC for Northern Africa (Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya) and equally supported the Zionist organizations that took charge of immigration to Palestine.

Although escaping the near-certain death that would have awaited them in German concentration and extermination camps in Europe, the refugees were faced with an extremely harsh reality as the Vichy government ordered their deployment in forced labor camps. To survive, internees in the camps attempted to use the bureaucratic means at their disposal within the inhumane structures of the camp. Given the widespread poverty among the Muslim and Jewish communities, it was the offices of the AFSC that dealt with supporting the thousands of men interned in the labor camps by implementing a relief program that provided food, clothes, and visas. To provide these forms of relief to internees throughout Morocco and Algeria, the AFSC had to rely on its own bureaucratic networks of management without clashing or interfering with governmental activities. The AFSC began reporting to consulates and to the U.S. State Department on the struggles and sufferings of European refugees in the Saharan camps before the war, and it continued to do so during the war's early stages.

AFTERMATH

The Anglo-American landings in French North Africa—Operation Torch on November 8, 1942—did not automatically result in the liberation of Vichy-held prisoners, the termination of the Mer-Niger project, or the revocation of Vichy antisemitic policies. In December 1942, the AFSC reported an estimated total of 5,000 refugees “in internment camps or work companies under extremely difficult conditions.”²⁴ Instead, the Vichy military leaders in North Africa who changed sides to support the Allies, Admiral François Darlan and Général d'Armée Henri Giraud, continued Vichy policies until Allied pressure led Giraud to repeal them in early 1943.

Censorship in Algeria was very strict and did not permit writing about the foreign workers and their internment in the press. After the liberation in the summer of 1943, the press started publishing details about atrocities in the camps. The offenses in the camps could no longer be ignored, and a military tribunal to try the perpetrators was set up by the French authorities in October 1943. In February and March 1944, the court of Algiers issued its verdicts, which ranged from the death penalty and life imprisonment to 10 years at hard labor.

SOURCES Important secondary sources relating to Jewish life and the persecution, atrocities, and camps under Vichy rule in Africa are André Moine, *La Déportation et la résistance en Afrique du Nord (1939–1944)*, preface by Léon Feix (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972); Henri Msellati, *Les Juifs d'Algérie sous le régime de Vichy* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1985); Ruth Ginio, *French*

Colonialism Unmasked (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006); Ruth Ginio, “La politique antijuive de Vichy en Afrique occidentale française,” *Aju* 36:1 (2003): 109–118; Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975); Michel Ansky, *Les Juifs d'Algérie, du décret Crémieux à la Libération* (Paris: Éditions du Centre, 1950); Joëlle Allouche-Benayoun and Doris Bensimon, *Les Juifs d'Algérie: Mémoires et identités plurielles* (Paris: Éditions Stavit, 1998); Michel Abitbol, *The Jews of North Africa during the Second World War*, trans. Catherine Tihanyi Zentelis (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989); Christine Levisse-Touzé, “Les camps d'internement en Afrique du Nord pendant la seconde guerre mondiale,” in ‘Abd-al-Ġalīl at-Tamīmī and Charles-Robert Ageron, eds., *Mélanges Charles-Robert Ageron*, 2 (Zaghouan, Tunisia: Fondation Temimi pour la Recherche Scientifique et l'Information, 1996), 2: 601–608; André Labry, *Office National des Chemins de Fer du Maroc: Histoire et évolution* (Rabat: Office National des Chemins de Fer, 1998); Catherine Akpo-Vaché, *L'AOF et la Seconde Guerre mondiale, septembre 1939–octobre 1945* (Paris: Karthala Éditions, 1996); David Miller, *Mercy Ships* (London: Continuum, 2008); Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); Jacques Cantier, *L'Algérie sous le régime de Vichy* (Paris: Éditions Odile Jacob, 2002); Benjamin Stora, *Les trois exils juifs d'Algérie* (Paris: Éditions Stock, 2006); Lucette Valensi, “Multi-Cultural Visions: The Cultural Tapestry of the Jews of North Africa,” in David Biale, ed., *Cultures of the Jews: A New History* (New York: Schocken Books, 2002), pp. 887–931; Reeva Spector Simon, Michael Menachem Laskier, and Sara Reguer, *The Jews of the Middle East and North Africa in Modern Times* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003); Michael M. Laskier, *North African Jewry in the Twentieth Century: The Jews of Morocco, Tunisia, and Algeria* (New York: New York University Press, 1994); Georges Bensoussan, *Juifs en pays arabes: Le grand déracinement 1850–1975* (Paris: Tallandier, 2012); Susan Gilson Miller, *A History of Modern Morocco* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); and Jacques Taïeb, *Etre Juif au Maghreb à la veille de la colonisation* (Paris: Albin Michel, 1994).

Numerous local, regional, and national archives contain documentation, with much of the material available in microform or digital form at USHMMA. At USHMMA, see, among others, RG-67.008M (AFSC, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa); RG-43.070 (CDJC, Special Records from LIV, Tunisia and Morocco); RG-43.071M (CDJC, Selected records from collection LII Algeria 1871–1947); AN (Pierre Boisson collection); RG-43.062M (CAOM collection); RG-68.115M (Private collection of Hélène Cazès-Benathar); RG-43.144M (Afrique du Nord, Congrès Juif Mondial, Maroc—pays étrangers); and RG-43.016M (AN—Police Generale). The ITS holds a survey of camps, including Vichy Africa, under 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentration- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten). This collection is available in digital form at USHMMA. VHA holds rich interviews on the camps. Among published testimonies by former prisoners of camps in Vichy-run Africa are Paul Caillaud, *Tournant Dangereux: Mémoires d'un déporté politique en Afrique du Nord, 1940–45* (La

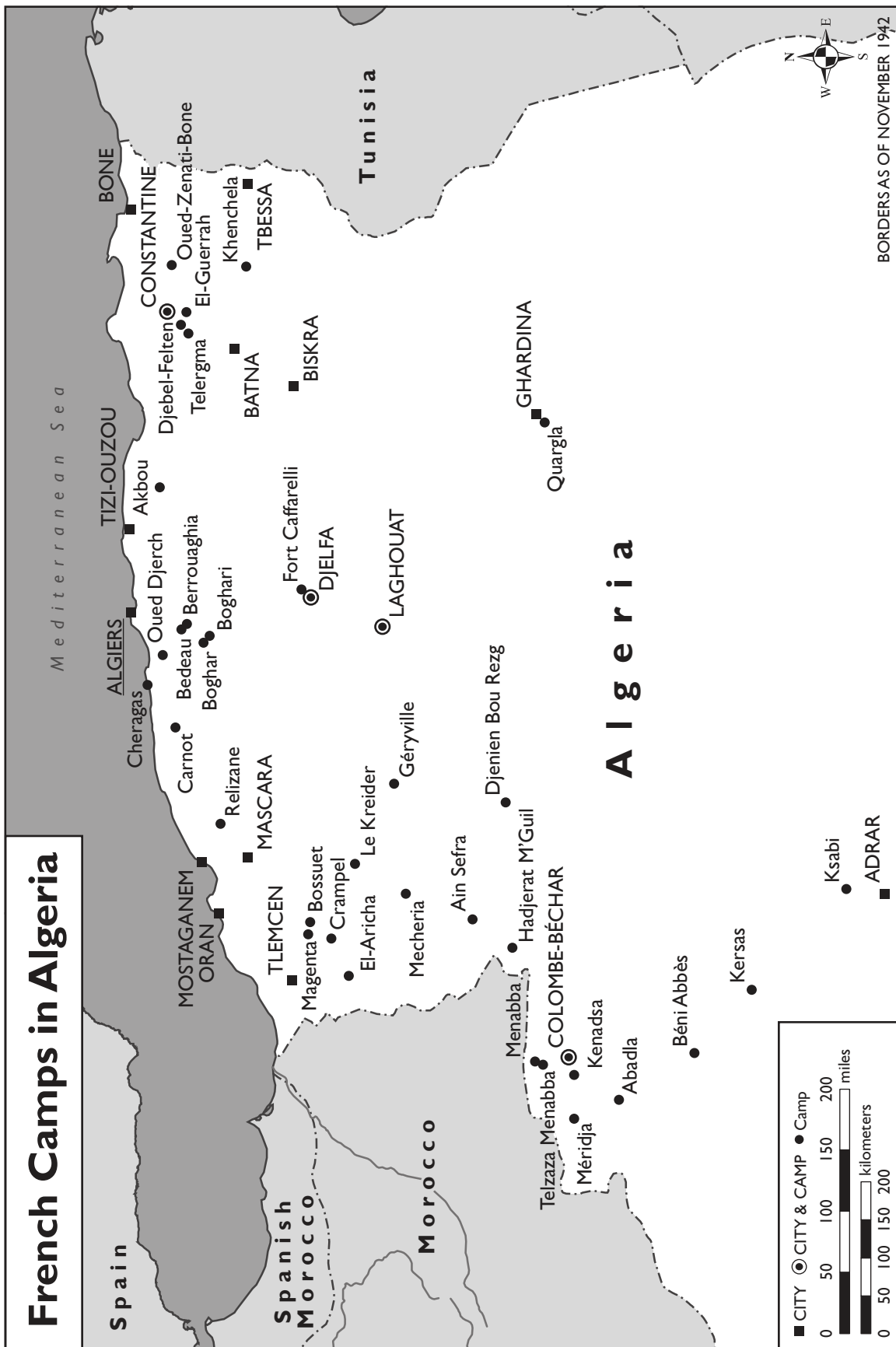
Rochelle, France: Imprimerie Jean Foucher and Cie, 1957); and Mohamed Arezki Berkani, *Mémoire: "Trois années de camp," un an de camp de concentration, deux ans de centre disciplinaire, Djenien-Bou-Rezg, Sud oranais, 1940 à 1943 (régime Vichy)* (Koudia-Sétif: N.P., 1965). The text of the Franco-German Armistice can be found in *Documents on German Foreign Policy*, 13 vols., Series D (London: HMSO, 1949).

Cristina Bejan and Aomar Boum

NOTES

1. See Article VIII, *Documents on German Foreign Policy*, Series D, 9: 673.
2. Akpo-Vaché, *L'AOF et la Seconde Guerre mondiale*, p. 55.
3. *Ibid.*
4. "Memorandum concerning work in North Africa," December 21, 1942, USHMMA, RG-68.007M, box 1, folder 33, p. 62–63.

French Camps in Algeria



Spain

Spanish Morocco

Morocco

Tunisia

Mediterranean Sea

BONE

CONSTANTINE

Oued-Zenati-Bone

El-Guerrah

Khenchela

TBESSA

TIZI-OUZOU

Akbou

Djebel-Felten

Telergma

BATNA

BISKRA

ALGIERS

Cheragas

Oued Djerch

Bedeau

Berrouaghia

Boghar

Boghari

Fort Caffarelli

DJELFA

LAGHOUAT

GHARDINA

Quargla

MOSTAGANEM

ORAN

MASCARA

Relizane

Carnot

Boghar

Boghari

Le Kreider

Géryville

Djénien Bou Rezg

TLEMCEM

Magenta

Bossuet

Crampel

El-Aricha

Mecheria

Ain Sefra

Hadjerat M'Guil

Menabba

COLOMBE-BÉCHAR

Kenadsa

Abadla

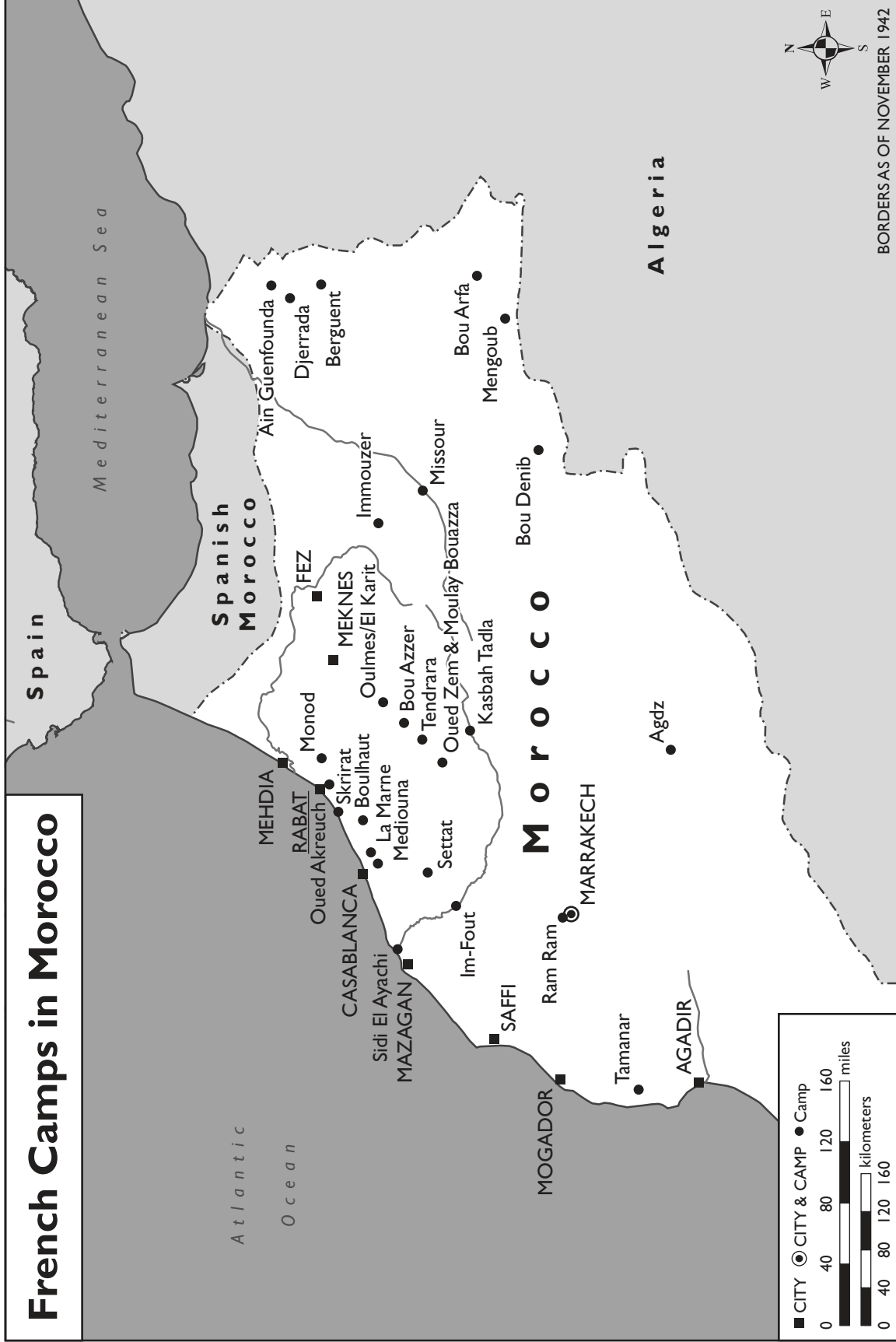
Béni Abbès

Kersas

Ksabi

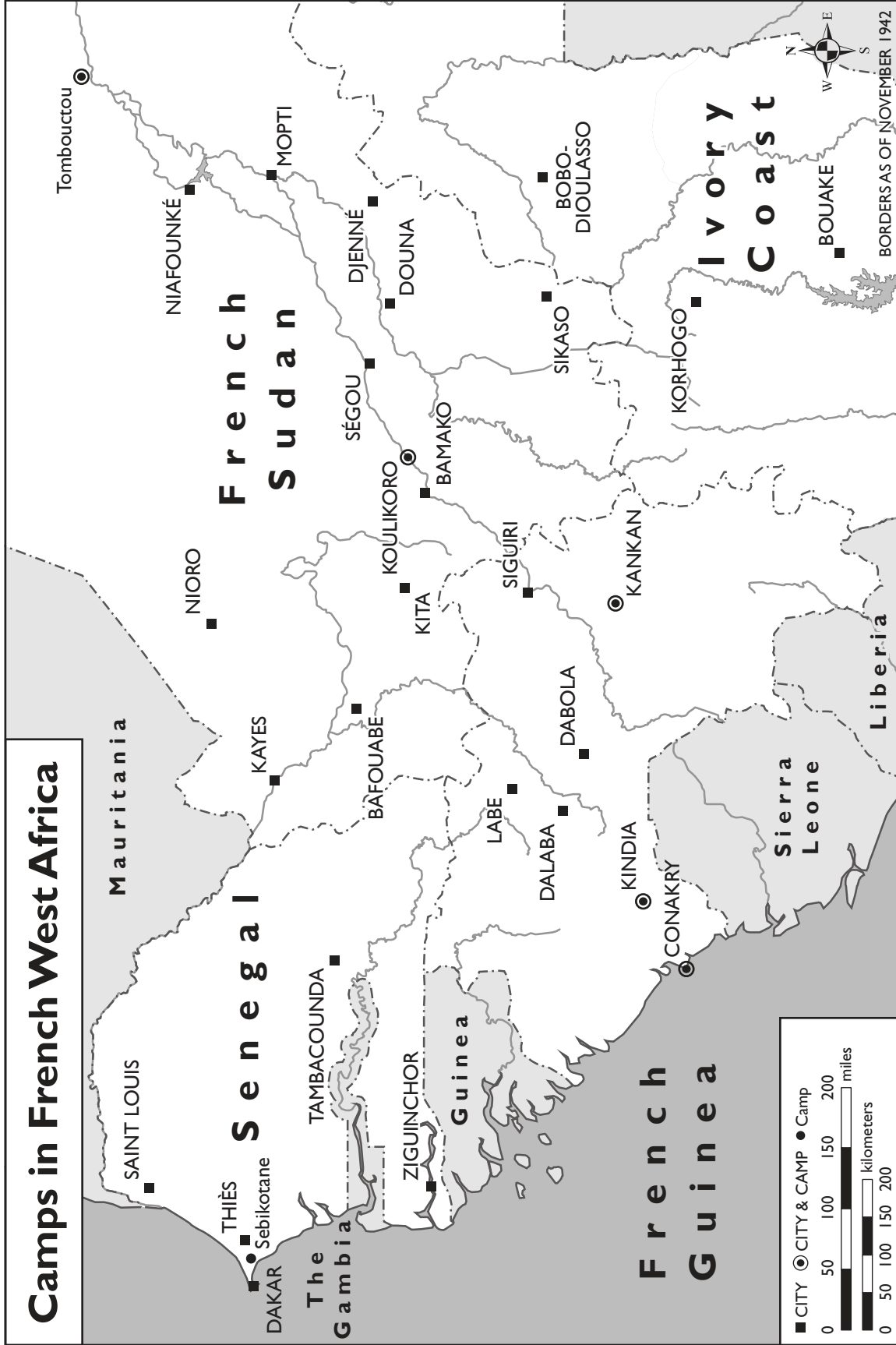
ADRAR

French Camps in Morocco



BORDERS AS OF NOVEMBER 1942

Camps in French West Africa



ABADLA

Abadla (also known as Ksar El Abadla or Abdala) served as a disciplinary and internment camp for prisoners transferred from the Kersas and Ksabi camps. It was located on the bank of the Guir River, about 82 kilometers (51 miles) southwest of Béchar. On March 22, 1941, Marshal Henri-Philippe Pétain authorized the construction of the Trans-Saharan Railroad, also known as the Mediterranean-Nigerian (*Mer-Niger*) railroad project. It was intended to connect ports in Morocco and Algeria with the port at Dakar, Senegal. The detainees were members of the demobilized foreign workers group (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers Démobilisés*, GTED), GTED No. 6. The Abadla-Colomb-Béchar railroad line was officially opened on April 5, 1948.

The camp was made of old *marabout* (large) tents supported by walls or on the ground. The tents were grouped into three sections, depending on the type of treatment to be received by the occupants: ordinary discipline, isolation, and repression. The camp was under the direction of Commandant Viciot from the camp at Hadjerat-M'Guil and was guarded by *goumiers* (fighters provided by Arab tribes to police French colonial territories). Overall, Abadla housed approximately 1,500 internees during its existence. On August 16, 1941, 13 people were held in regular custody, 63 in isolation, and 23 in the harsh punishment section.¹ The prisoners were of different nationalities and included Germans, Austrians, Russians, Spaniards, and Poles.

The prisoners were mostly involved in the fabrication of bricks.² Like other disciplinary camps, prisoners were held at Abadla for between three to six months depending on the camp administrator's decision. However, some prisoners' six-month sentences were extended for another three months. On January 11, 1942, the Abadla camp was closed, and its prisoners were transferred to the disciplinary camp of Hadjerat-M'Guil.

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the Abadla camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources on Abadla camp can be found in ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

Aomar Boum

NOTES

1. Annexe No. 31, Gouvernement Générale de l'Algérie, "Rapport du Colonel Lupy C. R. Inspecteur des TED sur le GTED No. 6 à Abadla," Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371236.

2. Ibid.

AGDZ

The Agdz (or Agdt) camp was located in an oasis at the southern slopes of the Atlas Mountains in southwestern Morocco,

approximately 182 kilometers (113 miles) southeast of Marrakech. The camp was an old fortress (locally known as a *kasbah*) that housed members of the French Foreign Legion (*Légion Étrangère*, LE) and was an important French military outpost in the region.

Under the Vichy regime, Agdz was used as a camp for foreign workers. The internees worked for the Mediterranean Niger Company (*Chemins de Fer de la Méditerranée au Niger*, MN), which had the job of maintaining the railway link between Morocco, Algeria, and the coal mines in western Africa. Some interned sailors attempting to flee the Mediouna camp were transferred to Agdz on January 3, 1941; that year the camp also received Belgian and British sailors transferred from the Sidi El Ayachi internment camp. The camp was usually guarded by local soldiers known as *meghazenis* (or *moghazis*).¹ During the five weeks between January 3, 1941, and February 8, 1941, the internees were not allowed to leave the camp. Later they were permitted to walk outside.² Most of the internees were kept in Agdz until May 1942, after which they were released and taken to Marrakech.

According to historian Michel Abitbol, the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE) held at Agdz was composed mainly of foreign Jews, mostly from Central Europe but including a few French Jews from mainland France, as well as Spaniards or Italians. A lack of detailed reports makes it impossible to estimate the number and the nationalities of the detainees. According to historian Jacob Oliel, however, there were between a few dozen and 100 forced laborers at Agdz, approximately 10 percent of whom were Jews (but not Moroccan Jews). The camp's physical environment was unaccommodating, in part because of the presence of snakes and scorpions.³

The camp was operational from October 1940 to November 1942, when the Americans and British landed during Operation Torch.

SOURCES Secondary sources mentioning the forced labor camp at Agdz are Michel Abitbol, *The Jews of North Africa during the Second World War*, trans. Catherine Tihanyi Zentelis (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989); André Moine, *La déportation et la résistance en Afrique du Nord (1939–1944)*, preface by Léon Feix (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972); and Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources on the Agdz forced labor camp can be found in CDJC, collection CGQJ (414–50), regarding labor camps and transit camps; CAHJP, Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA. Moine cites a report that briefly describes Agdz, which was compiled by Henri Prudhomme and Charles Dupuy and submitted to ARDIEP.

Aomar Boum and Eliezer Schilt
Trans. Allison Vuillaume

NOTES

1. Annexe No. 5, Procès-Verbal d'interrogatoire, Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371186.

2. Testimony of Paul V., July 11, 1951, extracted in Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371121.

3. Report of Henri Prudhomme and Charles Dupuy, n.d., reproduced in Moine, *La déportation et la résistance en Afrique du Nord*, p. 233.

AIN GUENFOUNDA

Ain Guenfounda (also Ain Guenfouda; today: Guenfouda) was an internment camp in Morocco, located 522 kilometers (almost 325 miles) east of Casablanca, more than 25 kilometers (17 miles) southwest of Oujda, and 22 kilometers (14 miles) northeast of Djerrada. It was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940. Officially the camp was classified as housing a group of civilian foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Civils Étrangers*, GTCE).¹ The mines at nearby Djerrada were labeled as being “at Guenfouda.”²

In June 1940, the French Foreign Legion (*Légion Étrangère*, LE) was disbanded, and its “volunteers engaged for the duration of the war” (*Engagés volontaires à la Légion étrangère pour la durée de la guerre*, EVDG) were dispatched to camps in North Africa, including Ain Guenfounda. On March 22, 1941, Marshal Henri-Philippe Pétain authorized the construction of the Trans-Saharan Railroad, also known as the Mediterranean-Nigerian (*Mer-Niger*) railroad project. It was intended to connect ports in Morocco and Algeria with the port at Dakar, Senegal. Ain Guenfounda was one of the camps designated to provide labor for the construction of the Mer-Niger railway line.

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, after which the detainees at Ain Guenfounda were progressively returned to civilian life. However, the camp was still in use well into 1943. A census in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection counted seven “ex-German” and Jewish detainees at Ain Guenfounda.³

The prisoner Erwin Sommer makes a good case study in considering how prisoners made the transition to civilian life after liberation. He was a forced laborer in the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 11, at Djerrada who left on May 28, 1943, to work for the Americans at Oujda as a “clerk-interpreter” without contract. After that he was happy to work at Ain Guenfounda, albeit for less pay but with accommodation provided.⁴

While at Ain Guenfounda, Sommer was liberated by the Americans. Writing from Ain Guenfounda in care of the Moroccan Society of the Coal Mines at Djerrada (*Société Chérifiennes Charbonnages de Djerrada*), he requested the assistance of

Cazès-Benathar, a Moroccan Jewish lawyer who worked on behalf of refugees, on June 5, 1943; he asked for help finding work and also assistance for his wife and two children who were then in Marseille.⁵ Shortly thereafter, on June 23, an official from Ain Guenfounda wrote on Sommer's behalf to the director of the Casablanca office of the French bank, Crédit Lyonnais, recommending him for the position of accountant. He described Sommer as an expatriated German Jew, 45 years old, with 23 years of commercial experience and who spoke French, English, German, and Spanish.⁶

SOURCES Secondary sources that mention the camp at Ain Guenfounda are Jacob Olie, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006).

Primary source material documenting the Ain Guenfounda camp is available in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform and digital form at USHMMA as RG-68.115M).

Cristina Bejan

NOTES

1. “Groupes de Travailleurs Civils Étrangers, Camp Ain-Guenfouda,” n.d., USHMMA (CAHJP), RG-68.115M, pp. 328–329.

2. “W. Cohen, Mines de Djerada à Guenfouda,” December 7, 1942, USHMMA, RG-68.115M, pp. 437–438; and “Cohen W. Mines de Djerada Guenfouda,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-68.115M, n.p.

3. “Desgroupement des Internés par Nationalité et Confession,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-68.115M, pp. 254–255.

4. “Erwin Sommer chez Société Chérifiennes Charbonnages de Djerrada Ain-Guenfouda par Oujda,” June 5, 1943, USHMMA, RG-68.115M, n.p.

5. Ibid.

6. “Monsieur le Directeur du Crédit Lyonnais, Casablanca,” June 23, 1943, USHMMA, RG-68.115M, n.p.

AIN SEFRA

Ain Sefra (Aïn Séfra or Aïn Sefra) is located in Algeria, 93 kilometers (almost 58 miles) south of Mecheria and almost 199 kilometers (nearly 124 miles) northeast of Colomb-Béchar. Ain Sefra was also the name of the military territory that included such camps as Djenien Bou Rezg and Colomb-Béchar. The Ain Sefra camp was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

In June 1940, the French Foreign Legion (*Légion Étrangère*, LE) was disbanded, and its volunteers engaged for the duration of the war (*Engagés volontaires à la Légion étrangère pour la durée de la guerre*, EVDG) were sent to camps in North Africa such as Ain Sefra. In December 1941, two companies of the LE 1st Regiment in Algeria were sent to the camps at Ain Sefra and Saida. Each company had 200 to 300 men, about a

third of whom were Spanish. There was a hospital in the town of Ain Sefra.

There is little documentation on prisoner demographics, prisoner names, or daily life in the camp. Ain Sefra was among a list of North African civil and military internment camps that the French Red Cross (*Croix-Rouge Française*, CRF) assigned for inspection between July 18 and 20, 1942.¹ The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, after which the detainees at Ain Sefra were progressively returned to civilian life. However, the camp was still in use well into 1943.

Ain Sefra was also a center for assigned residence (*assignation à résidence*). Jewish internee Isaac Temimi (or Temime) was held in forced residence at Ain Sefra and was designated to be sent with inmates from other camps to the Mecheria camp on June 30 or July 1, 1941.²

SOURCES Secondary sources referencing the camp at Ain Sefra include Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); and Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975).

Primary source material available for Ain Sefra can be found in CAOM, available at USHMMA under RG-43.062M, reels 6 and 8.

Cristina Bejan

NOTES

1. "Service des Affaires Indigènes Militaires Territoire Colomb-Béchar," July 16, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 6, n.p.; "Surveillance suspects (camps) Alger 13 Juillet 1942," USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.

2. "Telegramme Chiffre Demarque," June 28 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 8, n.p.

AKBOU

Akbou is a small town located in north-central Algeria, 137 kilometers (85 miles) southeast of Algiers and 59 kilometers (37 miles) southwest of Bejaia. The scant information available suggests that the Akbou camp was one of the Vichy internment camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

The Akbou camp was in a former French Army compound of four permanent buildings in which the internees slept on beds with two blankets each. The treatment at the camp was particularly harsh: the prisoners suffered frequent and tough punishments, and the women were assigned to conduct arduous chores.

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, but the Akbou camp was still in use well into 1943. In July 1943 the camp was reserved for 100 female internees and their children. At this stage, a representative of the International Committee of the

Red Cross (ICRC) counted 10 German women, 50 Italian women, 34 women of diverse origins, and 21 children in the Akbou camp.

SOURCES Secondary sources that mention the camp at Akbou are Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939-1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975).

Cristina Bejan

BEDEAU

Located approximately 134 kilometers (83 miles) south of Oran, Algeria, at the edge of the Sahara between Sidi-bel-Abbès and Mascara, the camp in Bedeau (today: Râs el Ma) served as a forced labor camp for the Vichy regime; many Jewish soldiers were detained there between 1941 and 1943. French Jewish soldiers who had been interned after the Franco-German Armistice at the Saint-Marthe camp in Marseille were moved to Algeria at the end of July 1941; there, they were distributed among different regiments, especially the 8th in Algiers and the 2nd in Oran. In addition, at the end of 1941, some Jewish soldiers in the French Foreign Legion (*Légion Étrangère*, LE) were expelled from the army and sent to the French Army-run camp at Bedeau for two years, living in tents under the control of Capitaine Orsini and Commandant Boitel.

Similar to other camps in terms of multiplicity of purposes and fluency of inmate population, the camp consisted mostly of *marabout* (large) tents, which each held up to 10 detainees. Bedeau was under the direct authority of LE soldiers commanded by Capitaine Orsini, who was known for his hatred for Jews. Between 1940 and 1942, the camp population included a Group of Jewish Workers (*Groupe de Travailleurs Israélites*, GTI). After March 1942, the Bedeau camp was reclassified and became a camp for Algerian workers (*Groupe-ment des Travailleurs Algériens*, GTA); it was then placed under the direct control of the general governor of Algeria instead of the military authority.

Despite their previous military service to France, the detained Jewish war veterans were subjected to hard labor, poor hygiene, and the extreme heat of the desert. They did not have a means of communication with the outside world, not even by radio or newspapers. When the camp was placed under civilian authority, the guards were members of the Legionary Order Service (*Service d'Ordre Légionnaire*), a collaborationist group notorious for its antisemitism. Survivors of the Bedeau camp described it as a concentration camp. The prisoners were forced to wear old civilian clothes and a black cap; hence the name given them by their guards: "crows" (*corbeaux*). They experienced daily harassment and had to do forced labor, such as cutting trees and clearing roads. Prisoners were told to fill bags with rocks and carry them for a long

distance under the sun. They were also subjected to a disciplinary action common in other camps called the “tomb,” which involved digging a hole and lying in it under the blazing sun for hours, if not days.

The Bedeau camp was closed on April 15, 1943, and prisoners were transferred to military camps in Morocco (Marrakech) and Tunisia (Le Kef and Le Sers). Almost 750 Jewish prisoners were sent to Marrakech where they joined the Autonomous Group of Ground Anti-Aircraft Forces (*Groupe Autonome des Forces Terrestres Antiaériennes*, GAFTA). They were later incorporated into the regular Free French Army and fought in France, Italy, and Germany.

SOURCES Secondary sources describing or mentioning the camp of Bedeau are Norbert Bel Ange, *Quand Vichy internait ses soldats juifs d'Algérie: Bedeau, sud oranais, 1941–1943* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2006); Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975).

Primary sources documenting the Bedeau camp can be found in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M). Published testimonies by Bedeau prisoners are Léon Benhamou, “Les camps d'Algérie,” *IJ* 136 (1994): 15; Maurice Benkemoun, “Le camp de Bedeau,” *IJ* 138 (1994): 5; and Golski, *Un Buchenwald français sous le règne du Maréchal* (Périgueux: Éditions Pierre Fanlac, 1945).

Aomar Boum

BEN-CHICAO

Ben-Chicao (or Ben-Chica) was an internment camp in Vichy-run Algeria located 64 kilometers (40 miles) southwest of Algiers, 11 kilometers (almost 7 miles) southeast of Medea, 9 kilometers (5.6 miles) northwest of Berrouaghia, and 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from the Djelfa internment camp. The Third French Republic and the Vichy regime used Ben-Chicao to hold Spanish refugees and, after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940, to intern prisoners.

Before the Armistice, Ben-Chicao had served as a reception camp (*camp d'accueil*) for refugees from the Spanish Civil War. In April 1940 the camp contained 218 Spanish refugees: 49 men, 74 women, and 95 children under 16 years old.¹ At the time there were no political suspects interned at Ben-Chicao.² The majority of the refugees were factory or shop workers,³ but there were two farmers, one baker, one railroad worker, one accountant, one nurse, two teachers, one soldier, one pharmacist, two tanners, and one weaver.⁴ The total camp budget for the year 1940, including medical care and food, was 1,733,750 francs.⁵

When the Vichy government took over, the camp's population diversified. In a list of French camps prepared by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), “Ben-Chicao next to Medea” was listed as an “internment camp for Poles in Africa, Algeria.”⁶

The commandant of the 19th Army Corps, Général des Corps d'Armée Henry Martin, had a plan to transfer the military detainees from Ben-Chicao, and he ordered Vichy official Lehuraux to solicit the opinion of the governor general of Algeria about such a move. Martin proposed to transfer the prisoners to Laghouat and to deploy some of them in various military services. Lehuraux disagreed with this approach: he did not think it was appropriate to transfer the prisoners to the Southern Territories because it was beneath the dignity of the French Army and the detainees. He suggested that they be transferred to the Quargla internment camp (525 kilometers or 326 miles southeast of Ben-Chicao), which was a large installation where the prisoners (elderly and officers) would have a higher quality of life.⁷

In response, a “Note of Service” from Algiers reported that the members of the Transit Company No. 1 of the French Foreign Legion (*Compagnie de Passage de la Légion étrangère Nr. 1*) currently stationed at Ben-Chicao, could be transferred to the Quargla internment camp. Général des Corps d'Armée Martin ordered the provision of accommodations at Bordj-Chandez in Quargla for 3 officers, 16 French noncommissioned officers (NCOs), 208 French of other ranks, and 2 indigenous rank-and-file soldiers.⁸

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch, November 8, 1942, after which the prisoners at Ben-Chicao were progressively returned to civilian life.

SOURCES The only secondary source found that mentions the Ben-Chicao camp is Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006).

Primary source material documenting the Ben-Chicao camp can be found in CAOM, available at USHMMA under RG-43.062M (reel 9 contains especially rich material on the Spanish refugee camp before the Armistice); and A-ICRC, “Division d'Assistance Special CICR 1940–1963,” available at USHMMA under RG-58.002M.

Cristina Bejan

NOTES

1. “Department d'Alger: État Prévisionnel de Dépenses pour le Mois de Avril 1940, Camp de Réfugiés Espagnols de Ben-Chicao,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 9, n.p.
2. “Suspects,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, p. 78.
3. L'Administrateur-Adjoint, Directeur du Camp de Ben-Chicao à Monsieur le Sous-Préfet de Medea, January 29, 1940, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.
4. “Centre d'Herbergement de Ben-Chicao: Recapitulation,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, p. 63.
5. “Projet de Budget de Centre d'Accueil de Ben-Chicao pour l'Année 1940,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.
6. “Camps en France,” USHMMA, RG-58.002M (A-ICRC), reel 5, n.p.

7. Note à Monsieur le Directeur du Cabinet de M. le Geur Gal s/c de Monsieur le Secrétaire Gal du Gouvernement, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.

8. Note de Service, 19^{ème} Corps d'Armée, État Major, 3^{ème} Bureau, Nr. 2151/3, Algiers, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.

BÉNI ABBÈS

Located approximately 167 kilometers (104 miles) south of Béchar, the Béni Abbès (Beni-Abbas) camp was used as an internment and labor camp for a group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 5. It was set up in the Saoura Valley, on the bank of the Saoura River, between April 1941 and November 1942. The internees were volunteers of the French Foreign Legion engaged for the duration of the war (*Engagés volontaires à la Légion étrangère pour la durée de la guerre*, EVDG). They were joined by forced laborers, most of whom were originally from Poland.

GTE No. 5 was deployed on the construction of the trans-Saharan dirt road linking Goa with Hadjerat-M'Guil; the laborers worked along the route at Ksabi, located between Béni Abbès and Adrar. There they revolted over working conditions on May 29, 1941. The Vichy authorities managed to subdue the revolt by force, killing one prisoner and injuring two. On August 31, 1942, the Polish forced laborers were transferred to Morocco to work on the Mediterranean-Niger (*Mer-Niger*) railway line. From Kenadsa the Mer-Niger line was to run through Béni Abbès, traverse the desert to Adrar, and continue on to Tassit in the French Sudan.

SOURCES Secondary sources mentioning the Béni Abbès camp are Jacob Oriel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Édition du Lys, 2005); and Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust's Long Reach in Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006).

Primary sources documenting the Béni Abbès camp can be found in CAOM, available in microform as USHMMA, RG-43.062M (selected records from France's North African colonies).

Aomar Boum

BERGUENT

Operating under the jurisdiction of the Directorate of Industrial Production (*Direction de la Production Industrielle*) and named after a French colonel, the Berguent camp in Morocco housed the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 4. Berguent (today: Ain Beni Mathar, but also known as Ain Berguent or Bergame) was located about 76 kilometers (47 miles) south of Oujda and 36 kilometers (22 miles) west of the Algerian border. Berguent had a large indigenous Jewish community; however, no one from the community was held in the Berguent camp, although many foreign Jews were interned there.

Berguent was part of a series of camps along the Algerian-Moroccan border housing prisoners who worked on the Trans-Saharan Railroad—also known as the Mediterranean-Nigerian (*Mer-Niger*) railway line—as part of the Mediterranean Niger Company (*Chemins de Fer de la Méditerranée au Niger*, MN). The majority of Berguent's prisoners were Jewish. At one point the camp held about 400 Jews, many of whom had been transferred to the detention site from camps in France. On July 29, 1942, Dr. Wyss-Dunant of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited the Berguent camp. He recorded that there were 155 prisoners at this location: 13 were away and 142 were present inside the camp (of these, 113 were at work in and around the camp). These internees were allowed 500 grams (1.1 pounds) of bread per day, 125 to 150 grams (4 to 5 ounces) of meat over a six-day period, and a half-liter (more than a pint) of wine twice a day.¹ A canteen was located in a shelter dugout and provided lemon soda, beer, aperitifs, preserved fruits, and cigarettes. It opened after working hours and closed at 10 p.m. As in other camps along the Mer-Niger railroad works, the availability of shoes and clothes was a concern for many forced laborers, who suffered from the hot summers and cold winters. At Berguent, prisoners were issued two shirts, shorts, and sandals for the summer and a pair of warm trousers and shoes for winter.

Water was not available in the camp: it was brought in twice a day on camelback from the neighboring oasis of Berguent, about 5 kilometers (just over 3 miles) from the camp. Prisoners bathed once a week in the pool at Berguent. Every Monday they had access to laundry; however, the lavatory was in the open. Mail was received daily, including books in German and French. Dr. Wyss-Dunant counted approximately 40 books in German during his trip to Berguent. Jewish prisoners were allowed to attend prayer services at the three synagogues in Berguent.

All prisoners of Berguent were involved in working on the railway line and the surrounding roads. The Department of Industrial Production paid 4.25 francs per day per forced laborer. Sometimes a bonus was added, making a total daily payment of 9.25 francs.

Given the fact that most of the internees were tradesmen, accountants, artisans, and intellectuals, they were not able to easily bear the physically challenging roadwork. They complained of shortages of water and food and of heat exhaustion. Although the camp's commandant was a former legionnaire and was lenient in his treatment of most of the detainees, six were sent to the Bou Arfa disciplinary camp, whereas others were held in solitary confinement for short periods at Berguent.

SOURCES Secondary sources mentioning the camp at Berguent are Jacob Oriel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975); and Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust's Long Reach in Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006).

Primary sources documenting the Berguent camp can be found in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M); AFSC (available at USHMMA as RG-67.008M, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa); and NaP, JAF 1007: MSP-L (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-48.011M).

Aomar Boum

NOTE

1. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), box 1, folder 15.

BERROUAGHIA

Berrouaghia is a town located approximately 70 kilometers (almost 44 miles) south of Algiers in the prefecture of Algiers. A railway station on the line connecting Algiers-Djelfa via Boghari and Blida was in the town.

The Berrouaghia camp was located in the town's old prison: four dormitories housed internees who were seriously ill, internees eligible for repatriation, and prisoners held on a permanent basis in a confinement center (*Centre de Séjour Surveillé*, CSS). The section reserved for the sick was isolated from the other dormitories, with its own shower and bathroom. The rooms were whitewashed and ventilated, and each room had a stove. The beds were made of wood, with straw mattresses and two blankets per internee.

On August 14, 1942, Dr. Wyss-Dunant of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited the camp and recorded that there were 80 internees at Berrouaghia: 33 Spaniards, 12 Germans (4 Jews), 12 Italians (3 Jews), 1 Austrian, 6 Czechs (1 Jew), 5 Poles (4 Jews), 8 Russians (4 Jews), and 3 stateless (1 Jew). Among these internees, 32 had tuberculosis (TB), and 16 had minor illnesses. Several Italians and Germans were eligible for repatriation, and another 32 prisoners were in good health, but were not eligible for release.¹

The internees had access to 500 grams (1.1 pounds) of bread per day, meat three times a week, but no wine. Those with money could leave the camp, when accompanied by an armed guard, to buy more food in the village to supplement their inadequate rations: there was no canteen inside the camp. A small amount of worn-out clothes was supplied occasionally, but prisoners still lacked shirts, shoes, linens, and towels. Sick prisoners did not have access to medicine; the only doctor available complained about the lack of medicine to combat disease, mainly lung hemorrhages. The camp did not have a library. The priest in the neighboring village of Berrouaghia visited on call.

The internees permitted to do so worked on a voluntary basis. They were paid 18 francs per day: half of this amount went to cover their food and lodging, and the other half was disbursed to their savings accounts. There were carpentry, shoe-repair, watchmaking, and blacksmithing workshops. The men who worked in them received between 1.25 to 2 francs per hour. The internees unable to work due to illness could not afford the goods sold in the village, increasing the misery of their stay. According to Belgian internee

Gabriel Délépine, the prisoners classified as “undesirables” and held in the prison's CSS were likewise not permitted to work.²

The Berrouaghia camp was connected with the Ben-Chicao camp, located 9 kilometers (5.6 miles) northwest of Berrouaghia.

SOURCES A secondary source mentioning the camp of Berrouaghia is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources on the Berrouaghia camp can be found in AFSC (available at USHMMA as RG-67.008M, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

Aomar Boum

NOTES

1. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), box 1, folder 15.
2. “Berrouaghia,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82381127.

BOGHAR

Boghar was a forced labor camp located 98 kilometers (61 miles) southwest of Algiers; it held an autonomous group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers Autonome*, GTEA). Under the supervision of the Algiers Regional Office of Labor, Dr. Wyss-Dunant of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited Boghar on August 16, 1942. He recorded the following statistics on the prisoner population within the camp: 40 Poles, 340 Spaniards, and 20 German Jews. An additional 45 internees were deployed to the Morand internment camp and to camps in Algiers, 16 were in the infirmary, and 1 was in prison. The number of inmates was 401; the camp's capacity was 500.¹

Located on the top of a hill not far from the Morand (Boghari) internment camp, Boghar comprised 20 barracks, of which 6 were permanent stone buildings. Other camp buildings were not as sturdy, but were still in use, including some wooden barracks. Each barrack accommodated about 40 prisoners. The climate was good, and the barracks were ventilated.

The prisoners slept on wooden beds with straw mattresses and sufficient coverings for winter. There was a stove and adequate wood for winter heating. The forced laborers were mostly free to move around.² Prisoners were punished with extra work or prison time. Six guards and five inspectors guarded Boghar.

Approximately 230 prisoners were hired by private employers and paid between 50 to 70 francs a day, depending on the terms of the collective contract. Other foreign laborers worked as carpenters and blacksmiths in camp workshops. Finally, labor was voluntary for those considered disabled, infirm, or old.

Forced laborers were served 500 to 600 grams (more than a pound) of bread daily, meat three times a week, and a half-liter (more than a pint) of wine. The camp commandant received a daily grant of 11 francs per detainee from the local authorities. A garden within the camp supplied vegetables and potatoes to supplement purchased provisions. A grocer from Boghar managed a canteen that operated at different hours. Although the Algiers Regional Office of Labor provided some winter clothes, there were shortages of linens, sweaters, and towels.

Prisoners had to shower twice a week, but had the option of taking a third hot shower each week. There was a shortage of water during the summer, but toilets were available. A detainee doctor, a military doctor, and an infirmary nurse cared for sick refugees, despite the shortage of medical equipment and medicine. The infirmary had 24 beds; serious cases were transferred to the nearby Morand camp. An Austrian dentist with the help of a dental technician set up a dental unit that crafted plates and bridges for patients in need of dental work. The Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) sent many books to the camp.

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the Boghar camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources on the Boghar camp can be found in AFSC (available at USHMMA, RG-67.008M, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

Aomar Boum

NOTES

1. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), box 1, folder 15.
2. "Notice sur Boghar," Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371151.

BOGHARI

Boghari (also known as Ksar El Boukhari, Ksar Boukhari, and Boughari) is 100 kilometers (62 miles) southwest of Algiers. The Boghari camp was an internment camp located near the Boghar camp; it was also known as the Morand camp.¹ The camp housed demobilized foreign workers, as well as Spanish and Belgian refugees. The internees were issued civilian clothes and blankets. They were not expected to work, but were given the freedom to go to Algiers to find jobs. The prisoners were able to walk out of the camp freely at night and on Sundays. Many Boghar camp prisoners were transferred to Boghari either for work or health reasons.

SOURCES Secondary sources that mention the Boghari camp are Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and Jacques Cantier and Éric Jennings, *L'empire colonial sous Vichy* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2004).

Primary sources on the Boghari camp can be found in AFSC (available at USHMMA as RG-67.008M, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

Aomar Boum

NOTE

1. "Notices dur le camp d'hébergement de Boghari ou camp Morand," Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371150.

BOSSUET

Located 57 kilometers (35 miles) south of Sidi bel Abbés, the camp of Bossuet (or Bousseut; today: Dhaya) in Algeria occupied a fortress that was built in 1845. During World War II, the fort was transformed into a confinement center (*Center de Séjour Surveillé*, CSS). It housed many communists arrested in 1939 and 1940 who had been transferred from camps in France, especially Nexon, Saint-Paul-d'Eyjeaux, and Saint Sulpice-la-Pointe. It was part of what former prisoner and author André Moine called the "camps of death," along with Djelfa and Djenien Bou Rezg.

Surrounded by walls as high as 8 meters (26 feet) and barbed wire, the camp was directed by Capitaine Seynave. Its capacity was 492 prisoners, who were known as "undesirables." Approximately 350 of those prisoners were former soldiers of the French Army (110 were wounded in the war, 24 were awarded military medals, 3 were members of the *Légion d'Honneur*, 120 held the *Croix de Guerre*, and 15 were members of the *Ordre Étrangers*).

Like Djenien Bou Rezg and Djelfa, Bossuet was one of the most inhospitable camps in Algeria during the Vichy period. The prisoners were humiliated daily and forced to work in horrible conditions. Typhus, dysentery, and malaria affected a substantial part of the camp population in 1941.¹ Many famous French politicians and Algerian nationalists were held at Bossuet. Among them was the historian André Moine, who published his testimony of this camp and others. Another was Bernard Lecache, the president of the International League against Antisemitism (*Ligue internationale contre l'antisemitisme*, LICA). On May 26, 1941, Lecache was transferred from Djelfa to Bossuet. After Bossuet, he was sent to Djenien Bou Rezg. A good number of the prisoners had been transferred from Djelfa.

The camp was liberated by the U.S. Army in the spring of 1943. Bossuet was mentioned during a French Army investigation convened in Algiers in late 1943.²

SOURCES Secondary sources that mentions the Bossuet camp include Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and André Moine, *La*

Déportation et la résistance en Afrique du Nord (1939–1944), preface by Léon Feix (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972).

Primary sources documenting the Bossuet camp can be found in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M); the France North African Colonies collection (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-43.062M); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA. Photographs of the camp can be found in Moine.

Aomar Boum

NOTES

1. For health conditions, see the report by prisoner “Dr. Bourgeois,” quoted in Moine, *Déportations et résistance en Afrique du nord 1939–1944*, pp. 151–153.

2. “Le Colonel Lupy à Monsieur le Capitaine Juge d’Instruction au TM d’Armée—Alger,” December 27, 1951, Annexe 24, Rapport définitif No. 52, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371221.

BOU ARFA

Bou Arfa (or Bouarfa) is located in northeast Morocco, 296 kilometers (184 miles) southeast of Oujda. The discovery of manganese and other minerals in its vicinity made it a major French settlement and mining industry center. The colonial administration began its exploitation of Bou Arfa’s natural resources in 1913 at Ain Beida. The French government also developed a network of railroads that connected the region to Mediterranean ports. In 1941, the Vichy government built a set of tent and barracks camps around Bou Arfa; these satellite camps were Aïn al-Ouraq, Foum-Deflah, and Tamlelt.¹ The camp of Bou Arfa and its satellite camps served both as forced labor and discipline camps for political prisoners and Jews.

The Bou Arfa camp and its subcamps were the largest Vichy camps designed primarily for internment purposes in French Africa. Bou Arfa primarily housed the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 4,² although at different times members of GTE Nos. 9 and 1 were also held in the camp.

Bou Arfa was built at a place where a gorge opened into the plain and stretched along the banks of a dry creek. It was composed of seven large buildings made of tiles and wooden beams. The Mediterranean Niger Company (*Chemins de Fer de la Méditerranée au Niger*, MN) played a key role in its establishment. The workers earned between 20 to 60 francs per day.

Bou Arfa was opened first as an internment camp for refugees who fled the Spanish Civil War after 1936. The French colonial authorities decided to use the refugees confined in Bou Arfa-Tamlelt as forced laborers. The work done by Spanish refugees was key to the pre-Vichy French infrastructure projects around Bou Arfa, especially the early stages of construction of the MN railroad. In January 1941, Spanish re-

publicans who sought refuge in North Africa were assigned to the construction of the railroad connecting Bou Arfa to Kenadsa. By October 1942, about 70 Polish prisoners were transferred from the Oued Zem camp to Bou Arfa, joining about 200 former Polish soldiers already housed there. Jews were later added to the workforce constructing the railroads connecting Bou Arfa to other settlements.³

In July 30, 1942, Dr. Wyss-Dunant, a representative from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), recorded the following statistics on the forced laborers at Bou Arfa: Spanish (694), German (21), Italian (11), Austrian (19), Belgian (5), Algerian (2), Stateless (2), Hungarian (1), Dutch (2), Romanian (1), Yugoslav (4), Greek (1), Portuguese (2), French (2), Russian (4), Brazilian (1), and Cuban (1).⁴

Prisoners slept on beds with springs fabricated by the Mediterranean Niger Company. Each bed had a mattress and blanket. The food included on average 600 grams (1.3 pounds) of bread per day and 600 to 700 grams of meat per week. There was a canteen on site where supplies could be purchased, as well as a hall where concerts were held and recreation was allowed in the evening, including listening to a radio. Although there was a shortage of Spanish books and newspapers, the workers had access to a library. After one year of work, the inmates were allowed a 12-day leave, but were not permitted to travel to large urban centers. The hygiene was adequate. The Mediterranean Niger Company built a hospital not far from the camp, which provided a variety of health services for internees. A priest came to the camp to celebrate Mass every Sunday.

The first subcamp of Bou Arfa to be established was Aïn al-Ouraq, a disciplinary camp approximately 60 kilometers (just over 37 miles) west of Bou Arfa on the road leading to Colomb-Béchar. It served as the main punishment camp for Bou Arfa’s forced laborers. Established near a mine, the prisoners slept and worked in the open air while building the barracks. Under Capitaine Abala, the detainees faced three types of harsh punishment. In the first type, the prisoner was tied up and struck repeatedly with a rifle butt. In the second type of punishment, known as “the tomb,” a prisoner was forced to sleep in a hole for 25 to 30 days under the surveillance of a Senegalese soldier.⁵ Movement in the confined space resulted in the prisoner being struck by a stone, clubbed with a rifle butt, or fired on. Finally, the “lion cage” was a 1.80-meter (1.9-yard) cube surrounded by barbed iron threads. The prisoners could only either stand up or lie down. Prisoners being punished only received 100 grams (3.5 ounces) of bread and water daily.

Bar Arfa’s second subcamp was Foum-Deflah (Foum El Flah or Foum Defla). In May 1942, the French authorities sold the site of the Aïn al-Ouraq camp to an Arab notable for the amount of 100,000 francs and in its stead opened the camp at Foum-Deflah. The Foum-Deflah disciplinary camp was located 15 kilometers (9.3 miles) east of Bou Arfa. The camp’s name originated from the eponymous dry creek. Approximately 50 inmates worked mostly on the MN railroad; they worked for 10 hours every day for which they were paid 8 francs.

As a temporary camp most of its structures were tents; workers slept on straw mats and were provided with a single blanket. Food was inadequate (and less than provided at the Bou Arfa camp). Water had to be transported from outside the camp; the climate was dry. The workers were subjected to some of the worst treatment, including punishment by the tomb and lion cage. A doctor visited the camp once a week; the Bou Arfa camp supplied the infirmary with medicine and supplies.

The third Bou Arfa subcamp was Tamlelt, a small site initially built to hold Spanish republicans and located near the manganese mine of Tamlelt. French colonial authorities used foreign refugees as forced laborers. Later during the war Tamlelt primarily housed German dissidents from Nazi Germany.

The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) records contain many individual files on prisoners who spent time in Bou Arfa and its subcamps. A case in point is the file of Ernest Sello. Sello attempted to flee the Bou Arfa camp in September 1941. As punishment following his recapture, he was sent to Aïn al-Ouraq. After experiencing a series of harsh punishments at Aïn al-Ouraq, including spending time in the tomb, he returned to the Bou Arfa camp, where he was again imprisoned. Capitaine Avelin and the commandant, Janin, tried to deport him to Nazi Germany, but the Bou Arfa camp doctor interceded in his favor. Because of his poor health, he was sent to the Oujda hospital in January 1942, where both of his feet were amputated as the result of his torture.⁶

SOURCES There is a wide range of secondary literature about Bou Arfa camp and its subcamps, including Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions de Lys, 2005); Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust's Long Reach in Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); Christine Levisse-Touzé, “Les camps d'internement en Afrique du Nord pendant la seconde guerre mondiale,” in ‘Abd-al-Ġalil at-Tamīmī and Charles-Robert Ageron, eds., *Mélanges Charles-Robert Ageron*, 2 (Zaghouan, Tunisia: Fondation Temimi pour la Recherche Scientifique et l'Information, 1996), 2:601–608; André Moine, *La Déportation et la résistance en Afrique du Nord (1939–1944)*, preface by Léon Feix (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972); and Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975). On the Mediterranean Niger Company, see André Labry, *Les chemins de fer du maroc: Histoire et évolution* (Rabat: Office National des Chemins de Fer, 1998).

There is a considerable amount of primary documentation on the Bou Arfa camp and its subcamps. Among them is the private collection of Hélène Cazès-Benathar, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M). The Cazès-Benathar collection includes her correspondence with Bou Arfa detainees. The AFSC Refugee Assistance Case Files (available at USHMMA as Acc. No. 2002.296) include files for prisoners held at Bou Arfa, Aïn al-Ouraq, and Foum-Deflah. Abraham Uriel and Sinfiorano Rodriguez recorded two of the few photographs of the Bou Arfa camp known today. The Uriel photograph is available at www.danielabraham.net/tree/abraham/uriel.

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NOTES

1. Private collection of Hélène Cazès-Benathar, USHMMA, RG-68.115M (CAHJP), reel 1, dossier 16.
2. Ibid., reel 7, dossier 47.
3. Ibid., reel 1, dossier 12.
4. USHMMA, RG-67.008 (AFSC), box 1, file 15.
5. USHMMA, Acc. No. 2002.296 (AFSC), case file 8985, Ernest Sello.
6. Ibid.

BOU AZZER

Bou Azzer (also Moulay Bou Azza and Moulay Bouazza) is located in north-central Morocco about 54 kilometers (34 miles) northeast of Oued Zem, 133 kilometers (83 miles) southeast of Casablanca, and 105 kilometers (65 miles) southeast of Rabat. Bou Azzer was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940. It was set up to house a group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE) and was built on a clay slope.

Dr. Wyss-Dunant, a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), visited the camp on July 15, 1942. At this time there were 52 male internees: 2 British, 8 Belgian, 5 Spanish, 2 French, 4 Italian, 1 Luxembourger, 1 Dutch, 15 Poles, 5 Russian, 1 Slovak, 2 Swiss, 3 Czech, and 3 Yugoslavs. The heat was excessive and the sanitary conditions deplorable. Ten internees were hospitalized, and five more were medical patients in the camp. The men suffered from dysentery and isolation. Many were dressed in rags, and five went barefoot. The internees were lodged in tents and slept on mats with two blankets each.

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942. However, evidence suggests that the Bou Azzer camp might have been in use until 1945. Materials available in the archive of Hélène Cazès-Benathar and the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) Casablanca collection confirm that contract employment for refugees to work at the Bou Azzer mines continued until 1945. However, these files do not specifically refer to Bou Azzer as a camp. Dr. Julius Ullman worked as a doctor at the Bou Azzer mines from liberation until 1945.¹ Alfred Kuhn and Charles Burger also had contracts to work at the Bou Azzer mines after liberation.² In 1943 Kuhn wrote to Benathar that he and Ullman were very happy at Bou Azzer: the lodging and food were good.³

SOURCES The secondary source that mentions the Bou Azzer camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions de Lys, 2005).

Primary source material can be found in the AFSC Refugee Assistance Case files, available in hard copy at USHMMA as Acc. No. 2002.296; and the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform and digitally at USHMMA as RG-68.115M).

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NOTES

1. “Dr. Ullman médecin de mines,” January 30, 1945, USHMMA, RG-68.115M, n.p.
2. “Monsieur le Directeur de la CTM Casablanca,” April 15, n.d., USHMMA, RG-68.115M, n.p.; and “Certificat de Travail,” March 23, 1943, USHMMA, RG-68.115M, p. 20.
3. “Maître Benathar, Casablanca,” May 14, 1943, USHMMA, RG-68.115M, n.p.

BOU DENIB

Also called the Meknès camp, Bou Denib (Boudenib or Bou Dnib) was a former military base for the 37th French Aviation Regiment that was earlier known as the Haricot camp. Under the Vichy regime it was transformed into a confinement center (*Centre de Séjours Surveillé*, CSS) and labor camp for the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 2.¹ It was located in Tafilalet in the region of Meknès (hence its alternative name). Bou Denib is 282 kilometers (175 miles) southeast of the city of Meknès.

The Bou Denib camp consisted of 21 stone and adobe brick buildings. Walls, but not barbed wire, surrounded the camp. Administered by French security, the camp’s number of inmates was 243 prisoners; including 210 Italians, 12 Germans, one American, and one Japanese prisoner.² The camp had a lecture and entertainment hall, showers, and a sports field.

Bou Denib was guarded by one policeman and six armed indigenous personnel (*moghazeni*). The forced laborers were allowed to work outside the camp and were paid a salary. They mostly worked hydraulic jobs approximately 1,500 meters (almost a mile) from the camp. Inside the camp, the prisoners performed a variety of tasks. Guards oversaw the prisoners as they did their daily work. When accompanied by an indigenous guard, the prisoners were also allowed to do shopping in the neighboring village of Bou Denib.

In addition to the foreign laborers, there were 100 prisoners at Bou Denib, one-third of whom were Jews. In addition, some local Moroccan Jews were held in the camp, apparently because of their support for the national independence movement.

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the Bou Denib camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

A primary source on the Bou Denib camp is ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

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NOTES

1. “Boudenib-Meknès,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371147.
2. Annexe 21, “Enquêtes sur les prisons et les camps d’internement,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 823716.

BOULHAUT

Boulhaut (also Bouhaut; today: Ben Slimane) is in northwestern Morocco near the Atlantic coast, 44 kilometers (27 miles) east of Casablanca and 235 kilometers (146 miles) northeast of Marrakech. The Boulhaut camp was one of the Vichy internment camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

Establishing the proper documentation for the Boulhaut camp is difficult for four reasons. First, the town of Boulhaut was sometimes referred to as Camp Boulhaut before and during World War II. Second, there was a road in Morocco named Camp Boulhaut (*Route de Camp Boulhaut*). Camp Boulhaut was also a base for the mobilization of French and Moroccan troops. Finally the Vichy paramilitary group, Builders of French Youth (*Chantiers de la jeunesse française*, CJF), CJF No. 101, was stationed at Camp Boulhaut. Despite these limitations, there is evidence from the humanitarian aid activist Hélène Cazès-Benathar and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) that Boulhaut also served as a camp for volunteers engaged in the French Foreign Legion for the duration of the war (*Engagés volontaires à la Légion étrangère pour la durée de la guerre*, EVDG).¹

The Boulhaut camp continued to remain in use after the Allied landing, Operation Torch, on November 8, 1942. When ICRC representative Camille Vautier inspected Boulhaut on April 24, 1943, he found that the camp consisted of small brick barracks (*noualla*), each holding four prisoners. The internees were issued a mattress and two blankets apiece. At that point the camp held 35 prisoners, most of whom were Italian, although there was one Portuguese: all the prisoners were classified as EVDG. The internees complained to Vautier about their hard labor and poor sanitary conditions.²

SOURCES Secondary sources mentioning the Boulhaut camp are Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and David Bensoussan, *Il était une fois le Maroc: Témoignages du Passé Judéo-Marocain* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2012).

Primary source material can be found in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M).

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NOTES

1. “Camp Boulhaut—Italians,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-68.115M (CAHJP), n.p.
2. ICRC report, April 24, 1943, as summarized in Oliel, *Camps du Vichy*, p. 115.

CARNOT

Carnot is located in northern Algeria, 133 kilometers (83 miles) southwest of Algiers, 441 kilometers (274 miles) west of Constantine, and 118 kilometers (73 miles) northeast of Relizane.

Before the Franco-German Armistice, Carnot was one of the two reception camps (*camp d’accueil*) established by the au-

thorities in 1939 for refugees from the Spanish Civil War; the other camp was at Orléansville. Planned and built in haste, these first two camps were equipped with makeshift facilities. The Carnot camp was initially intended to hold women, children, “unfit” people, and some intellectuals and servicemen who had arrived in the first wave of refugees. There were no political suspects interned at Carnot.¹ On May 1, 1939, there were 317 detainees in the camp: 39 able-bodied men, 7 elderly or “unfit” people, 138 women, and 133 children (under 18 years of age).²

Seventy residents of the Carnot camp were transferred to the camp at Ben-Chicao according to a report dated August 16, 1939, leaving 247 refugees at Carnot at this point.³ A report from August 26, 1939, complained that the guard commanders at Carnot changed too frequently.⁴ In December 1939, the camp was guarded by a staff sergeant (*Maréchal de logis-chef*) and four police officers.⁵ The doctor at Carnot was named Mademoiselle Colombani.⁶ The sub-prefect of the residential center of Carnot ordered a system of supervised self-administration for the refugees and purchased 50 oil stoves for the refugee families.⁷

Files from the Carnot camp give a picture of the internees' lives. During Carnot's phase as a reception camp, the occupations of more than 60 internees could be identified and included accountants, doctors, a lawyer, and a pharmacist, as well as people in the building trades.⁸ The pharmacist Jose Vazquez Sanchez expressed his desire to leave the French territory.⁹ In October 1939, a baby boy with the surname of Exillio was born in the camp.¹⁰ A Spanish refugee named Confero Cuenca Francisco based at the Relizane reception camp was relocated to Carnot in December 1939,¹¹ and that month a refugee named Garido Carrasco died at Carnot.¹² In a single petition, 30 Spanish refugees requested their release; in 9 of the cases, the authorities refused their request. Other refugees were recommended to live elsewhere at their own expense, provided that they chose any location that was not in the Algier Département, which already had too many refugees. Other refugees were ordered to present work authorizations to the Service of Spanish Refugees (*Service du réfugiés espagnols*).¹³

The camp population declined over the course of 1940. On January 10, 1940, there were 306 men, women, and children interned at the camp.¹⁴ In March 1940, there were 289 detainees: 88 males, 105 females, and 96 children under the age of 16.¹⁵ Some Carnot internees were relocated to the Boghari military camp on March 18, 1940.¹⁶ Seven detainees at Carnot were employed in factories under the control of the French Navy's Service of Naval Construction (*Service des Constructions Navales en Algérie*) as of the same date.¹⁷ In April 1940, 47 detainees at Carnot were designated for transport to the Boghar camp.¹⁸ There were 99 internees deemed “unfit” on July 9, 1940: 73 men, 9 women, and 17 children.¹⁹ There were 108 detainees on November 18, 1940: 76 men, 14 women, and 18 children.²⁰

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942. After 1942 the detainees at Carnot were gradually returned to civilian life, but the camp was still in use well into 1943.

SOURCES Secondary sources that mention Carnot include Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006).

Primary source material available for Carnot can be found in CAOM, available at USHMMA under RG-43.062M, reels 9 to 10. The majority of information on Carnot in this collection covers its use as a Spanish refugee camp. Reel 10 consists of identification questionnaires for the Spanish refugees.

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NOTES

1. “Récapitulation Générale,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 9, p. 78.

2. “Réfugiés d'Espagne en Algérie,” May 1, 1939, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, pp. 1–2.

3. “Le Préfet d'Alger à Monsieur le Gouverneur de l'Algérie—Cabinet,” August 16, 1939, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, pp. 2–3.

4. “Le chef d'Escadron Commandant la Gendarmerie,” August 26, 1939, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

5. “Carnot, le 27 December 1939, Rapport du Maréchal des logis chef Mixa (sic.), Commandant le Détachement de Carnot,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

6. “Ministere de Sante Publique, Département d'Alger,” March 13, 1940, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

7. “Orléansville, 29 Aout 1939,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

8. “Centre d'hébergement de Carnot, Récapitulation,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

9. “Rèlève des Miliciens espagnols ou anciens,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, p. 66.

10. “Orléansville, le 18 Octobre 1939,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

11. “Orléansville, le 26 Decembre 1939,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

12. “Orléansville, le 2 Janvier 1940,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

13. Le Sous-Préfet d'Orléansville, n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

14. “Le Chef d'Escadron commandant la Compagnie de Gendarmerie,” January 10, 1940, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

15. “Département d'Alger, Arrondissement d'Orléansville,” May 1940, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

16. “Alger le: 18 mars 1940, Réfugiés Espagnols dirigés sur Boghar,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

17. “Alger, 18 Mars 1940, Monsieur le Général de Brigade Commandant p.i. 1er Division Territoriale d'Alger,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, p. 1.

18. “Le nombre de réfugiés espagnols à diriger sur le camp militaire de Boghar est de 104,” April 11, 1940, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

19. “État numérique des réfugiés espagnols inaptes et leurs familles hébergées au camp de Carnot,” July 9, 1940, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

20. “Effectif numérique des réfugiés présents au camp d'accueil de Carnot,” November 18, 1940, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

CHERAGAS

Cheragas (today: Cheraga) was a small settlement 8 kilometers (approximately 5 miles) northwest of Algiers. The Cheragas or Cheragas-Meridja camp was used for the internment and punishment of soldiers, most of whom were Jews, who had enlisted in the French Army before the defeat of June 1940 and who were subsequently expelled by Vichy. Most of the Cheragas prisoners were Jewish Pioneers (*Pionniers Israélites*) known as the 202nd Company of the 1st Zouave (light infantry regiment). According to historian Robert Satloff, under the Vichy regime the label “pioneer” was synonymous with prisoner. The camp also housed a number of Arab nationalist prisoners.

The camp was under the control of Capitaine Suchet, who subjected the Jews to harsh treatment and humiliation. Most of the guards were members of the Vichy paramilitary organization, Service of the Legionary Order Service (*Service d'ordre Légionnaire*, SOL), that was notorious for its antisemitic doctrine. Jewish prisoners were required to hike daily for 20 to 25 kilometers (12 to 15 miles). Capitaine Suchet and his associates unsuccessfully attempted to sow infighting between Arab and Jewish prisoners. The prisoners were also subjected to the “tomb” punishment (burial in the sand) for days at a time.¹

SOURCES Secondary sources that mention the Cheragas camp are Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust's Long Reach in Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006).

Primary sources on the Cheragas camp can be found in USHMMA, RG-43.071M (CDJC, Selected records from collection LII Algeria 1871–1947).

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NOTE

1. July 1943 report, CDJC, 385–387, as cited by Satloff, *Among the Righteous*, p. 104.

CHERCHEL

The town of Cherchel (Cherchell, Cherchelles) is located in northwestern Algeria on the Mediterranean coast. It is 78 kilometers (48 miles) west of Algiers, 396 kilometers (246 miles) due west of Constantine, and 235 kilometers (146 miles) northwest of Djelfa. The Cherchel camp was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

Before the Armistice, Cherchel was a reception center for Spanish refugees (*Centre d'Hébergement des Réfugiés Espagnol*) established in the autumn of 1939 along with the Ben-Chicao camp.¹ As of December 30, 1939, there were 290 refugees at Cherchel; another 110 refugees were supposed to be transferred soon thereafter to Cherchel from the neighboring Boghar camp.² The projected budget for 1940 totaled 1,282,312 francs, covering among other things the costs of food, administration, heating, lighting, hygiene, and transportation.³

The most common occupations among the refugees at Cherchel were farmers, accountants, office employees, teachers, sailors, and mechanics.⁴ Once war broke out, numerous Spanish refugees at Cherchel appealed to the French authorities, offering their services (such as drivers and mechanics) for national defense. Those deemed physically able could be employed by a company of foreign workers (*Compagnie de Travailleurs Étrangers*, CTE).

On March 18, 1940, nine refugees at Cherchel, including one female, were reassigned to Boghar.⁵ On the same day the head of the Naval Construction Service (*Service des Construction Navales*) in Algeria reported that seven Cherchel inmates were working in marine factories.⁶ According to a report issued on April 11, 1940, 55 Cherchel inmates were transferred to the Boghar camp.⁷ At one point Cherchel had 260 detainees, none of whom were political suspects.⁸

A notable internee at Cherchel was the Spaniard José Campos Peral. He was the editor of *Lucha*, a Republican newspaper in Almeria, Spain, that was opposed to Francisco Franco. When Franco's forces won, Peral fled to Oran, Algeria, and was interned at Cherchel. In June 1940 he was deployed with other Cherchel detainees to work on the railroad at Bou Arfa. He subsequently served as a guide for the American journalist Kenneth G. Crawford.

On April 1, 1942, Cherchel held indigenous prisoners.⁹ The governor general of Algeria recommended on April 22 that El Hachemi Abdelaziz, the sheikh of Zaouia Kadrya at El-Oued, be placed in monitored residence at Cherchel.¹⁰ At one point Cherchel had a total of 220 demobilized foreign laborers.¹¹ Staffing the camp hospitals at Cherchel, Boghar, and Kenadza was one Spanish nurse, Francisco Comba.¹²

After Operation Torch began on November 8, 1942, the detainees at Cherchel were progressively returned to civilian life, but the camp was still in use well into 1943.

SOURCES The secondary sources mentioning the Cherchel camp are Michel Ansky, *Les Juifs d'Algérie, du décret Crémieux à la Libération* (Paris: Éditions du Centre, 1950); Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); and Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975).

Primary sources documenting the Cherchel camp can be found in CAOM, available at USHMMA under RG-43.062M, reels 6, 7, 9, and 10; and the AFSC Refugee Assistance Case files, available in hard copy at USHMMA as Acc. No. 2002.296.

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NOTES

1. “Le Préfet d'Alger à Monsieur le Gouverneur Générale de l'Algérie,” August 16, 1939, USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 9, p. 1.

2. “Observations,” December 30, 1939, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

3. “Articles: Nature des Dépenses Sommes prévues,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.

4. "Centre d'Hébergement de Cherchell, Agriculteurs (de 28 à 35 ans)," n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, pp. 47-56.
5. "Alger le 18 mars 1940, réfugiés espagnols dirigés sur Boghar," March 18, 1940, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.
6. "Marine Nationale, Service des Construction Navales en Algérie," March 18, 1940, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, p. 1.
7. "Le nombre de réfugiés espagnols à diriger sur le camp militaire de Boghar est de 104," April 11, 1940, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.
8. "Récapitulation Generale," n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, p. 78.
9. "Copie, Liberation d'Internés du Centre de Séjour Surveillée de Mecheria," April 1, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 7, n.p.
10. "Liste des Individus Places en Résidence Surveillée," October 19, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.
11. "Tableau Annexe I," n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.
12. "M. Francisci, Jean Charles," n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, n.p.; "Nurse," n.d., USHMMA, Acc. No. 2002.296 (AFSC), Casablanca Series, box 2 (C-F), folder AFSC Casablanca Subject Files "C" 1942-1945, Subfolder Comba, Francisco," n.p.

COLOMB-BÉCHAR

Located 58 kilometers (36 miles) south of the Moroccan border and 748 kilometers (approximately 465 miles) southwest of Algiers, Colomb-Béchar (today: Béchar) is an Algerian town at the foot of Mount Béchar. The town housed the command center of the southern Algerian territory, which administered many camps along the Moroccan-Algerian frontier. It was also the location of many train stations for the railway line along the Moroccan border that was administered by the Mediterranean Niger Company (*Chemins de Fer de la Méditerranée au Niger*, MN, or *Mer-Niger*). In 1942, the Colomb-Béchar camp opened as a detention center and labor camp for several groups of foreign workers (*Groupements des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTEs). GTE No. 5 prisoners worked in the nearby Béchar-Jdid coal mines, whereas GTE Nos. 2, 21, and 22 repaired railways. Colomb-Béchar and its environs thus held many satellite camps for groups of forced laborers who took part in Mer-Niger railroad construction.

On August 2, 1942, Dr. Wyss-Dunant of the International Red Cross (ICRC) visited the Colomb-Béchar camp of GTE No. 22 and recorded that there were 112 prisoners at this location: 75 were inside the camp and 37 were away on labor assignments. They included 97 Spaniards, 3 Germans, 3 Poles, 1 Austrian, 1 Belgian, 1 Czech, 1 Italian, 1 Luxembourger, 1 Portuguese, 1 Russian, 1 Latvian, and 1 Swiss.¹ He noted that the camp's normal capacity was no more than 60 prisoners. The camp was set up in an oasis under the shade of palm trees and consisted of many canvas tents and six *marabout* (large) tents. Wyss-Dunant noted how the guards treated the members of the various GTEs differently. The prisoners of GTE

No. 22 were in relatively good health and had access to water, showers, and some leisure time. They served as an advance group in the construction of the Mengoub and Menabba rail stations at which GTE Nos. 1, 21, and 22 were stationed. The group was handed over to the control of the general governor of Algeria after August 20, 1942, when 205 Polish prisoners were transferred to Colomb-Béchar.

Under the supervision of the Algiers Regional Office of Labor, the 205 Polish prisoners were part of the group of demobilized foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers Démobilisés*, GTED), GTED No. 2. Members of GTED No. 2 were tank specialists, aviation experts, and bridge builders who had served in the French Army before the Armistice. They were brought to Colomb-Béchar from Mascara in northern Algeria after attempting to escape. As punishment they were compelled to work on the Mer-Niger railroad. They were housed in a subcamp near Colomb-Béchar, in which there were tile-covered barracks that lacked ceiling insulation. The prisoners slept on straw mats laid on the dirt floor. Each prisoner had access to one blanket. The camp had sufficient water for washing, drinking, and showering. The prisoners also had access to dental services twice weekly and were allowed to go to the neighboring town and the recreation halls of other subcamps around Colomb-Béchar.

Prisoner pay differed according to group category. The first group, made up of Polish prisoners, was paid 45 to 50 francs daily in addition to a food allowance of less than 15 francs. Those in the second category were paid, fed, and lodged by private employers. The third group received 4 to 12 francs a day for light work inside the camp. Those who broke the law were sent to the jail of the neighboring Moll camp. The Polish prisoners complained about excessive heat, cold, and long work days: from 6:00 to 11:15 A.M. and 4:00 to 7:00 P.M. In September 1942, the residents-general of Morocco and Algeria began negotiating the exchange of these prisoners for Spanish workers from a Moroccan camp and moving the Poles to a place close to the mountains that had a climate similar to that of northern Europe.

The third main group of prisoners in Colomb-Béchar was GTE No. 21, which was under the authority of the Directorate of Industrial Production (*Direction de la Production Industrielle*) headquartered in Rabat. According to Wyss-Dunant, GTE No. 21 consisted of 747 men who worked on the Mer-Niger railway line (696 were Spaniards and 51 were other nationalities). The camp had stone barracks covered with red tiles. Each barrack housed 50 prisoners who slept on beds with springs but no mattresses. Each had access to two blankets. The floor was made of beaten earth and cement. Wyss-Dunant also reported that prisoners were fed 500 grams (1.1 pounds) of bread per day. They were given meat four days a week, a half-liter (just over a pint) of wine per meal, and dessert on Thursdays and Sundays.

GTE No. 21 prisoners wore shorts, shirts, and sandals during the summer and were given a cloth work suit during the winter. Specialized workers were paid between 1,400 to

1,500 francs per month, whereas unskilled workers received only 5.25 francs in addition to bonus pay per day. Religious prisoners attended church in Colomb-Béchar. The prisoners had access to showers and a pool at the garrison infirmary every three days.

The prisoners had the opportunity to visit two Mer-Niger company doctors at the Béchar hospital. They also received medical assistance from two Spanish doctors in the camp. Minor illnesses were handled by a male nurse in the camp infirmary. As in other sections of the Colomb-Béchar camp, there were no libraries in the GTE No. 21 satellite camp. However, the prisoners had access to recreational and music programs in the camp hall, as well as to games of football and chess. Most of the complaints were about the poor quality of the food. Many prisoners were able to send the money they earned to their families.

According to a cursory Belgian report submitted to the International Tracing Service (ITS), GTE No. 2 was housed in unused cavalry barracks. Its guards were unarmed civilians, and the prisoners included at least one Belgian.²

SOURCES Secondary sources that mention the Colomb-Béchar camps are Jacob Oliel, *Les Juifs de Colomb-Béchar et des Villages de la Saoura 1903–1962* (Orléans: self-published, 2003); Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust's Long Reach in Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); Christine Levisse-Touzé, “Les camps d'internement en Afrique du Nord pendant la seconde guerre mondiale,” in ‘Abd-al-Ġalīl at-Tamīmī and Charles-Robert Ageron, eds., *Mélanges Charles-Robert Ageron*, 2 (Zaghouan: Fondation Temimi pour la Recherche Scientifique et l'Information, 1996), 2: 601–608; and Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975).

Primary sources documenting the Colomb-Béchar camps can be found in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M); AFSC (available at USHMMA as RG-67.008M, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa); NaP, JAF 1007: MSP-L (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-48.011M); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA. VHA has one testimony by a Colomb-Béchar prisoner, Louis Cohn (#9399, February 12, 1996).

Aomar Boum

NOTES

1. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC collection), n.d., box 1, folder 15.

2. “Notice sur Colomb-Béchar,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371152; Annexe 33, Liste 15, “Liste des Belges passés par Colomb-Béchar,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371268.

CONAKRY

The Conakry internment camp was located in the capital city of Conakry in French Guinea in French West Africa (*Afrique occidentale française*, AOF), approximately 705 kilometers (438 miles) southeast of Dakar and 1,412 kilometers (almost 762 miles) southwest of Tombouctou. The city was also the terminus of a railway that ran from Kankan on the upper Niger River, spanning 330 miles. The Conakry camp was originally located solely on Tombo Island in the Atlantic Ocean, which served as a port of entry for both naval vessels and aircraft. It later was relocated to a swamp four miles out of town and then again to a former school in town. It held foreign internees.

The Vichy government was in charge of the zone from June 1940 to January 1943, and its governor general, Pierre Boisson, directed all internment camps in the AOF. The camp at Conakry was known as “Seven Kilometers” (*Sept Kilometres*).

The Royal Navy prize merchant ship, the *SS Criton*, was sunk by the Vichy ship *Air France IV* on Saturday, June 21, 1941. The *Criton* crew totaled 24 men, and all were interned at Conakry.¹ Immediately after the sinking its passengers were also interned at Conakry: the total number of internees, including both the *Criton's* crew and its passengers, was 52. The passengers were later sent to Sierra Leone.² The *Criton* crew was found guilty of piracy by a Vichy French naval court-martial.³

During the *Criton's* crew's three-month stay at Conakry, the crews of the *Allende Samsø*, *Vulcain*, and *Pandias* were also interned there. Internee H. J. W. Flett testified that, in 1941, some British civilians were detained there as well in poor living conditions. The rations were meager and of poor quality, consisting chiefly of rice, beans, and macaroni; the internees were also given a cup of coffee and a piece of bread in the morning.⁴ The rations just barely kept the internees from starving.⁵ They did not have shoes. Officers and sailors were kept in common quarters (in violation of the Geneva Convention of 1929), and guards escorted their charges to the latrines with bayonets.⁶

The seamen of the *Criton* were interned successively at Conakry, Tombouctou, and Kankan. Peter de Neumann (the second officer aboard the *Criton*, later named “the Man from Timbuktu” by the *Daily Express*) was interned at all three camps. Internee N. T. Clear described as “rather a strange coincidence” that at all three camps the native military band was sent to rehearse in the internees' near vicinity. He claimed, “We (the prisoners) were inclined to wonder if this was part of our punishment.”⁷

It rained constantly for the three months that the *Criton* crew was interned at Conakry. The internees were not issued clothing during their internment. They were accommodated in circular huts that were 5.2 meters (17 feet) in diameter—10 men in each hut—and each slept on a platform of branches. The men were given old army blankets, only one apiece, and some were too small to provide adequate cover.⁸ Each hut

had only one small entrance without ventilation. Sometimes due to the heavy rain the men were confined to their huts for an entire week. The internees did not receive the Red Cross parcels sent to them.⁹

There were already prisoners in the Conakry camp when they arrived, and the *Criton* crew was kept separate from them by barbed wire and posted sentries. Their food was supplied by a hotel in the town of Conakry, to which the Vichy authorities paid 40 francs per day per internee. The local population of Conakry occasionally gave unauthorized gifts of bananas or cakes to the internees. The British Anglican priest in Conakry, Father de Coteau, made a special effort to assist the camp internees. The Conakry hospital designated two wards for the sick internees, and those 30 beds were always full.¹⁰

George Whalley, the second radio officer aboard the *Criton*, remembers that the crew had to “trudge through ankle [deep] mud to answer the calls of nature.”¹¹ The latrines were open trenches in open view of the families of the African troops. Each morning the men were escorted to a line of 10 taps to bathe and do their washing. There was no privacy, and the taps were also used by the African families living near the camp. Whalley attributes the ill health of the internees to two main causes: (1) the location of the camp on a swamp teeming with malarial mosquitoes, with no mosquito netting for the beds, and (2) malnutrition.

The location of the Conakry camp changed six weeks into the stay of the *Criton* crew: it was moved from the swamp outside the town to the Tomba Grammar School in Conakry, and the housing situation improved considerably. There the crew occupied a single-story building of three rooms, and the compound had adequate exercise space, unlike “Sept Kilometres.” The new location provided the internees with an iron bed and a piece of matting, but because the beds crawled with bugs, many men elected to sleep on the floor. Here the latrines were in trenches, and the bathing took place in a well outdoors in full public view.¹²

During George Whalley’s internment, the Vichy authorities psychologically tortured the crew by lying to them that they would be repatriated to Freetown shortly. Whalley was hospitalized for four or five weeks and had a very high opinion of the medical services.¹³ Eight *Criton* seamen who were hospitalized were left at Conakry after the majority of the crew departed for Tombouctou; these eight detainees were transferred to Kankan in September 1941.¹⁴ An airgram from the U.S. consulate in Dakar dated December 1, 1942, documents that non-British sailors and British or British chartered merchantmen were interned at Bamako, Kankan, and Conakry camps. These detainees included 4 Irishmen, 1 Spaniard, 13 Norwegians, 1 Czechoslovakian, and 20 Dutch.¹⁵

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the Conakry internment camp is Catherine Akpo-Vaché, *L’AOF et la Seconde Guerre mondiale, septembre 1939–octobre 1945* (Paris: Karthala Éditions, 1996). An unpublished but detailed account of the camp is Bernard de Neumann, “Sand in their Seaboats: The Story of the SS CRITON” (unpub. MSS, 2004).

This account is based in part on documentation about his father’s internment.

Primary sources on the Conakry internment camp can be found in TNA, FO 371, WAPIC; AN, Pierre Boisson collection; NARA, RG-84, Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the U.S. Department of State, Senegal, Dakar Consulate General, General Records 1940–49; and IWM, “The Private Papers of P Le Q Johnson,” Cat. No. Docs 101, 1988.

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1. De Neumann, “Sand in their Seaboats,” p. 98.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 107.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 87.
4. Interview with H. J. W. Flett, WAPIC Bulletin No. 11, Annex B, 1941, TNA, FO 371/28246, quoted in Akpo-Vaché, *L’AOF et la Seconde Guerre mondiale*, pp. 65, 67.
5. De Neumann, “Sand in their Seaboats,” p. 115.
6. Interview with H. J. W. Flett, pp. 65–67.
7. De Neumann, “Sand in their Seaboats,” p. 126.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 114–115.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 135.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
12. *Ibid.*, p. 137.
13. *Ibid.*
14. *Ibid.*, p. 142.
15. NARA, RG-84 (Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the U.S. Department of State, Senegal, Dakar Consulate General, General Records), 1940–49, box 1, folder 700.

CONSTANTINE

Constantine is located in northeastern Algeria, 357 kilometers (222 miles) northeast of Djelfa and 322 kilometers (200 miles) east of Algiers. The forced labor camp and prison at Constantine were two of the Vichy camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

Constantine was one of four locations where groups of demobilized workers were stationed in the Constantine Département. At one point the forced laborers held in the Constantine camp totaled 400.¹ On August 31, 1942, the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 21, held at the Constantine camp had one commander, an assistant, and two indigenous supervisors on staff. In addition, there were one indigenous superintendent and one indigenous auxiliary official. Of the 251 forced laborers, 250 were indigenous, and only one was French. The Army Service (*Service de l’Armée de Terre*) employed GTE No. 21.²

A fortress at Constantine also served as a prison. According to documentation submitted to the International Tracing Service (ITS) by the kingdom of Belgium, a Belgian national, Séraphin Cartiens, was among the prisoners in the fortress.³

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, after which the detain-

ees at Constantine were progressively returned to civilian life; however, the camp was still in use well into 1943.

SOURCES The secondary sources describing the Constantine detention sites are Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006).

Primary sources documenting the detention sites at Constantine can be found in CAOM, available at USHMMA under RG-43.062M, reels 6 and 8; ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

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1. “Tableau Annexe I Organisation-Stationnement et Effectifs des Unités de Travailleurs Démobilisés,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 6, p. 4.

2. “Lieux de stationnement du Groupement et des différent Groupes composant le Groupement,” October 7, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, pp. 1–2.

3. Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), Annexe No. 33, Liste No. 24, December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371277.

CRAMPEL

Crampel is located in northwest Algeria, 434 kilometers (270 miles) southwest of Algiers and 192 kilometers (119 miles) southwest of Relizane. Crampel was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

Together with the neighboring sites at Boghar and Saïda, Crampel was a camp for a group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE) formed in Southern Oran (*Sud Oranais*). Altogether, there were 100 Jewish forced laborers in the three camps. Each camp had a canteen. The commandant of Crampel was named M. Roger Auger, and the supervisor (*surveillant*) was Vincelet.¹

The prisoners at Crampel had to work 10 hours per day in the heat of the “semi-desert,” where the only crop that grew was alfalfa. Meals consisted of insufficient soup (such as beets), fried cucumber, or onions cooked in water. Most of the prisoners had to sell their last personal effects, such as shirts and sweaters, to supplement their rations.² The American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) at Marseille administered aid to Crampel; in the summer of 1942 prisoner Erwin Müller, a physician, received 860 francs, and in the fall of 1942 he received 645 francs.³

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942. Müller testified that the Allied invasion was “a day of unheard-of persecutions” that was “dramatic” for the Crampel prisoners.⁴ Neither Auger nor Vincelet notified the prisoners whether the Americans or Ger-

mans had occupied Oran. The chief of the alfalfa factories, Ollier, forbade the civilian workers from passing along any war news to the Crampel prisoners. The members of the French Legion of Veterans (*Légion française des combattants*, LFC) and the French Foreign Legion (*Légion Étrangère*, LE) were mobilized, and the prisoners were told that anyone who left their quarters risked being shot.⁵

It was not until the next day, on November 9, that refugee Erwin Müller discovered that the Allies had landed in North Africa. That afternoon, relying on his “exceptional position as physician of the detachment known by the government,” he spoke with Auger.⁶ Their conversation went as follows:

MÜLLER: In case new Franco-American authorities should arrive at Crampel, I beg you, Monsieur, to ask their authorization for me to talk to them, in your presence, in order to better explain to them our special situation as refugees.

AUGER: But that’s conspiring with the enemy!

MÜLLER: With the enemy?

AUGER: Yes, because the government has ordered resistance. What you want to do is contrary to its orders.

MÜLLER: But the Americans are not our enemies. They are the friends of France, and the friends of our Spanish and German refugees, too.

AUGER: We shall see about that.⁷

That night, troops of the French Foreign Legion roused Müller. Based in Bedeau, 9 kilometers (5.6 miles) from Crampel, the LE unit was commanded by Sergent-Chef Fischer, a German. The unit threatened to hang Müller from the nearest tree and also seized a German biologist named Levy at Crampel because he expressed joy to Vincelet about the arrival of the American troops. Both men were labeled “undesirables” and transported to the LE prison at Bedeau. They were held at Bedeau until November 17, 1942, when they were sent to the Boghar camp. Müller made it clear that German and Austrian refugees did not have anyone to advocate for them following the Allied landing and that discrimination against the Jews in North Africa continued.⁸

After 1942 the detainees at Crampel were progressively returned to civilian life, but the camp was still in use well into 1943.

SOURCES Secondary sources that mention Crampel are Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); Michel Ansky, *Les Juifs d’Algérie, du décret Crémieux à la Libération* (Paris: Éditions du Centre, 1950); and Joëlle Allouche-Benayoun and Doris Ben-simon, *Les Juifs d’Algérie: Memoires et identités plurielles* (Paris: Éditions Stavit, 1998).

Primary source material available for Crampel can be found in collection LIII Algeria, 1871–1947, at CDJC, available in microform at USHMMA as RG-43.071M; and AFSC, records

relating to humanitarian work in North Africa, available at USHMMA as RG-67.008M.

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1. Notes réunies sur les groupements de TÉ du Sud Oranais, n.d., LIII-25, USHMMA, RG-43.071M (CDJC), n.p.; and USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), n.d., box 1, folder 33.
2. Copy, Translation from French, Oran (Algeria, 11/25/42), USHMMA, RG-67.008M, box 1, folder 33, pp. 70–72.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. Ibid.
7. Ibid.
8. Ibid.

DJEBEL-FELTEN

Djebel-Felten was an internment camp in Algeria located 311 kilometers (193 miles) southeast of Algiers and 23 kilometers (14 miles) southwest of Constantine. The Vichy regime used Djebel-Felten, which was already operational in the first half of 1940 under the Third French Republic, as a confinement center (*Centre de Séjour Surveillance*, CSS) to hold prisoners deemed “undesirable from the political or public security point of view.”¹

Following the Franco-German Armistice, a group of 142 indigenous soldiers in the French Foreign Legion (*Légion Étrangère*, LE) was purged from the French Army. The governor general of Algeria and Général de Corps d’Armée Henri Martin, commandant of the 19th Region, selected Djebel-Felten as a suitable location for detaining the former soldiers pending their release.² Although Djebel-Felten had an official capacity of 300 detainees, it held 425 prisoners—including 195 French and 230 Algerians—on April 1, 1941. There were 495 foreigners in total held at that time as prisoners in Djebel-Felten and the camp at Djelfa.³

The 2ème Bureau (Second Bureau of the French General Staff, Intelligence) in Constantine delivered intelligence about the detainees by telephone to the Djebel-Felten camp commandant. This office also developed the camp’s general regulations. The camp administration included the commander, an assistant who acted as the general supervisor, two subordinate officer supervisors, and one accountant.⁴ The head of the camp was variously termed a capitaine or commandant in conflicting reports.⁵ The camp management also included two adjutants; one doctor; an auxiliary doctor; an adjutant who acted as the head of the adjutants; six accounting secretaries and typists (including those intended for the doctors); ten nurses; two drivers; four orderly cyclists; two truck drivers; two cooks (one for the infirmary); and three servers or busboys.⁶

The detainees were divided into groups, generally by ethnicity, and then they selected their own group leaders. The camp was guarded day and night. Punishments were meted out in the vicinity of the nearby police station. There was a sys-

tem in place for detainees to file complaints, with twice-weekly adjudication by the camp commander. Daily roll calls took place at morning, afternoon (after lunch), and night.⁷

On arrival, prisoner mail was checked by the camp postman (*vaguemestre*), who was also a camp officer, so that it was censored before the prisoners received it. Letters sent from the camp were left open, deposited in a special box, and censored by the postman before mailing. In the presence of an officer, visitors met with individual prisoners at an isolated location in the camp. Trips outside the camp were possible under guard supervision. The camp intended to employ the detainees in their respective civilian trades, such as masonry and carpentry.⁸

Prisoners received the same food as the guards, with cooks drawn from among the guards and prisoners. The French authorities furnished drinking water.⁹ The camp had electric lighting. The detainees slept on covered benches.¹⁰ The bath soap was the same for detainees and guards, but showers were taken only every 15 to 21 days depending on water availability. The prisoners were responsible for camp laundry. One internee served as a barber. As for clothing, the detainees wore what was on their person when they arrived. When necessary, the army requested items from the Vichy colonial authority. The authorities provided either a military or civilian doctor to ill patients. The Djebel-Felten infirmary had beds, but cases of serious illness were referred to the nearby military hospital in Constantine.¹¹ The prisoners’ health was assessed in July 1941, with those deemed too old or incurable released.¹²

Despite being under careful watch, several prisoners escaped from Djebel-Felten. Ahmed Benmoumen escaped the camp and was arrested by the mobile brigade of Sidi-Bel-Abbès.¹³ While in police custody he escaped from the Sidi-Bel-Abbès prison.¹⁴ Lucien Chiche escaped Djebel-Felten on May 24, 1941. After his recapture, he was relocated to the Mecheria camp, 682 kilometers (424 miles) southwest of Djebel-Felten, where he was released for good behavior.¹⁵ Allel Muhammed attempted to escape Djebel-Felten on February 22, 1941. He was also recommended for release after transfer to Mecheria.¹⁶ Agha Abdelkader escaped Djebel-Felten on May 6, 1941.¹⁷

On June 5, 1941, the Constantine prefect demanded the immediate liquidation of the camp at Djebel-Felten and proposed to relocate the “undesirables” to the Mecheria internment camp.¹⁸ This proposal may have coincided with plans to transfer the control of Djebel-Felten to the local authorities.¹⁹ The camp nonetheless continued to operate. In November 1941, Amar Laid ben Mohamed was interned to Djebel-Felten by a *douair* (a Muslim engaged in auxiliary police service) named Bougzouf stationed in Boghari. He was punished for repeated instances of cattle theft and burglary and was later transferred to the Mecheria camp. Prisoner files underscore the close association between the Djebel-Felten and Mecheria camps. Jean Sanchez, Charles Buriez, Mohammed Saddock, and Louis Schosmann were just some of the many prisoners transferred from Djebel-Felten to Mecheria from 1940 to 1941.²⁰

Prisoner files also document attempts by outside authorities, including French prefects, to secure the release of certain detainees; there are also documented efforts made by the detainees themselves to secure their release. The Vaucluse prefect recommended Jacques Cardi for liberation and clemency on August 9, 1941.²¹ Cardi's parents resided in his prefecture. A similar request came from the city of Nancy for the release of Alfred Baderot. Although Baderot was rumored to be a communist, the special commissioner of Nancy asserted that he was only guilty of subversive activity in cafés, not of distributing extremist propaganda.²² Auguste Ricardo appealed for clemency in 1942.²³ Haubraiche was recommended for liberation in a letter dated May 21, 1941.²⁴

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942. After 1942 the prisoners were progressively returned to civilian life.²⁵

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the Djebel-Felten camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary source material documenting the Djebel-Felten camp can be found in CAOM, available at USHMMA under RG-43.062M.

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1. Note de Service Nr. 4508 7/2 du 7/12/40 du Général Commandant la 19^{ème} Région, February 12, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 6, n.p.

2. Gouverneur Général de l'Algérie à Monsieur le Général de Corps d'Armée, Commandant la 19^{ème} Région, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.

3. "Les internés sont groupés dans les camps par ordre des Autorités françaises tant que l'exigent le sécurité de l'État et l'ordre public," April 1, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, p. 7.

4. Copie: Renseignements Sommaires sur l'Organisation et le Fonctionnement du Camp d'Internés Politiques du Djebel-Felten (Constantine), USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.

5. Ibid.; "Liaison," USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, p. 6.

6. Ibid.

7. Copie: Renseignements Sommaires sur l'Organisation et le Fonctionnement du Camp d'Internés Politiques du Djebel-Felten (Constantine).

8. Fragmentary document concerning the vagemestre, n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.

9. Ibid.

10. "VI. DIVERS," USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.

11. Fragmentary document concerning the vagemestre, n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.

12. Copie: Conforme Transmise à Monsieur le Gouverneur Général de l'Algérie, July 22, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.

13. Copie: Renseignements Sommaires sur l'Organisation et le Fonctionnement du Camp d'Internés Politiques du Djebel-Felten (Constantine).

14. Le Préfet du département d'Oran à Monsieur le Gouverneur Général de l'Algérie, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 7, n.p.

15. Gouverneur Général de l'Algérie à Monsieur le Préfet du département d'Oran, January 31, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 7, n.p.

16. Ibid.

17. Colonel Liebray, Commandant Militaire du Territoire d'Aïn Séfra en résidence à Colomb-Béchar à Monsieur le Gouverneur Général de l'Algérie, January 16, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 7, n.p.

18. Note: Directeur de la Sécurité Générale à Monsieur le Directeur des Territoires des Sud, June 5, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.

19. "VI. DIVERS," USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.

20. "Surveillante Suspects, État Français," August 12, 1941, "Buriez, Charles," "Saddock, Mohammed," Le Préfet d'Alger à Monsieur le Gouverneur Général de l'Algérie, July 30, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 7, n.p.

21. Préfet de Vaucluse à Monsieur le Gouverneur Général de l'Algérie, August 9, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 7, n.p.

22. Copie: Commissaire Spécial de Nancy, August 19, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 7, n.p.

23. Note à Monsieur le Directeur de la Sécurité Générale, s/c de M. le Secrétaire Général du Gouvernement, January 12, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 7, n.p.

24. Préfet d'Ille-et-Vilaine à Monsieur le Préfet de Constantine, Algérie, July 29, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 7, n.p.

25. Fragmentary document concerning the vagemestre, n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.

DJELFA

Built as a French military post in 1852, Djelfa is located at the crossroad between Laghouat, Bou-Saada, and Aflou, approximately 232 kilometers (134 miles) south of Algiers. In 1921, Djelfa became the southern terminus of the railroad to Blida. As a central colonial post, Djelfa attracted a Jewish community of about 400 people, mostly from Ghardaia and Bou-Saada.

Under the Vichy regime, the Djelfa camp served as a center for residential assignment (*assignation à résidence*) and a forced labor camp. On March 25, 1941, the camp was opened to receive approximately 1,200 French "undesirables" (*indésirables*) who were later transferred to different camps. The camp was also used to detain Spanish republicans, former members of the French Foreign Legion (*Légion Étrangère*, LE) and of the International Brigade (Interbrigade), Jews, and people of other nationalities.¹ The camp was also a disciplinary site for French and foreign political prisoners.

Built on the right bank of the Djelfa River, about 1 kilometer (0.6 miles) north of the military post, the Djelfa camp consisted mostly of tents. Between 12 to 20 men occupied each tent, and most slept on the ground on hay. There were shortages of sleeping mats, blankets, towels, and underwear. Many detainees suffered from extreme cold during the winter and

heat in the summer. The lack of shoes also put the prisoners at risk of scorpion and snake bites.

According to Dr. Wyss-Dunant, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) representative who visited the camp on August 16, 1942, the camp commandant used the prisoners in such a way as to make the camp virtually self-sufficient. The commandant accomplished that feat by “dividing the men according to their special skills and in establishing workshops where these skills could be utilized.”² The prisoners erected the barracks and manufactured everything for the camp. According to Wyss-Dunant, “the blacksmiths built a complete forge, some carpenters their workshop, and they made all the necessary things for the camp. There were some tanners in the group and the commandant in anticipation of the coming winter put them to work making clothing (and shoes) from sheep skin. Moreover, as alfalfa is very plentiful in the country, he set up a workshop for the manufacture of hammocks, sandals, mats and mattresses.”³ Later the prisoners built a canteen and community hall and ran a soap manufacturing operation. The prisoners worked from 6 A.M. to 11 A.M. and from 3 P.M. to 6 P.M. The detainees who worked in the town of Djelfa were paid 20 francs a day, 10 of which was put into the camp’s general account and 5 in an account reserved for their eventual release. The prisoners who worked inside the camp were paid 16 francs a day.

Most of the prisoners slept on wooden beds. They ate 50 grams (1.7 ounces) of bread per day and meat three times a week. They raised cattle in the camp and maintained small fruit and vegetable gardens. According to many prisoners there was little food, and some resorted to eating rats and dogs to survive.⁴

In his visit to the camp, Dr. Wyss-Dunant counted 899 prisoners (189 of whom were Jewish). They included Spaniards (444); Poles (52; 44 were Jewish); stateless people (118); Germans (50; 16 were Jewish); Austrians (15; 11 were Jewish); Hungarians (15; 11 were Jewish); Romanians (11, all Jewish); Russians (39; 17 were Jewish); Soviets (85; 37 were Jewish); Czechs (8); Slavs (2); Armenians (6); British (2); Belgians (3); Italians (2); Serbians (1); and Argentinians (3). The remaining prisoners were of several other nationalities.⁵

The Djelfa camp held a number of prominent French and Spanish individuals. The most notable prisoner was Bernard Lecache, the president of the International League against Antisemitism (*Ligue Internationale contre l'antisémitisme*, LICA), who had been transferred from the Bossuet camp. Another well-known prisoner was the Spanish Mexican novelist and literary critic, Max Aub Mohrenwitz. Aub was first imprisoned as a militant communist at the Vichy penal camp at Le Vernet d’Ariège before being deported to Djelfa. In 1942 he escaped and hid in a Jewish maternity hospital in Casablanca with the help of the Hebrew Immigration Committee (HICEM). On September 10, 1942, he fled to Mexico City aboard the Portuguese ship, *Serpa Pinto*. Aub was one of the few Djelfa prisoners who recorded memories of life in the camp in his works and poetry.

Capitaine Chabrol was the first camp commandant; he was succeeded by Général Jules César Caboche. Caboche announced to the prisoners that he was their enemy and that his job was to send as many of them as possible to the cemetery. Prisoners who violated camp rules were sent to the neighboring prison at Fort Caffarelli. Suffering from malnutrition, typhoid, dysentery, and dehydration, more than 50 prisoners died in the camp. In early December 1942, there were 870 inmates, mostly Spaniards, in the Djelfa camp.⁶

SOURCES Secondary sources describing the Djelfa camp are André Moine, *La Déportation et la résistance en Afrique du Nord (1939–1944)*, preface by Léon Feix (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972); Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing, 1975). For more on Aub, see Eloisa Nos Aldás, “El testimonio literario de Max Aub sobre los campos de concentración en Francia (1940–1942)” (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, Universitat Jaume I, 2001); and Ofelia Ferrán, “Los Campos de la Memoria: The Concentration Camp as a Site of Memory in the Narrative of Max Aub” (unpub. Ph.D. thesis, University of Minnesota, 2009).

Primary sources on the Djelfa camp can be found in the private collection of Hélène Cazès-Benathar, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M). Additional unpublished documentation can be found in AFSC (available at USHMMA as RG-67.008M). CAOM holds several files related to Djelfa (available in microform as USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, files 9H115, 9H116, and 9H117; and reel 7, file 9H120). USHMMA also holds the Hans Landesberg collection (Acc. No. 2004.295), which contains some Djelfa documentation, and an oral history interview with Harry Alexander (RG-50.030*0007; interviewed April 4, 1991). The Alexander interview is one of the most detailed accounts of Djelfa. VHA holds two testimonies by Djelfa survivors, including Charles Flejszer, January 16, 1996 (#8104). Published testimonies on the Djelfa camp are Paul D’Hérama, *Tournant Dangereux: Mémoires d’un péporté politique en Afrique du nord (1940–1945)* (La Rochelle: Imprimerie Jean Foucher & Cie, 1957); and the following memoirs by Max Aub: *Campo francés* (Paris: Ruedo ibérico, 1965); “*San Juan*,” *tragedia* (Mexico City: Ediciones Tezontle, 1943); and *Diario de Djelfa* (Mexico City: J. Mortiz, 1970).

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NOTES

1. D’Hérama, *Tournant Dangereux*, pp. 92–93.
2. Wyss-Dunant report, August 16, 1942, USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), box 1, folder 15.
3. Ibid.
4. USHMMA, RG-50.030*0007, Harry Alexander, oral history interview, April 4, 1991; D’Hérama, *Tournant Dangereux*, p. 116.
5. Wyss-Dunant report, August 16, 1942, USHMMA, RG-67.008M, box 1, folder 15.
6. USHMMA, RG-67.008M, box 1, folder 33, pp. 47–48.

DJENIEN BOU REZG

Built primarily as a fortified military post by General Delebecque in March 1885 to control movement of people and goods between the Moroccan oasis of Figuig and Aïn Sefra, Djenien Bou Rezg was located about 48 kilometers (30 miles) southwest of Aïn Sefra in Algeria. Before World War II the site was used for the political exile of French communists and Algerian Muslim nationalists. In 1940, under the authority of Vichy's military commanders, Djenien Bou Rezg became a detention site and "punishment camp" for political prisoners from France and North Africa; the prisoners were subjected to harsh punishment in the Saharan interior there. The camp was officially closed in 1943.

Capitaine Metzger, a former member of the French Popular Party (*Parti Populaire Français*, PPF) in Tiaret became the first military supervisor of Djenien Bou Rezg in 1940. After its establishment in 1936, the PPF waged a strong antisemitic campaign in Algeria, disseminating antisemitic propaganda among European settlers in Algiers and other cities. On his appointment as military supervisor of Djenien Bou Rezb, Metzger instituted a policy of terror inspired by PPF ideology. His hatred was directed toward all detainees: Jews, Muslims, and communists from France, Spain, Germany, and Austria. Called "undesirables" (*indésirables*) by the Vichy authorities, the prisoners thus faced terror and repression at Djenien Bou Rezg.

On July 1, 1941, the management of the camp was transferred to Lieutenant Pierre de Ricko, a naturalized French citizen of Russian origin, whose subordinates included Louis Villy, a pro-fascist Alsatian; Ali Guesmi, an Arab policeman; Georges Fabre; Hugues Krengel, a former member of the French Foreign Legion (*Légion étrangère*, LE); and other guards such as Ernest Dupont and Julien Dupont.

According to André Moine, Djenien Bou Rezg was a fortress surrounded by a 7-meter (nearly 23-foot) high wall. Isolated from the local population, the camp housed Jewish, Muslim, and European detainees. Before the arrival of de Ricko, the prisoners lived together in one courtyard. De Ricko decided to isolate the detainees in separate sections of the camp and ordered his guards to forbid direct communication between the different groups. Walls surrounded each group of prisoners, limiting their capacity to escape. They slept on a cement floor on mats and so were vulnerable to scorpion stings and snake bites. Hygiene was nonexistent, while food was scarce and nutritionally meager. The prisoners usually got up at 6:00 A.M. After breakfast, which was mostly just coffee, they were grouped into teams, given digging tools, and were marched to work sites where they usually cleared the riverbed of rocks, constructed water reservoirs, or cleared roads. Those who broke camp regulations were placed in solitary confinement for days. Djenien Bou Rezg had an administrative section, which included a kitchen, offices, housing for guards, and a quarter with about 20 prison cells.

In 1941, prisoners from the Saint-Sulpice-la-Pointe camp in Vichy France, primarily French communists and union delegates, were transferred to Djenien Bou Rezg. Approximately

40 political prisoners were also transferred from the Bossuet camp to Djenien Bou Rezg. Some prisoners were moved to other camps in Mecheria (for instance, Benkemoun Israël) and Bossuet (for example, Paul Nahmias), whereas others were moved from Mecheria to Djenien Bou Rezg (including Mardochee Hazana and Abraham Bensoussan) and from the Djelfa camp to Djenien Bou Rezg (including Jacob Zeberou).

Many famous individuals were detained in Djenien Bou Rezg. Bernard Lecache, the president of the International League against Antisemitism (*Ligue internationale contre l'antisémitisme*, LICA), was transferred from the Bossuet camp to Djenien Bou Rezg in 1941 before being moved again to the Djelfa camp in the Ghardaïa region. Members of the International Solidarity of Anti-Fascists (*Solidarité internationale antifasciste*, SIA) were also sent to Djenien Bou Rezg. They included Grau, Joseph Vallet, Blessi, and Stéphanie Helena who provided logistical help to many sympathizers and combatants of the Spanish Civil War. Grau died on January 23, 1942.

Many members of the nationalist Algerian People's Party (*Parti Poulair Algérien*, PPA) were held in Djenien Bou Rezg. They included Maamar ben Bernou, Mohand Amokrane Khelifati, Ahmed Mezerna, and Mohamed Arezki Berkani. Berkani wrote one of the few surviving Muslim testimonies about his experience on the camp.

Members of the Algerian Communist Party were also sent to Djenien Bou Rezg. They included Mahed Badsî, Kaddur Belkaim, Larbi Bouhali, Amar Ouzegane, and Ali Rabia. Belkaim and Rabia died in the camp. In addition, important Algerian religious figures such as Cheikh Azoug Tahar (84 years old) and Cheikh Chetout Ahmed (75 years old) were sent to the camp.

On December 22, 1942, the prisoners went on a hunger strike. De Ricko ordered his guards either to limit their access to doctors at the Aïn Sefra hospital or to forbid their access to medication. Many detainees were put in individual cells and some died. In July 1944, the administrators and military personnel of Djenien Bou Rezg were held responsible for the prisoners' abuse in the camp by a military court.

SOURCES There is a wide range of secondary literature about the camp at Djenien Bou Rezg, including Christine Levisse-Touzé, "Les camps d'internement en Afrique du Nord pendant la seconde guerre mondiale," in 'Abd-al-Galîl at-Tamîmî and Charles-Robert Ageron, eds., *Mélanges Charles-Robert Ageron*, 2 (Zaghouan, Tunisia: Fondation Temimi pour la Recherche Scientifique et l'Information, 1996), 2: 601–608; Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions de Lys, 2005); and Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust's Long Reach in Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006). Background on the Djenien Bou Rezg military post can be found in Bernard Augustin and Napoléon Lacroix, *Algérie: Historique de la pénétration saharienne* (Alger-Mustapha: Giralt, 1900), p. 103; and Paul Gaffarel, *Histoire de l'expansion coloniale de la France: Depuis 1870 jusqu'en 1905* (Marseille: Barlatier, 1906), p. 42.

Primary sources documenting the camp at Djenien Bou Rezg can be found in A-ICRC, C SC Algeria (reports of visits to camps in Algeria, 1942–1944). Additional documentation

can be found in CAOM (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-43.062M, reel 6, files 9H116, 9H117, and 9H118; reel 7, files 9H121 and 9H122; and reel 8, file 9H123). There is an extensive memoir literature on the camp, including Mohamed Arezki Berkani, *Mémoire: "Trois années de camp," un an de camp de concentration, deux ans de centre disciplinaire, Djenien-Bou-Rezg, sud oranais, 1940 à 1943 (régime Vichy)* (Sétif: N.P., 1965). André Moine, a communist militant arrested in August 1939 and detained in Saint-Sulpice-la-Pointe before being sent to Djelfa and Bossuet, is one of the few Algerian camp survivors who collected interviews regarding life in Djenien Bou Rezg and prisoner conditions. His collection is *Déportations et résistances Afrique du Nord 1939–1940* (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972).

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DJERRADA

Djerrada is 263 kilometers (163 miles) east of Fes. Located near the Beni Snassen Mountains in Morocco close to the Algerian border, the Djerrada (or Jerada) camp was under the jurisdiction of the Directorate of Industrial Production (*Direction de la Production Industrielle*). With a capacity of 230 detainees, the camp was reserved for the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 2. The camp opened during the summer of 1941.¹ On July 28, 1942, when Dr. Wyss-Dunant of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited the camp, he counted 145 Spaniards, 33 Germans, 11 Poles, 10 Austrians, 10 Belgians, 5 Yugoslavs, 3 Romanians, and 11 others. There were four internees in the hospital in Oujda (47 kilometers or just over 25 miles northeast of Djerrada), and seven were exempted from labor.²

The camp consisted of six tile-covered barracks. Some barracks were made of concrete and others of wood. The rooms were of different sizes to accommodate the various groups of forced laborers. The double-tiered bunks were made of wood, and the space was generally very crowded. Mattresses were not provided, and the inmates slept mostly on straw.

The forced laborers worked in the nearby coal mines. Skilled workers earned up to 1,000 francs every two weeks. Others were paid between 14 and 60 francs per day. They were provided 625 grams (1.4 pounds) of bread a day, meat six times a week, and a half-liter (more than a pint) of wine daily, in addition to a supplementary ration of a quarter-liter of wine for men who worked in the mine pit. The night shift workers got a double ration for breakfast. A typical breakfast was coffee, 120 grams (4 ounces) of bread, and sauteed liver. Lunch consisted of fresh tomatoes (one per person), roasted lamb, fried squash and eggplant, peaches for dessert, one-quarter liter of wine, and 250 grams (around 8 ounces) of bread, whereas dinner included tomato soup, pancakes à la mode, baked potatoes, tomatoes, onions, a quarter-liter of wine, and 250 grams of bread.

There was a canteen inside the camp and a hall where a few newspapers and magazines were displayed for readers. Mail was delivered daily. Games such as dominoes, cards, and checkers

were available. Toiletries and beer were also sold. The mining administration provided work clothes—each prisoner was issued a pair of shorts, two khaki shirts, and one blue shirt, as well as one better outfit. Outdoor entertainment was limited to after work hours. Each worker was allowed 12 days of annual leave. However, occasionally they were allowed to leave for Oujda if transportation was available. A Mass was celebrated every Sunday at the chapel on site, and a priest visited the camp once a week.

There was one shower in the camp, but the inmates were allowed to use showers at the mine. The infirmary at the mine had one bathroom, which was not clean. Half of the forced laborers worked above ground and the other half in the pit. The health of the pit workers was good overall. In addition to three foreign male nurses, the mining company's doctor and a dentist were present at the camp at all times. The company provided medications. Conditions at Djerrada were relatively good, although some prisoners occasionally complained about the food quality. There were few cases of disciplinary action.

SOURCES A secondary source mentioning the Djerrada camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

A primary source on the Djerrada camp can be found in AFSC (available at USHMMA as RG-67.008M, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

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NOTES

1. "Liste des Belges passes par Bou-Arfa-Djeraba (sic.)," Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371266.
2. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), box 1, folder 15.

EL-ARICHA

El-Aricha (Al-Arisha, Al-Aricha, El-Arisha) is located in the high plateaus of Algeria, 480 kilometers (298 miles) southwest of Algiers, almost 118 kilometers (73 miles) northwest of Mecheria, and just over 303 kilometers (189 miles) north of Colomb-Béchar. The El-Aricha confinement center (*Centre de Séjour Surveillé*, CSS) was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940. It was located in the Oran Département.

As of November 30, 1941, the camp administration consisted of a camp director, an assistant manager, two secretaries, one assistant secretary, and a postman. To supervise the *douair* (Muslims engaged in auxiliary police service) and militia, there were one troop commander, four French officers, three indigenous officers, two French head corporals, and two indigenous corporals. About 50 to 55 *douair* served at the camp. The militia at El-Aricha had a strength on paper of 99 personnel, but just 67 soldiers were deployed.¹

El-Aricha held Frenchmen and indigenous people deemed dangerous to public security.² For that reason the camp was surrounded by barbed wire. In 1941 there were 124 “undesirables” detained in El-Aricha: 74 Frenchmen, including Jews, and 50 indigenous people. In January 1942, there were 65 Frenchmen, including 9 Jews; 95 indigenous people; and 1 foreigner of an unspecified nationality.

El-Aricha prisoners suffered various fates. One inmate, René Devoyon, was selected for “liberation without condition of (forced) residence.”³ Italian prisoner Giuseppe Clemente was imprisoned at El-Aricha in 1941 and later interned at Djelfa the following year.⁴ A prisoner with the first name of Kouider (or Kaddeur) escaped El-Aricha.⁵

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, after which the detainees at El-Aricha were progressively returned to civilian life; however, the camp was still in use well into 1943. In the first six months of 1943 there was an unsuccessful campaign to deploy the inmates from CSS El-Aricha and CSS Bossuet in the mines at Kenadsa.⁶

SOURCES Secondary sources describing El-Aricha are Michel Abitbol, *The Jews of North Africa during the Second World War*, trans. Catherine Tihanyi Zentelis (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989); Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975); Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust’s Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); and André Moine, *La Déportation et la résistance en Afrique du Nord (1939–1944)*, preface by Léon Feix (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972).

Primary source material available for El-Aricha can be found in CAOM, available at USHMMA under RG-43.062M, reels 6 to 9.

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NOTES

1. “Gouvernement Général de l’Algérie, Département d’Oran, Centre de Séjour Surveillé d’El-Aricha,” November 30, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 6, n.p.

2. “Maroc, Chantier de l’Oued Akreuch 198,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 9, p. 6.

3. “Bossuet,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 7, n.p.

4. “Surveillance Suspects: État Français,” March 17, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 7, n.p.; “Surveillances Suspects: État Français, Alger,” USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 7, n.p.; and “Le Général Noguès, Résident Général de France au Maroc à Monsieur la Général Commandant en Chef Weygand, Gouverneur Général de l’Algérie,” October 25, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 7, n.p.

5. “Surveillance suspects camp État Français,” December 5, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.

6. “Surveillance suspects camp, République Française,” May 1943, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.; and “Surveillance suspects,” May 31, 1943, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.

EL-GUERRAH

El-Guerrah (also El-Guerre or Guerrah) is located in northern Algeria, 326 kilometers (203 miles) southeast of Algiers and 25 kilometers (16 miles) south of Constantine. El-Guerrah was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

The secondary sources contradict each other, as well as the primary source material, giving conflicting information about when the El-Guerrah camp was established, the category of forced laborers it held, and where it fit within the structure of forced labor camps in Vichy-run Algeria. Historians Michel Ansky and Zosa Szajkowski agree that El-Guerrah held Jews who were mobilized to do forced labor, but disagree as to the distribution of such camps. Szajkowski contends that each Algerian department housed a concentration camp for Jews mobilized as forced laborers: Cheragas (Algiers), Bedeau (Oran), and El-Guerrah (Constantine). By contrast, Ansky claims that there were two camps for Jews in each department; in Constantine the camps were El-Guerrah and El Meridja. The claim that El-Guerrah held Jewish forced laborers conflicts with extant archival documents, which state that the camp was already in use for indigenous forced laborers by the time of the Allied invasion in 1942.

Archival documents show that there were five sites where demobilized forced laborers were stationed in the Constantine Département, including Constantine, Oued-Zenati-Bone (today: Oued Zenati), and Sétif-Satne-Saint-Arnaud, as well as El-Guerrah. Apart from El-Guerrah and Constantine, it is not clear how many such sites were forced labor camps.¹

At least initially, El-Guerrah held indigenous demobilized workers who were part of the group of demobilized workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Démobilisés*, GTD), GTD No. 1, deployed by the Algerian National Railway. On August 31, 1942, the camp held 60 laborers. On September 30, 1942, the total number of laborers increased by four. At one point, El-Guerrah held a total of 160 demobilized laborers.² El-Guerrah had one superintendent and two supervisors for the group.

According to Ansky, the conditions in El-Guerrah were similar to those in the Magenta concentration camp, known as “the trap of Magenta” (*piège de Magenta*). Magenta’s food, hygiene, and the general political climate were deplorable. Those detained in El-Guerrah faced the same inadequate material conditions and humiliating circumstances.

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, but El-Guerrah continued to operate for some time afterward.

SOURCES The secondary sources that mention El-Guerrah are Michel Ansky, *Les Juifs d’Algérie, du décret Crémieux à la Libération* (Paris: Éditions du Centre, 1950); Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust’s Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); and Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975).

Primary source material available for El-Guerrah can be found in CAOM, available at USHMMA under RG-43.062M, reels 6 and 8.

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NOTES

1. “Lieux de stationnement du Groupement et des différentes Groupes composant le Groupement,” October 7, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.; and “Encadrement,” October 7, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.

2. “Tableau Annexe I Organisation-Stationnement et Effectifs des Unités de Travailleurs Démobilisés,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 6, p. 4.

FORT CAFFARELLI

Fort Caffarelli (Fort Carafelli or Fort Cafarelli, now Djelfa Bedeau) was a prison in Vichy-run Algeria located 232 kilometers (134 miles) south of Algiers, just over 2 kilometers (1.25 miles) from the Djelfa camp and very close to the village of Bedeau. Fort Caffarelli confined inmates from the Djelfa camp deemed recalcitrant and whom the Vichy authorities wanted to punish.

In April 1941, soon after it opened, Djelfa was full of former members of the French Foreign Legion (*Légion Étrangère*, LE) and the International Brigade (Interbrigade), Jews of various nationalities, and Soviet citizens. In 1942, there were 180 to 184 Jews, 60 Russians, 46 Poles, and 78 other nationalities present at Djelfa.

The disciplinary measures at Djelfa were imposed by the camp's second commandant, Générale Jules César Caboche; his adjutant, Jean Gravelle; and the camp supervisors. The most common form of punishment at Djelfa was imprisonment at Fort Caffarelli: almost half of Djelfa inmates were imprisoned there at one time during their stay. If a reason did not exist for imprisonment, Caboche invented one. For example, Caboche prohibited the detainees from lighting fires for heating, under penalty of imprisonment at Fort Caffarelli.

At Fort Caffarelli, the Russian prisoners were lodged in two rooms with unglazed windows. One Jewish detainee, Dr. Alexandre Roubakine—a medical doctor and prominent scientist—was sent to Fort Caffarelli for 17 days because he wrote in a letter to his family that “Europe is dying of hunger under German domination.”¹ During a debate in the British House of Commons on March 24, 1943, a member of Parliament stated that at Djelfa the prisoners were sent to the “dungeons” at Fort Caffarelli and often horsewhipped naked in front of other prisoners.²

Former prisoner Paul d'Hérama recalled that at Fort Caffarelli the guards were *douair*, Muslims engaged in auxiliary police service, with the ranks of corporals and sergeants, who were overseen by four Muslim warrant officers. Only the supervising officers were French.³

The prison at Fort Caffarelli consisted of 10 to 12 cells, each measuring about 3.1 square meters (33.6 square feet) and holding up to three prisoners. A cement block without a mattress served as the bed, and it was forbidden to possess more than

one blanket. Smoking and reading were also forbidden. There was no lighting, and outdoor walks were not allowed.

On arrival the new inmates at Fort Caffarelli were divided alphabetically into groups of 20, with a leader for each group. D'Hérama described this practice as “naturally, a fascist organization.” In the courtyard eight tents were installed for every 12 men, with the additional prisoners lumped together with those already crammed into the cells in the buildings. Food was prepared outside. The prison's water tank, which had an unreliable pump, served the camp's cooking, bathing, and washing needs. Counting the guards, the equipment serviced 600 people.⁴

Roubakine described his experience as follows: “Food consisted of six ounces [170 grams] of bread per day and two measures of always meatless camp soup. In winter it was freezing and the more so as the panes of the windows beneath the ceiling were broken . . . After a few days in a cell, the prisoners were directly taken to the infirmary or to the hospital.”⁵

There were widespread gastrointestinal epidemics, principally dysentery and typhoid. As former prisoner Frederic Guizarro recalled,

In April-May 1941 the sick (from Djelfa) were interned at Fort Cafarelli, until the hospital was completed. . . . The sick lived in tents on the ground and everyday they traveled two kilometers [1.2 miles] on foot in freezing cold or stifling heat, to go to the surgery for a consultation. When Générale Beynet decided that the sick would return to Fort Cafarelli, they were all put in the same room, whether infectious or not, except on the day of inspection.⁶

Historian Jacob Oliel claims that, on August 11, 1942, the confinement center (*Centre de Séjour Surveillé*, CSS) of Djelfa was temporarily located at Fort Caffarelli while the Djelfa camp was being reorganized to serve as a forced labor camp. But multiple reports document that this relocation actually lasted more than a year, from the beginning of the spring of 1941 until September 1, 1942.⁷ In a letter dated December 30, 1942, the military commandant of the Ghardaïa Territory asked the commander of the 19th Territorial Region, Algiers, if it was possible to transfer prisoners to the Ghardaïa Territory. It was suggested that a camp of 1,000 be constructed at Djelfa while 200 prisoners were being held in Fort Caffarelli. A similar message was recorded on January 16, 1943, from Algiers in a “Note of Service.”⁸

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, after which the prisoners were progressively returned to civilian life. Yet Fort Caffarelli was still in operation well into 1943. Two prisoners who passed through Fort Caffarelli during this period were a Belgian, Gabriel Delépine, who was held there for 56 days at the end of March 1943,⁹ and Capitaine Khibner, a Soviet citizen who wrote the following year that he “was among those who on March 15, 1943, were threatened with death by Colonel Brot at Fort Caffarelli.”¹⁰

SOURCES Secondary literature on the Fort Caffarelli camp includes Michel Abitbol, *The Jews of North Africa during the Second World War*, trans. Catherine Tihanyi Zentelis (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989); Michel Ansky, *Les Juifs d'Algérie, du décret Crémieux à la Libération* (Paris: Éditions du Centre, 1950); André Moine, *La Déportation et la résistance en Afrique du Nord (1939–1944)*, preface by Léon Feix (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972); Henri Msellati, *Les Juifs d'Algérie sous le régime Vichy* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999); Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975).

Primary source material documenting the Fort Caffarelli camp can be found in CAOM, available at USHMMA under RG-43.062M; CDJC; and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA. Two testimonies on the camp are Paul D'Héréma, *Tournant Dangereux: Mémoires d'un déporté politique en Afrique du Nord (1940–1945)* (La Rochelle: Imprimerie Jean Foucher and Cie, 1957); and Max Aub, *Diario de Djelfa* (1944; Valencia: Edition de la Guerra & Café Malvarrosa, 1998).

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NOTES

1. As quoted in Oliel, *Camps du Vichy*, p. 106.
2. Parliamentary Debates, House of Commons, March 24, 1943 (London, 1943) col. 1728, cited in Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion*, p. 158.
3. D'Héréma, *Tournant Dangereux*, p. 94.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 94–96.
5. CDJC 385-3, Roubakine, “Quelques renseignements sur le camp d'internes politiques étrangers de Djelfa,” (April 1943); other eyewitness accounts of this camp have been published in Moine, *Deportation et résistance*, pp. 195–196.
6. Moine, *Deportation et résistance*, pp. 195–196.
7. Commandant Militaire du Territoire de Ghardaïa à Monsieur le Gouverneur General de l'Algérie, Direction de la Sécurité Générale, August 2, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 6, n.p.; Directeur du C.S.S. à Monsieur le Commandant Militaire du Territoire de Ghardaïa à Laghouat, August 6, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.; Général Jaubert Commandant Supérieur du Génie de la 19^{ème} Région à Monsieur le Gouverneur Générale de l'Algérie Direction de la Sécurité Générale, July 16, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.; and Général de Division Beynet Commandant la 19^{ème} Région à Monsieur le Gouverneur (Direction des Territoires du sud Service du Personnel Militaire), February 27, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.
8. Commandant Militaire du Territoire de Ghardaïa à Monsieur le Général de Division Commandant la 19^{ème} Région Territoriale, December 30, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.; and “Note de Service,” January 16, 1943, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.
9. “Liste des Belges passes par le Fort de Cafarelli,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371278.
10. Commandant Militaire du Territoire de Ghardaïa à Gouverneur Générale de l'Algérie—Direction des Affaires

Musulmanes et des Territoires du Sud, March 6, 1944, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, n.p.

GÉRYVILLE

Géryville (today: El Bayadh) is located 270 kilometers (168 miles) southeast of Oran in Algeria. The camp of Géryville was set up in a military base of the 19th Military Region south of the town. Headed by the officer Estebbe, the Géryville camp was mainly a refugee center for members of the Foreign Legion (*Légion étrangère*, LE) unable to be repatriated and to live in France. The detainees were allowed to live in the LE barracks on base. Overall they were free to move around and work in the city or on the base.

In 1940, 44 British sailors and officers were interned in the camp, where they remained until October 1, 1942. Other prisoners were transferred to Géryville. In November 1941, they included prisoners on trial (46), indigenous people (177), French “undesirables” (35), and indigenous “undesirables” (47).

In May 1942, the German vice consul of Algiers toured Géryville as part of the ongoing search for German nationals to be repatriated as part of the Franco-German Armistice.¹

After the Allied landing in Operation Torch in November 1942, Géryville held German prisoners of war (POWs).

SOURCES Secondary sources that mention the Géryville camp are Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Jacques Cantier, *L'Algérie sous le régime de Vichy* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2002); and Sylvie Thénault, *Violence ordinaire dans l'Algérie coloniale: camps, internements, assignations à résidence* (Paris: Odile Jacob, 2011).

Primary sources documenting the Géryville camp can be found in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M), and the France North African Colonies collection from CAOM (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-43.062M).

Aomar Boum

NOTE

1. Message Express, Le Chef du Gouvernement, Directeur des Services de l'Armistice, to Gouverneur Générale Algérie and le Général Commandant la 19^{ème} Région, May 19, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 8.

HADJERAT M'GUIL

Hadjerat M'Guil (also Hadjeret et Meguil) was a disciplinary, penal, and isolation camp in the territory of Ain Sefra in southwestern Algeria at the northwestern edge of the Sahara. The camp was 143 kilometers (more than 89 miles) northeast of Béchar (formerly Colomb-Béchar) and 158 kilometers (almost 98 miles) south of Meridja. Hadjerat M'Guil was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

Hadjerat M'Guil was one of the camps of South Oran (*Camps du Sud-Oranais*) and depended administratively on Colomb-Béchar, which was under the supervision of Colonel Liebray, the military commandant of the Ain Sefra Territory, and Lupy, the Inspector General of the Confinement Centers (*Centres de Séjour Surveillé*, CSSs); officially these camps were classified as confinement centers, although Hadjerat M'Guil also housed a group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 6.

When Hadjerat M'Guil was set up in October 1940 it had 2,070 prisoners, including 250 Jews and 1,300 Spaniards, although it typically held only about 150 inmates. Many of the prisoners were forced laborers from other camps who were former volunteers for the French Foreign Legion (*Légion Étrangère*, LE) or Spanish Civil War veterans who had been sent to Hadjerat M'Guil for political reasons when they were labeled as “suspects.”²¹ For example, Dr. Joseph Heller was sent to Hadjerat M'Guil by the Vichy authorities because he had fought with the Spanish Republicans against Franco. There were three prisoner categories—foreign workers, political refugees, and Jews; the breakdown of nationalities in the camp was as follows: 101 Germans and Austrians (among them 54 Jews), 2 Jews from the German Saarland, 1 Japanese, 18 Italians (including 1 Jew), 4 Hungarians (including 2 Jews), 3 Romanian Jews, 4 Swiss, 2 Russians, 1 Greek, 2 Albanians, 38 Yugoslavs, 1 Portuguese, and 2 Turkish Jews. At the end of 1941, the Jewish prisoners were sent to Kenadsa to work in the coal mines. In late January 1942, all of the prisoners from the closed Abadla disciplinary camp were transferred to Hadjerat M'Guil.²

On March 22, 1941, Marshal Henri-Philippe Petain authorized the construction of the Trans-Saharan Railroad, also known as the Mediterranean-Nigerian (*Mer-Niger*) railroad project. The railway was intended to connect ports in Morocco and Algeria with the port at Dakar, Senegal. Soon after the Allied landing on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) reported on November 18, 1942, that Hadjerat M'Guil had 200 prisoners working on railroad construction.³ On December 21, 1942, the AFSC reported that 200 internees were still at Hadjerat M'Guil and that the organization wanted to offer food and clothing assistance to them.⁴ In January 1943, Hadjerat M'Guil was officially closed, and the remaining prisoners distributed between Colomb-Béchar and Kenadsa. Some who eventually achieved freedom joined the British Pioneer Corps.

Hadjerat M'Guil was notorious for its maltreatment of prisoners and inhumane living conditions and was nicknamed with considerable hyperbole the “French Buchenwald” by survivor Golski. Its prisoners were starved, tortured, and subjected to humiliation.⁵ Transfer to Hadjerat M'Guil was held as a threat to prisoners in nearby camps in Ain Sefra, such as Kenadsa. The torturers at Hadjerat M'Guil included Commandant Viciot; camp reserve lieutenant Santucci; his assistant, the head of warrants Finidori; the chief accountant Dauphin; and the guard Riepp, who was of German origin

and a former officer of the Nazi Storm Troopers (*Sturmabteilungen*, SA). According to Golski, Riepp was “the incarnation of evil: he passed his days and nights thinking of new tortures to inflict.”⁶

The detainees were kept under constant watch and forced to work for 50 centimes (or a half-franc) per day. Golski recalled that the work was brutal and carried out under extreme conditions. The sun was oppressive, and temperatures reached as high as 49 to 54° C (120 to 130° F). As an example of the brutal work, Golski said that the workers had to carry 176 pounds (80 kilograms) of water to camp, making 12 trips each morning and 12 each night. This labor added up to 20 kilometers (more than 12 miles) per day. Golski concluded, “After spending seven months (in Hadjerat M'Guil) I think that Dostoevsky's *The House of the Dead* (about a Siberian prison camp) is a trifle (*bagatelle*).”⁷

Food was insufficient, consisting of soup and a piece of bread; thus starvation was a cause of death of some inmates. Clothing was pitiful and full of parasites.⁸ The lack of bathing water meant that the inmates could not shower. Most of the inmates lived in tents,⁹ but those in cells had to share them with two other prisoners and had to relieve themselves in their mess tins. Sometimes the interned doctors were forbidden to bandage the open wounds of the prisoners, caused by brutal beatings by the guards. Ten to twelve prisoners (including three Jews) died from malnutrition or torture. Among the punishments at Hadjerat M'Guil were the “tomb ordeal” and the “lion's cage.” For the tomb ordeal, the victim had to lie down in a ditch 1.6 meters (5.25 feet) long and nearly a meter (over 2.5 feet) wide where he was immobilized for between 8 to 25 days. During this time he was continually taunted and tormented by Arab and Senegalese guards, who hit him with their rifle butts and threw stones at him. For the lion's cage punishment, the inmate was put in a closed hole surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by a Senegalese sharpshooter. The prisoner could only either stand up or lie down.

Mosca accused one victim named Moreno of being a violent criminal. Over the next few days Moreno was tortured by having to run long distances carrying water or wood; when he spilled any water, he was struck with iron bars or wooden clubs. He was ordered to throw himself to the ground and get up again. When Moreno fell to the ground unconscious, he was stripped below the waist and thrown into a cold cell. After regaining consciousness he was fed a mixture of pepper, salt, and paprika in hot water. On September 25, 1942, he was sent to the mortuary to await death and died that night.

Survivor Louis Cohn testified that Dauphin, the chief accountant, displayed a particular kind of sadism: “Dauphin saw that the men were scared. He could read it in their eyes and that gave him a certain pleasure . . . He took a more and more lively pleasure in beating. In inspiring terror.”¹⁰

Censorship in Algeria was very strict and did not permit any reporting about the foreign workers and their internment in the press. Following the liberation, in the summer of 1943, the press started publishing details about atrocities in the camps.

The offenses in Hadjerat M'Guil were too heinous to be ignored, and a military tribunal to try the perpetrators was set up by the French authorities in October 1944. On March 3, 1944, the court of Algiers issued the verdict. Viciot, Lieutenant Santucci, Finidori, Dauphin, and Riepp were sentenced to death. Santucci and Riepp were executed on April 12, 1944. The death sentences for Finidori and Dauphin were commuted to forced labor for life. Dourmanoff was also sentenced to forced labor for life. Mosca, Treccs, and Doffi were sentenced to 20 years of forced labor and Cellier to 10 years of forced labor.

SOURCES Secondary sources on the camp at Hadjerat M'Guil begin with Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975); Michel Ansky, *Les Juifs d'Algérie, du décret Crémieux à la Libération* (Paris: Éditions du Centre, 1950); Joëlle Allouche-Benayoun and Doris Bensimon, *Les Juifs d'Algérie: Mémoires et identités plurielles* (Paris: Éditions Stavit, 1998); Michel Abitbol, *The Jews of North Africa during the Second World War*, trans. Catherine Tihanyi Zentelis (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989); Christine Levisse-Touzé, "Les camps d'internement en Afrique du Nord pendant la seconde guerre mondiale," in 'Abd-al-Ġalil at-Tamīmī and Charles-Robert Ageron, eds., *Mélanges Charles-Robert Ageron*, 2 (Zaghouan, Tunisia: Fondation Temimi pour la Recherche Scientifique et l'Information, 1996), 2: 601–608; and André Labry, *Les Chemins de fer du maroc: Histoire et évolution* (Rabat: Office National des Chemins de Fer, 1998).

Primary sources documenting the camp at Hadjerat M'Guil can be found in USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa); USHMMA, RG-43.071M (Selected records from collection LII Algeria 1871–1947); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA. The personal papers of Paul Hollander, 1939–1944 are held at WL (Doc. collection 963; Acc. No. 52278); Dr. C. F. J. Bergmann's original diary recording his experiences at Hadjerat M'Guil is also held at WL (Doc. collection 616). VHA holds an interview on the camp by Louis Cohn (#9399; February 12, 1996), and Kenadsa survivor Paul Hollander (#20060; October 3, 1996) mentions the camp in his interview as well. A published testimony is Golski, *Un Buchenwald français sous le règne du Maréchal* (Périgueux: Éd. Pierre Fanlac, 1945).

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NOTES

1. "Historique du Camp, Hadjerat M'Guil," Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371163.

2. "Historique du Camp Abadla, ou Ksar-El-Abadla," Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371162.

3. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), November 18, 1942, box 1, folder 33, pp. 44–45.

4. USHMMA, RG-67.008M, December 21, 1942, box 1, folder 33, p. 63.

5. Golski, *Un Buchenwald français*.

6. Ibid., quoted in Oliel, *Les Camps de Vichy*, p. 74.

7. Ibid.

8. Annexe 26, Tribunal Militaire d'Armée de Cométence Particulière séant à Alger, Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371225.

9. Annexe 28, "Rapport sur les faits de violences commises par fonctionnaire sans motifs légitimes," Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371229.

10. VHA #9399, Louis Cohn testimony, February 12, 1996.

IM-FOUT

Located approximately 95 kilometers (59 miles) southwest of Casablanca and 42 kilometers (26 miles) southwest of Settat in Morocco, the Im-Fout (also spelled Imfoud, In-Fout, and Infoud) forced labor camp was built on a deep gully at the bank of the Oum er Rbia River and housed the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 9. Under the jurisdiction of the Directorate of Industrial Production (*Direction de la Production Industrielle*) in Rabat, the camp was located near a dam construction site. It consisted of cement and stone buildings with low ceilings. The rooms had wooden beds supplied by the corps of engineers, but they were infested with bed bugs. The floors were made of cement, and the rooms were hot. Each barrack held approximately 100 people, each of whom was issued one blanket.¹

During his visit to the camp, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) representative Dr. Wyss-Dunant recorded that the camp housed 264 men: 205 were in the camp at the time of his visit; among the absent, 19 were hospitalized, and 29 were on external assignment.² On April 5, 1943, Édouard Conod, another ICRC representative, visited the camp, noting that it had only 23 prisoners (9 Spaniards, 9 Germans and Austrians, 3 Russians, 1 Italian, and 1 Pole). All of them were soon to be released after finding jobs in Casablanca.

While the camp's assembly hall was under construction, the prisoners had access to a canteen set up for the dam construction workers. The food was adequate. The meal menus varied, but included the following foods: boiled eggs, coffee, bacon, jam, and sardines in oil for breakfast; chickpea salad, roast pork, baked potatoes, watermelon, tomato salad, stuffed tomatoes, squash salad, eggs with spicy sauce, lamb stew, cheese, and a half-liter (over a pint) of wine for lunch; and lentil, vegetable soup, and onion soup; beef stew and pork stew; pork; mashed beans; biscuits; hard-boiled eggs with tomato sauce; fig squares; and a half-liter of wine for dinner.

The forced laborers were paid 1.50 francs per day with the potential to receive a bonus. They were issued shorts in the summer and cloth work suits, raincoats, and sweaters in the winter. They bathed in the river and drank spring water brought by truck. They were allowed to wash their clothes once a week. A male nurse supervised a well set-up infirmary.



A German Jewish prisoner pushes a cart in the stone quarry of the Im-Fout labor camp in Morocco, 1941–1942. USHMMA WS #50721, COURTESY OF SAMI DORRA.

A doctor visited the camp once a week and treated mild cases of illness; very sick prisoners, such as survivor Sami Dorra, were taken to a hospital in Casablanca.³ There was a library with some books and games that the prisoners shared with dam workers. They did not have access to places of worship, but they could take an annual 12-day leave. Mail was distributed daily.

According to Dr. Wyss-Dunant, overall the morale of the inmates was very low because their calls for release were rarely answered. Many suffered from health issues, including malaria, because of poor living conditions. According to survivor Sami Dorra, there were also cases of typhus at Im-Fout.⁴

SOURCES A secondary source mentioning the Im-Fout camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources on the Im-Fout camp can be found in AFSC (available at USHMMA as RG-67.008M, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa); NaP, JAF 1007: MSP-L (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-48.011M); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrationen- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA. USHMMA holds an oral history interview with survivor Sami Dorra (RG-50.030*0576, interviewed April 30, 2010) and photos of the camp and dam project that Dorra donated to USHMMA (WS #50719–50721 and 50724–50725).

Aomar Boum

NOTES

1. “Notice sur Imfout,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371149.

2. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), July 16, 1942, box 1, folder 15.

3. USHMMA, RG-50.030*0576, Sami Dorra, oral history interview, April 30, 2010.

4. Ibid.

IMMOUZER DES MARMOUCHA

The Imouzzer des Marmoucha (Imouzzer) camp was located in the Fes region, in the Middle Atlas Mountains of Morocco (more than 1,700 meters [almost 5,600 feet] high), approximately 91 kilometers (57 miles) southeast of Fes. It was a camp for foreign workers who were assigned to the Mediterranean Niger Company (*Chemins de Fer de la Méditerranée au Niger*, MN), which was responsible for maintaining the railway link between Morocco, Algeria, and the coal mines in western Africa. The French Army was in charge of the camp; in late December 1941, it had 179 inmates. According to historian Michel Abitbol, the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE) comprised mainly foreign Jews—most from Central Europe with a few French Jews from mainland France—as well as some Spaniards or Italians. According to historian Jacob Oliel, there were between 200 and 250 forced laborers at Imouzzer. The camp was operational from October 1940 to November 1942 when the Americans landed during Operation Torch. The camp never held any Moroccan Jews.

SOURCES Secondary sources mentioning the forced labor camp at Imouzzer are Michel Abitbol, *The Jews of North Africa during the Second World War*, trans. Catherine Tihanyi Zentelis (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989); André Moine, *La déportation et la résistance en Afrique du Nord (1939–1944)*, preface by Léon Feix (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972); and Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources on the Imouzzer forced labor camp can be found in CDJC, collection CGQJ (414–50) regarding labor camps and transit camps, and, at CAHJP, the private collection of Hélène Cazès-Benathar (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M).

Eliezer Schilt
Trans. Allison Vuillaume

KANKAN

Kankan is located in eastern Guinea, 488 kilometers (303 miles) east of Conakry, Guinea, and 984 kilometers (611 miles) southwest of Tombouctou, Mali. Guinea was part of colonial French West Africa (*Afrique occidentale française*, AOF). Kankan was the terminus of a railway that ran from Conakry up the Niger River, spanning 531 kilometers (330 miles). The Kankan internment camp was actually located 4 kilometers (2.5 miles) outside the town at Bordo, an agricultural station.¹

The Vichy governor general, Pierre Boisson, directed all AOF internment camps. The camps were established to hold Allied prisoners of war (POWs), although, because Vichy was officially neutral, the prisoners were given internee status. The

Vichy authorities in West Africa operated internment camps at Kankan, Conakry, and Tombouctou. Kankan was newer than the other internment sites in the AOF, but still lacked basic amenities, such as running water, toilets, and electricity.² A large well on the grounds provided the water supply. Initially, there were “decent beds and mosquito nets,” but this was not the case for prisoners who arrived in late 1942.³

The food at Kankan was of good quality, but was in short supply. The local people sold the internees oranges and bananas.⁴ The food was supplied by the train station buffet in the town of Kankan and warmed at the camp by an African cook.⁵ George Whalley, 2nd Radio Officer aboard the SS *Criton*, deemed Kankan superior in many ways to Conakry and Tombouctou: “The sight of trees, grass, etc., after the sandy waste of Timbuctoo was very restful.” Whalley was also impressed that the camp was well supplied with books and games.⁶ This improved situation was due to the arrival of next-of-kin parcels and the kindness of Royal Air Force (RAF) officers interned at Koulikoro, a military internment camp in southwestern Mali.⁷

Kankan held European, American, and African internees. Initially the camp housed 32 British soldiers and 10 African firemen from Freetown, and it eventually reached its full capacity of 150 prisoners.⁸ The Europeans at Kankan (mainly British and Norwegians) were housed in a farm building with mud walls and a galvanized iron roof. A “lavatory”—a mud hut covering up a hole in the ground—was located next to their accommodations. The African firemen were housed in mud huts within the compound. The compound was spacious, and the internees enjoyed walks inside the camp. A wooden fence more than 3.5 meters (12 feet) high surrounded the camp, and armed guards patrolled inside. Internees were punished by being sent to the stockade; their sentences usually lasted two weeks. The stockade was a small hut with high walls, but lacking a roof. There were no sanitary facilities inside the stockade or relief from either the sun or cold nights.⁹

The seamen of the armed French sloops patrolling the waters off West Africa intercepted several British merchant vessels, among them the Royal Merchant Navy prize vessel, the SS *Criton*, and the SS *Allende*, and captured their crews. The *Criton's* crew was interned successively at Conakry, Tombouctou, and Kankan. Noel Clear, *Criton's* chief engineer, described as “rather a strange coincidence” that at all three camps the native military band rehearsed nearby. He claimed, “We (the prisoners) were inclined to wonder if this was part of our punishment.”¹⁰

A telegram dated August 9, 1942, stated that the British merchant seamen who were interned at Tombouctou were being transferred to “a camp near Kankan.”¹¹ Before they arrived, the Kankan internees received tinned food and soap from the British Red Cross Society (BRCS).¹² The internees from Tombouctou arrived at Kankan on August 25, 1942, where they joined a group of *Criton* seamen who had been interned at Kankan since September 1941. As of April 11, 1942, there were 18 prisoners from the *Criton* including Peter Le Quesne John-

son, who served as Senior British Officer (SBO) and was responsible for official correspondence.¹³

The American missionaries at Kankan (the AOF headquarters of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, CMA) often visited the camp and interceded with the French police on behalf of the internees. They asked the authorities to treat the prisoners like human beings. Every Sunday morning there was a brief, missionary-led church service, with a French officer fluent in English always being present. This officer served as a sort of informant, and his presence prevented any news from the outside world reaching the prisoners. The French authorities finally allowed British-issued military uniforms to be delivered to the prisoners. As a result there was ample clothing; in fact, internee Peter de Neumann wore his until he reached the United Kingdom in 1943. Some parcels of cigarettes and tobacco also arrived, which the *Criton* crew shared throughout the camp.¹⁴

At the start of October 1942, two men who had earlier attempted to flee the Tombouctou camp made another escape attempt. They were missing for four days and, on their recapture, were sentenced to two weeks in the stockade. After they went missing, the internees were locked in their rooms at night and the windows were closed, preventing all ventilation.¹⁵ The internees' footwear was confiscated to prevent further escapes, and the shoes were left in a heap to rot in the sun.¹⁶ Whalley observed that the authorities “completely closed their eyes to the fact that the two men who escaped had walked about 150 miles [241 kilometers] in five nights wearing sandals.”¹⁷ Just after this incident the survivors of the Dutch ship SS *Delftshaven* arrived at Kankan from Conakry; there were four British citizens among them. The food supply decreased as a result of the additional internees.

After Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, many of the arrested African civilians were released, leaving the *Criton* crew alone in the camp. At this point the Vichy authorities disbursed the crates of army clothing and more than 180 food parcels designated for the crew, which significantly improved the prisoners' situation.¹⁸ Up until this point the Vichy authorities had withheld the parcels and stored them at the Kankan police station.¹⁹ The remaining prisoners were allowed to send telegrams and write letters home.²⁰

In French Guinea, the Vichy authorities retaliated for Operation Torch by arresting American missionaries and local civilians suspected of being pro-British and detaining them from November 9 to 24, 1942. This local decision did not reflect the wishes of the French governor general.²¹ CMA members P. Possiel and Reverend Clifford C. Ryan were interned at Kankan and appealed to Fayette J. Flexer, the U.S. consul in Dakar, documenting their experience.²²

Initially, the missionaries, their families, local inhabitants of Kankan (French, Greek, Syrian, and African), and African British subjects were brought to the CMA compound in Kankan by the Vichy gendarmes. On November 13, 1942, Pastor Rupp was brought up from Mamou, Guinea, along with 79 others in two freight cars and taken on foot to Bordo under

military escort.²³ On November 16 the male American missionaries (a total of four: Kurlak, Showell, Possiel, and Ryan) were separated from the women and children and sent to the Bordo camp. Thus the camp population at Bordo increased from approximately 50 to several hundred internees, without a corresponding increase in camp facilities or supplies.²⁴ At Bordo indigenous troops served as guards and carried bayonets.²⁵ From sunset until sunrise the prisoners were not allowed outside.

The missionaries remained in the camp until November 24, 1942. Although all the Americans were set free, British, Dutch, and Norwegian internees were held until they could be repatriated. They were forbidden to write home or to the U.S. consulate; camp staff refused to send some of Peter Johnson's official correspondence to the U.S. consul.²⁶

The *Criton* crew remained at the Kankan camp until December 14, 1942.

SOURCES An unpublished but detailed account of the Kankan internment camp is Bernard de Neumann, "Sand in their Seaboats: The Story of the SS CRITON" (unpub. MSS, 2004). This account is based in part on documentation about his father's internment. De Neumann also contributed to entries for the BBC *WW2 People's War* series that address the camp at Kankan, which can be found at www.bbc.co.uk/history. Additional information about the Kankan camp can be found in Catherine Akpo-Vaché, *LAOF et la Seconde Guerre mondiale, septembre 1939–octobre 1945* (Paris: Karthala Éditions, 1996).

Primary sources on the Kankan internment camp can be found in AN, Pierre Boisson collection; NARA, Record Group 84, "Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the US Department of State, Senegal, Dakar Consulate General, General Records 1940–49"; and IWM, "The Private Papers of P Le Q Johnson," Cat. Documents 101, 1988.

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NOTES

1. Report of former internee Noel T. Clear, reproduced in de Neumann, "Sand in their Seaboats," p. 127.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 127.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 128.
5. Whalley report in *ibid.*, p. 142.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 142.
7. Clear report in *ibid.*, p. 127.
8. Whalley report in *ibid.*, p. 142.
9. Clear report in *ibid.*, p. 115.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 126.
11. Telegram, August 9, 1942, NARA, RG-84, box 1, folder 711.4.
12. Whalley report in de Neumann, "Sand in their Seaboats," p. 142.
13. Memorandum, April 11, 1942, NARA, RG-84, box 1 (2521), folder 704, pp. 1–2; "Private Papers of P Le Q Johnson," IWM, Cat. Documents 101, 1988.
14. Clear report in de Neumann, "Sand in their Seaboats," p. 127.

15. Whalley report in *ibid.*, p. 143.
16. Clear report in *ibid.*, p. 127.
17. Whalley report in *ibid.*, p. 143.
18. *Ibid.*
19. Clear and Whalley reports in *ibid.*, pp. 128, 148.
20. Whalley report in *ibid.*, p. 143.
21. Copy, The Christian and Missionary Alliance, Dedougou, Cote d'Ivoire, January 15, 1943, NARA, RG-84, box 1, folder 320 p. 1.
22. Kankan, Guinea Francaise, AOF, December 4, 1942, NARA, RG-84, box 1, folder 320, p. 1–4; Mr. Fayette J. Flexer, American Consul, Dakar, Senegal, December 7, 1942, NARA, RG-84, box 1, folder 320 pp. 1–3.
23. Kankan, Guinea Francaise, AOF, December 4, 1942, NARA, RG-84, box 1, folder 320, p. 1; Mr. Fayette J. Flexer, American Consul, Dakar, Senegal, December 7, 1942, NARA, RG-84, box 1, folder 320, pp. 1–2.
24. Clear report in de Neumann, "Sand in their Seaboats," p. 115.
25. Kankan, Guinea Francaise, AOF, December 4, 1942, NARA, RG-84, box 1, folder 320, p. 2.
26. Mr. Fayette J. Flexer, American Consul, Dakar, Senegal, December 7, 1942, NARA, RG-84, box 1, folder 320, p. 3.

KASBAH TADLA

Kasbah Tadla (Kasba Tadla) is located in central Morocco, 161 kilometers (100 miles) southeast of Casablanca and 195 kilometers (121 miles) northeast of Marrakech. The Kasbah Tadla camp was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

Following the Vichy regime's forced demobilization of the Polish Army units serving on the Western front in July 1940, a group of Polish laborers was detained at Kasbah Tadla in 1941. According to a Hebrew Immigration Committee (HICEM) report for June and July 1941, there were 900 detainees at the Kasbah Tadla, Oued Zem, and Sidi El Ayachi (Azemmour) camps in Morocco.¹ On December 27, 1941, there were 97 internees at Kasbah Tadla.

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942. A group of British personnel (Navy, Army, and Merchant Navy) interned at an unnamed camp 19 kilometers (12 miles) inland from Casablanca were transferred the day after the invasion to Kasbah Tadla, where they were housed in clean military barracks. Their stay in Kasbah Tadla lasted only 36 hours, when news of the Anglo-American liberation reached the camp on November 11, 1942.

After 1942 the detainees at Kasbah Tadla were progressively returned to civilian life.

SOURCES Secondary sources mentioning the Kasbah Tadla camp include Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Robert Sattloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); Michel Abitbol, *Les Juifs d'Afrique du Nord sous Vichy* (Paris: G. P.

Maisonneuve et Larose, 1983); Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975); Lidia Milka-Wiczorkiewicz, "Groupement spécial Polonais à Kasba Tadla en 1941," *Ht* 38 (2000): 105–124; Mieczysław Zygfryd Rygor-Słowikowski, ed., *W tajnej służbie: Polski wkład do zwycięstwa w drugiej wojnie światowej; In Secret Service: The Polish Contribution for Victory in the Second World War* (London: Mizyng Press, 1977); David Bensoussan, *Il était une fois le Maroc: Témoignages du passé Judéo-Marocain* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2012); and Stanton Hope *Ocean Odyssey: A Record of the Fighting Merchant Navy* (London: Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1944).

Primary source material documenting the Kasbah Tadla camp is available in CAOM, available at USHMMA under RG-43.062M, reel 6.

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NOTE

1. HICEM, "Maroc," June–July 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 6, p. 6.

KENADSA

Kenadsa (Kenadza or Kenadzan) is located in southwestern Algeria at the northwestern edge of the Sahara, 21 kilometers (13 miles) southwest of Béchar (formerly Colomb-Béchar) and 49 kilometers (30 miles) east of Méridja. Its coal fields, which were discovered in 1907 and first mined in 1917, reached their maximum productivity during World War II. Kenadsa was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

On March 22, 1941, Marshal Henri-Philippe Petain authorized the construction of the Trans-Saharan Railroad, also known as the Mediterranean-Nigerian (*Mer-Niger*) railroad project. The railroad was intended to connect ports in Morocco and Algeria with the port at Dakar, Senegal. The coal mines at Kenadsa belonged to the railway, and both were owned by the government. The camp was under the jurisdiction of the Directorate of Industrial Production (*Direction de la Production Industrielle*) in Rabat and the Office of Manpower and Work in Algiers. Approximately 350 tons of coal were extracted daily for use on the Algerian portion of the railway.

Approximately 6,000 workers were housed in two separate camps at Kenadsa: one for Algerians and one for Europeans. Five thousand of the workers were north Algerian mountaineers, called Kabyles, and 1,000 Europeans were deemed "alien workers." The Kabyles worked in the mines, which were about three kilometers (two miles) south of the camps. In June 1940, the Foreign Legion (*Légion Étrangère*, LE) was disbanded, and its volunteers enlisted in the LE for the duration of the war (*Engagés volontaires à la Légion étrangère pour la durée de la guerre*, EVDG) were sent to camps in North Africa, including Kenadsa. The Europeans served as engineers, designers, overseers, doctors, accountants, and architects.

Initially there was only one company for the Europeans, but the administration soon decided to divide the company into

the following groups of foreign workers (*Groupements des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTEs): GTE Nos. 3, 4, 7, and 8. Most of the detainees in GTE No. 3 worked for the mining company. GTE No. 4 had "undesirables," including Jews, some employed and others unemployed. GTE No. 8 was made up of Spanish refugees. When Dr. Wyss-Dunant, a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), visited the European camp on August 3, 1942, he reported that there were 600 detainees: 300 German and Austrian Jews, 280 Spaniards and Poles, and the remaining 20 people representing other nationalities.¹ Survivor Eric Loëwe (later Harris) recalled that the camp had "Frenchmen, Germans and Austrians who were the majority, Romanians, Greeks, Slavs, Belgians, Dutch, a few British subjects, one Australian and two Americans."² The Jewish prisoners in the nearby disciplinary camp at Hadjerat M'Guil were transferred to Kenadsa at the end of 1941.

The detainees were required to sign labor contracts with the Mediterranean Nigerian Company. They were classified as wartime labor conscripts (*requis*), and the contract made them subject to military discipline. The Kabyles received 24 to 30 francs per day, and the Europeans received 10 francs per day, with board and lodging. The camp guards were Arab *goumiers* (fighters provided by Arab tribes to police French colonial territories), Senegalese sharpshooters, and former LE officers, most of whom were antisemitic Germans. The Kenadsa commander was Lieutenant Muttel.

There were 20 men per tent. Wyss-Dunant reported that whitewashed adobe barracks, "*ghorfas*," also provided accommodations. Each ghorfa consisted of a central corridor and rooms holding four to six men each. There were no cement floors, and internees slept on mats with a single blanket apiece. Carbide and acetylene lamps provided light in the winter. Clothing was scarce: each man possessed only one pair of trousers (called *sérouals*), one shirt, a pair of sandals, socks, and a tropical helmet. Toothbrushes, towels, sheets, and soap were luxuries.

Water was scarce, but Wyss-Dunant reported that drinking water was sufficient and that the men were able to shower—but only once a week. There were wells, and water was drawn each day for only two hours. The camp was very unsanitary: bugs such as lice and fleas were rampant, and the camp did not have sulfur or any other means to fight them.

The spread of disease, particularly typhus, was a serious problem. Those who succumbed were evacuated to the Colomb-Béchar hospital. The infirmary at Kenadsa was housed in two rooms in a specially constructed ghorfa, but it lacked basic medicine, bandages, tape, and iodine. The resident doctors were a Jewish detainee and a local doctor from Kenadsa. There was also a hospital in the town of Kenadsa where internees with more serious problems could be admitted.

The men were free to travel to Kenadsa; however, only Muslims were allowed inside the holy village walls of Kenadsa, while the Jews had to stay outside. The detainees could also go to the canteen in the miners' camp, where they could buy very expensive meals and drinks. "Coffee" consisted of dried

roasted dates and figs with water. The orange juice was also artificial. Wyss-Dunant reported that food consisted of 500 grams (1.1 pounds) of bread and one-quarter liter (1 cup) of wine daily, and meat five times a week.³ In the evenings the men retired to the camp for conversation.

The detainees in GTE No. 4 had a harder life than the rest because they only made 50 centimes (1 U.S. cent in 1940s dollars) per day. Rather than working in the better paying coal mines, they built barracks. There were three shifts of eight hours per day for workers in every GTE. The weather conditions were severe. In winter, the temperature ranged from 38° C (100° F) at 3 P.M. to almost -18° C (0° F) at 3 A.M. In summer, the temperature rose as high as nearly 63° C (145° F) in daytime and as low as 15.5° C (60° F) at night. It was so hot in the middle of the day that the forced laborers could not work.

The jail at Kenadsa consisted of eight holes dug in the ground, each the size of a person. The jail was surrounded by barbed wire and guarded by an Arab with a rifle. The inmate was meant to lie in the hole all day long and not stand up: there were no blankets or reading materials. Loëwe recalled an incident when one man became unhinged after lying there for 15 days and was then shot outside the camp. "This would serve as an example for the rest of them," said the authorities.⁴

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch, November 8 to 16, 1942. On November 10, 1942, Admiral Jean François Darlan ordered the draping of all public institutions with Allied and French flags. During the night of November 11, 1942, an American flag was hoisted on the main flag pole of the Kenadsa camp. The detainees were accused of perpetrating this act, and many were arrested by the camp guards.⁵ On December 12, 1942, there was a protest by other inmates against the internment of German and Italian fascists in Kenadsa.

After the Allied invasion, the forced laborers were gradually returned to civilian life. In Kenadsa about 600 detained foreigners became volunteers, serving at the British Pioneer bases at Hussein-Dey and Maison-Carrée. The 250 Jewish internees classified as EVDG were not liberated because they were still judged to be "particularly suspect." The liberation of Jews was formally banned for 18 months.

The officers of Kenadsa were put on trial in February 1944 in Algiers alongside other officers from Vichy-run camps in Algeria. Quite a few members of the unit of survivor Paul Hollander, a German Jewish former member of the LE, testified in the trial. Four to five people were sentenced to death, a few to life imprisonment, and others to 10-year and shorter sentences.⁶

SOURCES Secondary sources on the camp at Kenadsa include Jacob Olie, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975); Michel Ansky, *Les Juifs d'Algérie, du décret Crémieux à la Libération* (Paris: Éditions du Centre, 1950); Joëlle Allouche-Benayoun and Doris Bensimon, *Les Juifs d'Algérie: Mémoires et identités plurielles* (Paris: Éditions Stavit, 1998); Michel Abitbol, *The Jews of North Africa during the Second World War,*

trans. Catherine Tihanyi Zentelis (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989); Christine Levisse-Touzé, "Les camps d'internement en Afrique du Nord pendant la seconde guerre mondiale," in 'Abd-al-Galil at-Tamimi and Charles-Robert Ageron, eds., *Mélanges Charles-Robert Ageron*, 2 (Zaghouan, Tunisia: Fondation Temimi pour la Recherche Scientifique et l'Information, 1996), 2: 601–608; and André Labry, *Les Chemins de fer du Maroc: Histoire et évolution* (Rabat: Office National des Chemins de Fer, 1998).

Primary sources documenting the camp at Kenadsa can be found in USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa); and USHMMA, RG-43.071M (Selected records from collection LII Algeria 1871–1947). The personal papers of Paul Hollander, 1939–1944, are held at WL (Doc. collection 963; Acc. No. 52278). The unpublished autobiography of Eric Loëwe (Harris), "Twelve Years, 1933–1945," is held in the personal papers of David A. Harris. VHA holds rich interviews on the camp by Paul Hollander (#20060; October 3, 1996); Rodolphe Manes (#8339; January 24, 1996); Eric Meier (#19197; September 4, 1996); Peter Roberts (#1620; March 16, 1995); and Emile Schick (#33286; June 27, 1997).

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NOTES

1. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), August 3, 1942, box 1, folder 15.
2. Loëwe, "Twelve Years," p. 13.
3. USHMMA, RG-67.008M, August 3, 1942, box 1, folder 15.
4. Loëwe, "Twelve Years," p. 20.
5. USHMMA, RG-67.008M, December 28, 1942, box 1, folder 33.
6. VHA #20060, Paul Hollander testimony, October 3, 1996.

KERSAS

Kersas (Kersah, Kerzaz, Khersas, Kerras) is located in the region of Ain Sefra; it is an oasis in central-west Algeria, 912 kilometers (567 miles) southwest of Algiers and 253 kilometers (157 miles) southeast of Colomb-Béchar. Kersas was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940; it also served as a disciplinary and isolation camp for prisoners near the Moroccan-Algerian border.¹ Kersas had the reputation of being the "Devil's Island of the Sahara," a reference to the penal colony off the coast of French Guiana.

When some members of a group of demobilized foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Démobilisés*, GTD), GTD No. 6, protested against the harsh working conditions at the Ksabi detention site, the Vichy authorities tried to discourage any further protest: it turned GTD No. 6, a company of 150 internees, into a disciplinary company of workers (*compagnie de discipline des travailleurs*) and sent the men to Kersas. When there was a comprehensive inspection by the Vichy authorities of the North African camps in May and June 1941, GTD

No. 6 was exempted because it was divided into two groups at that time: one was at the Kersas camp and the other at the Ksabi detention site.²

Kersas had a capacity of approximately 100 prisoners. The company included men whom Vichy deemed political suspects and those who served in the International Brigades (Interbrigades) of Spain, who later volunteered and fought for France. The internees were of varying nationalities, including some Belgians.³ At Kersas, the forced laborers were assigned to the construction of two barracks.⁴ The inmates at Kersas did not have tents. They dug holes in the sand to sleep in, which were just long enough for the men to stretch out. There was no shelter for the internees from the mid-day heat or the bitter cold of the desert night. After finishing work for the day, they were forbidden from talking to each other and from playing cards. Each evening they had to give their sandals to the guards to prevent escape attempts. Anyone who passed through this company became a broken man.

The camp was staffed by adjutants, Corsican and German sergeants who viciously ruled Kersas. Goyou was the head of GTD No. 6. He was under the direction of Commandant Vicot, who served as commandant for all of the forced labor groups stationed in Southern Oran. There were both French and indigenous guards.⁵ The Arab guards were called *goums*. The typical sentence was for three to six months. It was up to the discretion of Goyou whether to extend a forced laborer's confinement by an additional three months. The camp was adjacent to the Saoura River, and when it flooded the camp, the workers were transferred to the nearby Ksabi and Abadla camps.⁶

In November 1940 there was a transfer to the Kenadsa camp.⁷ A notable prisoner at Kersas was Karl Stössler, who was from Vienna, Jewish, and a member of GTE No. 14. He was interned at Kersas on October 10, 1940, and remained there for a half-year before being transferred to Kenadsa.⁸

From May to November 1942 nine forced laborers died. Bienstock was tortured and died in the hospital. Moreno was strangled to death. Marshall became weak and died. Yaraba de Castillo, who had rickets and tuberculosis, died of his illnesses, in addition to suffering the ill effects of being overworked and hungry. Nazzariaz was tortured to death. Alvarez Ferrier and Kyzonois were beaten to death. Poras and an unnamed foreign worker were murdered.

Each meal consisted of soup and a slice of bread. There was no water with which to bathe, and the camp was full of parasites. The workers were punished constantly. The men who were punished by close confinement did not have the right to leave the prison and go outside to relieve themselves. Instead they were forced to use their eating bowl as a latrine. For a serious infraction, the workers were locked up for eight days in a cell. During this time they were beaten with heavy sticks and were fed two quarts of salted water and a slice of bread daily. The Vichy commandant handed over to the Italian Fascist authorities an Italian antifascist and French Army volunteer named Taba who was being held in Kersas.

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, after which the detainees at Kersas were progressively returned to civilian life.

SOURCES Secondary sources that mention Kersas include Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); and Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975).

Primary source material is available in ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA; and in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M).

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NOTES

1. Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371111 and 82371280.

2. Ibid., Doc. No. 82371244.

3. Ibid., Doc. No. 82371158.

4. Ibid., Doc. No. 82371159.

5. Ibid., Doc. No. 82371158.

6. Ibid.

7. Ibid., Doc. No. 82371159.

8. Stössler report, Casablanca, March 8, 1943, CAHJP, USHMMA, RG-68.115M, folder 5, pp. 26–34.

KHENCHELA

Khenchela was a camp located in northeastern Algeria, 397 kilometers (247 miles) southeast of Algiers and 114 kilometers (71 miles) southeast of Constantine.¹ It was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

Initially in Algeria nine groups of refugees were divided between the camps at Boghar (one group), Colomb-Béchar (six groups), and Khenchela (two groups), and there was a detachment at Quargla as well. Subsequently other camps at Djelfa and Berrouaghia were established to receive foreign internees. French nationals and Algerians were sent to Bossuet.

In Khenchela, the Vichy authorities set up a refugee center for the former members of the French Foreign Legion (*Engagés volontaires à la Légion étrangère pour la durée de la guerre*, EVDG) who could not return to their country of origin or to French territory. The workers enjoyed relative freedom. Several of them were authorized to work in the town of Khenchela. Others were temporarily employed in the service of the garrison. As of April 1, 1941, there were 379 foreign workers at Khenchela.²

In correspondence from the governor general of Algeria to the military commandant of the Ain Sefra Territory in Colomb-Béchar on December 6, 1940, the two groups of foreign workers stationed at Khenchela were cited as Groups

2 and 7.³ Another report sent by Colonel Lupy, the inspector general of the groups of workers in Algeria, to the governor general of Algeria, on December 8, 1941, indicated that the two groups stationed at Khenchela were Groups 7 and 8.⁴

In June 1941 Group 7, which was initially stationed at Khenchela, was transferred to Kenadsa without any protests from the internees.⁵ Group 8, which had only just arrived at Khenchela by this point, was made up exclusively of Spanish deserters from the Soviet Red Army. They presented themselves in a way that was an improvement over other prisoners: they were disciplined and relatively well dressed. The sleeping arrangements were normal, the food sufficient, and the camp was clean.⁶ This group was subsequently transferred to Kenadsa.⁷

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, after which the detainees at Khenchela were progressively returned to civilian life. However, as of December 15, 1943, there were still groups of foreign workers at Khenchela.⁸

SOURCES Secondary literature that mentions the Khenchela camp includes Jacob Olié, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and Robert Sattloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006).

Primary source material is available in ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA; in CAOM, available at USHMMA under RG-43.062M, reels 6, 8, and 9; and in the AFSC Casablanca collection, available in hard copy at USHMMA.

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NOTES

1. Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371111.
2. Groupements des Travailleurs Étrangers, USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 6, p. 5.
3. "Surveillance des étrangers, Corp," December 6, 1940, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.
4. "Le Colonel Lupy, inspecteur général des Groupements de Travailleurs de l'Algérie," December 8, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.
5. Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b., Doc. No. 82371245.
6. Ibid., Doc. No. 82371241.
7. Ibid., Doc. No. 82371153.
8. Ibid., Doc. No. 82371221.

KINDIA

Kindia (Kinda) is located in western Guinea, 106 kilometers (66 miles) northeast of Conakry, Guinea; 1,301 kilometers (over 808 miles) southwest of Tombouctou, Mali; and 716 kilometers (445 miles) southeast of Dakar, Senegal. A railway line connects Conakry to Kindia. Guinea was part of colonial French West Africa (*Afrique occidentale française*, AOF) until 1960. From February 12, 1940, to August 1942, the governor of French Guinea was Antoine Félix Giacobbi.

The Vichy governor general, Pierre Boisson, directed all internment camps in the AOF established for Allied prisoners of war (POWs). Because Vichy was officially neutral, the prisoners were given internee status.

Before the war there was a French Army camp in Kindia. On November 28, 1940, a group of rebels attacked French officers at that military camp. The French officers and African soldiers quickly lost control, and there was a threat of an attack on the railway. The colonial authorities gradually retook control of the situation and imprisoned the rebels. It is not clear whether the military camp involved in this revolt is the same as the Vichy camp at Kindia that interned Allied POWs. In November 1940, there was another failed mutiny against the Vichy regime in the Kankan camp.

The poor conditions at the Kindia camp were similar to those found at the Conakry camp. There was just enough food to prevent starvation. The British and Commonwealth internees reported that their inadequate rations consisted of rice, beans, and macaroni. For breakfast they had a cup of coffee and a piece of bread. They were not given real dinner plates and instead ate from bowls. After a while they were each given a small napkin. They did not have shoes. Officers and sailors were kept in common quarters in contravention of the 1929 Geneva Convention. Armed with bayonets, the guards led the internees to the lavatory. Despite the poor treatment, the British did not hold their French guards responsible. Rather, they blamed the French high authorities' lack of imagination and skill for the ill treatment. According to the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, Second Engineer Officer Lewis Elliot of the Canadian Merchant Navy is buried in the Kindia Christian Cemetery. An officer aboard the SS *Portadoc*, he died on May 25, 1941, presumably as an internee at Kindia.

In July 1941, some members of the crew of the Greek steamer, SS *Pandias*, were sent to the camp at Kindia, and some were dispatched to the Conakry camp. The master of the ship was Captain Petra Panapolous, and most of the crew was British.¹ They had spent 17 days at sea and were not doing well when they arrived in the camp.

SOURCES Secondary sources that mention the Kindia internment camp include Catherine Akpo-Vaché, *L'AOF et la Seconde Guerre mondiale, septembre 1939–octobre 1945* (Paris: Karthala Éditions, 1996); and an unpublished but detailed account of the camp, Bernard de Neumann, "Sand in their Seaboats: The Story of the SS CRITON" (unpub. MSS, 2004). This account is based in part on documentation about Bernard de Neumann's father's internment. Information on Second Engineer Officer Elliot can be found at www.cwgc.org.

Primary source material on the mutiny at Kindia can be found in CAOM, Aff. pol., 638, dos. 6, "troubles et incidents divers; mutinies à Kindia," November 28, 1940; and TNA, ADM199.

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NOTE

1. Report of Captain Lewis, n.d., ADM199/2137 Enc 114, as cited in de Neumann, "Sand in their Seaboats," p. 148.

KOULIKORO

Koulikoro (Koulikorro) was a military internment camp in southwestern Mali, 655 kilometers (407 miles) southwest of Tombouctou and 53 kilometers (33 miles) northeast of Bamako. Mali was part of colonial French West Africa (*Afrique occidentale française*, AOF) and was named French Sudan before it gained independence. At the time of Nazi Germany's defeat of France in 1940, there was a local French African railroad line that ran from Dakar to Koulikoro. Following Marshal Henri-Philippe Pétain's decree to build the Mediterranean-Niger (*Mer-Niger*) Railroad to connect North and West Africa, Koulikoro was designated as a terminus for the new railroad. The camp was 5 kilometers (3 miles) from the Koulikoro rail station.

The Vichy government was in charge of the AOF from June 1940 to January 1943, and the Vichy governor general, Pierre Boisson, directed all internment camps in the AOF; these camps were established to hold Allied prisoners of war (POWs). Because Vichy was officially neutral, the prisoners were given internee status. Koulikoro was one of the AOF camps that interned the crews of British, Dutch, Danish, and Greek ships in poor living conditions. However, the conditions at Tombouctou were reported to be worse than those at Koulikoro.¹ There was a sergeant in charge of the Koulikoro camp, and he served as a liaison between the internees and the Vichy authorities.² The French guards socialized with the internees, sharing news from outside the camp.

George Whalley and Peter Le Quesne Johnson (both of whom later served aboard the SS *Criton*) first served on the MV (Motor Vessel) *Memnon*, which was torpedoed on March 11, 1941. The crew was taken to the Dakar hospital and transferred to the Koulikoro camp at the end of April 1941. This group of 60 men joined about a dozen Royal Navy (RN) and Fleet Air Arm (FAA) personnel already interned at the camp. The internees were housed in newly constructed brick buildings with thatched roofs, and they were issued comfortable new beds. Water was supplied directly from the Niger River, which was a 20- to 30-minute walk from the camp. Given the oppressive heat, the internees requested help to carry the water, and a party of indigenous sharpshooters (*tirailleurs*) was assigned to the task. Many of the internees suffered from diarrhea due to drinking impure water. The camp doctor visited every morning and supplied them with quinine, but the internees (including the ship's doctor) did not think highly of his expertise.³

Initially the sanitary conditions were poor, but later improved. The internees bathed in the river, with half the camp bathing each day at 4:30 P.M. They were escorted to the river and forbidden from wearing hats, because hats would have been essential to an escape. The internees were allowed to write weekly letters, which were collected each Monday to be censored. They prepared their own food, in small quantities: the cost of food could not exceed 14.25 francs per day. Bread and a half-bottle of wine were supplied daily, and they also ate macaroni, vegetables, rice, and meat. They only had forks and spoons, but no knives. The internees had to eat their meals on

the ground or at their beds. Although the camp was plagued by deadly snakes, anti-venom serum was not available. They were fortunate to have mosquito netting over their beds, because the camp harbored many mosquitoes, insects, termites, ants, and flies. The group left Koulikoro at the end of May 1941, by which point the rainy season had started. The camp compound, which had started out as hard clay, became a swamp.⁴

Notable internees included Humphrey H. Jackson of the FAA, Fred S. Milthorp of the *Sally Maersk*, MacRitchie of the steamer *Tweed*, a British Indian named Numahamed of the *Jhelum*, Sub-Lieutenant Stretten of the *Criton*, Canadian fighter pilot Allan Robert McFadden, and Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) officer Dusty Rhodes. Six United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) personnel made a forced landing at Conakry on May 7, 1942, and were then interned at Koulikoro.⁵ It is likely that the Royal Air Force (RAF) officers interned at Koulikoro sent the *Criton* crew at Tombouctou a parcel of books, playing cards, and cigarettes.⁶

Vichy Générale de division Jean-Joseph-Guillaume Barrau issued a decree in September 1942 with the aim of improving camp organization and management, living conditions, and the pay (in francs) given to prisoners by rank. Upon entering the Koulikoro camp, each prisoner was issued a set of European clothes (undershorts, shirts, shorts, handkerchiefs, socks, shoes, and helmet), and a towel, bowl, tableware, plate, sheet, blanket, and mosquito net. Interned British Africans were worse off. They received only a mat and a blanket or two. The internees were allowed to take walks outside the camp. Despite Barrau's measures, the camp conditions remained harsh.

The Italian-born hotelier Joseph de Nicolay, who resided in St. Louis, Senegal, was held at Koulikoro well after the Operation Torch landings in November 1942. His case demonstrated that wartime camps were used to intern political suspects with Axis ties long after the cessation of immediate hostilities. Given that Nicolay was an Italian national, he was a suspect.⁷ Nicolay's case also indicated that the administration of the Vichy camps was handed to Gaullist forces after Operation Torch.⁸ As of January 28, 1944, Nicolay was still in Koulikoro while his wife was in Casablanca lobbying for his release.⁹

SOURCES Secondary sources that mention the Koulikoro internment camp include Catherine Akpo-Vaché, *L'AOF et la Seconde Guerre mondiale, septembre 1939–octobre 1945* (Paris: Karthala Éditions, 1996); Vincent Joly, *Le Soudan français de 1939 à 1945: Une colonie dans la guerre* (Paris: Karthala Éditions, 2006); and Wayne Ralph, *Aces, Warriors & Wingmen: Firsthand Accounts of Canada's Fighter Pilots in the Second World War* (Mississauga, Ontario: John Wiley & Sons, Canada, 2005). An unpublished but detailed account of the Koulikoro camp is Bernard de Neumann, "Sand in their Seaboats: The Story of the SS CRITON" (unpub. MSS, 2004). The author's account is based in part on documentation about his father's internment.

Primary sources on the Koulikoro internment camp can be found in AN, Pierre Boisson collection; NARA, RG-84, Records of the Foreign Service Posts of the U.S. Department of State, Senegal, Dakar Consulate General, General Records

1940–49; IWM, “The Private Papers of P Le Q Johnson” Cat. No. Docs. 101, 1988; and AFSC Refugee Assistance Case files, available in hard copy at USHMMA as Acc. No. 2002.296.

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NOTES

1. Extract from a letter from J. M. Gray, President, Gambia Branch, BRCS, July 21, 1942, to Colonial Secretary, Viscount Cranbourne, reproduced in de Neumann, “Sand in their Seaboats,” p. 157.
2. George Whalley report, reproduced in *ibid.*, p. 133.
3. *Ibid.*, pp. 131–133.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 133.
5. USAAF internees in French West Africa, September 12, 1942, NARA, RG-84, box 1, folder 711, “War. Peace. Friendship Alliance,” p. 1.
6. Noel Clear report, reproduced in de Neumann, “Sand in their Seaboats,” pp. 124, 127.
7. Copie: “Koulikoro, le 15 juillet 1943, J. de Nicolay, Hotelier a St. Louis (Sénégal) interné à Koulikoro,” USHMMA, Acc. No. 2002.296 (AFSC), Casablanca Series, box 5 (M–Q), folder AFSC “N,” pp. 1–2.
8. Monsieur le Lt-Colonel Kerdavid, November 11, 1943, USHMMA, Acc. No. 2002.296, Casablanca Series, box 5 (M–Q), folder “N,” pp. 1–2.
9. “Division of Public Welfare and Relief Refugee Section,” January 28, 1944, USHMMA, Acc. No. 2002.296, Casablanca Series, box 5 (M–Q), folder “N,” n.p.

KSABI

The Vichy authorities established a disciplinary camp in Ksabi (El Ksabi), Algeria, which is 985 kilometers (612 miles) southwest of Algiers, 170 kilometers (106 miles) southeast of Kersas, and 384 kilometers (244 miles) southeast of Abadla. The prisoners originated from the Kersas camp and constituted the group of demobilized foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Démobilisés*, GTD), GTD No. 6. Commanding GTD No. 6 was a French officer named Goyou, who in turn answered to the commander of forced labor groups in Southern Oran, Commandant Viciot. The first group of Kersas prisoners was transferred to Ksabi after the flooding of the Saoura River, so not all the transfers were for disciplinary reasons.

A Belgian report in the International Tracing Service (ITS) archives noted that among the Ksabi group were internees representing various nationalities. The prisoners’ terms of confinement in the disciplinary camps lasted from three to six months, but could be extended at the discretion of the commandant of GTD No. 6, Guyon.¹ They lived in *marabout* (large) tents and were transferred to the Abadla disciplinary camp after they completed their sentences.² According to a related report, the prisoners at Ksabi built barracks.

Colonel de Brion, the inspector general of demobilized foreign workers in the vicinity of Colomb-Béchar, did not inspect GTD No. 6 during his tour of the camps in June 1941. His reasons for not doing so were that the group was divided between the Kersas and Ksabi sites, and his tour took place as

the Kersas prisoners were being transferred to Abadla.³ In a separate report, Colonel Lupy, another inspector general of demobilized foreign workers, claimed that members of GTD No. 6 mutinied at Ksabi and therefore had to be closely guarded at Abadla.⁴

In 1941, the German delegation to the Franco-German Armistice Commission demanded that the French authorities account for why an alleged deserter of the German Army who was confined at Ksabi was killed during an escape. The prisoner in question, named Niersmann, made the attempt with two confederates.⁵

SOURCES Primary sources documenting the Ksabi camp can be found in ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA. Ksabi is briefly mentioned in Pierre Caron and Pierre Cézard, eds., *La Délégation auprès de la Commission allemande d’armistice: Recueil de documents publiés par le gouvernement français*, 5 vols. (Paris: Costes, 1947–1959).

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NOTES

1. “Kersah,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371158-82371159.
2. “Historique du Camp Ksabi,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371160.
3. Annexe 32, “Rapport du Colonel de Brion, Inspecteur Générale sur les Groupes de démobilisés étrangers du Groupe de Colomb-Béchar,” June 1941, Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371241.
4. Annexe No. 31, Gouvernement Générale de l’Algérie, “Rapport du Colonel Lupy C.R. Inspecteur des TED sur le GTED No. 6 à Abadla,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371236-82371237.
5. Caron and Cézard, eds., *La Délégation*, 5: 217.

LAGHOUAT

Also known as the Nili camp, the Laghouat camp was established in the military barracks of the French sharpshooters (*tirailleurs*), located 329 kilometers (204 miles) south of Algiers. The camp was a prison for French colonial dissidents before World War II and served as an internment camp for British and Commonwealth servicemen between April 1941 and November 1942. The camp also held Canadian and South African prisoners, although the Vichy authorities called it the “camp for British internees Laghouat” (*Camp des internés britanniques Laghouat*).¹ Because Vichy was officially neutral, the prisoners were given internee status. The camp was set up initially to hold some internees from the Djelfa camp, who were French “undesirables” (*indésirables*), more than 102 kilometers (over 63 miles) northeast of Laghouat.

The Laghouat camp consisted of two buildings, one of which had an isolation cell for punishment. A triple barbed-wire fence surrounded the compound, and the guard towers were equipped with machine guns and searchlights.

Its guard force consisted of a battalion of Arab tirailleurs and a cavalry unit, the Premier Spahis, under the command of Commandant Jeunechamp and French officers. According to former internee James Arthur "Buster" Brown, the internees got along well with the spahis, who occasionally performed horseback riding tricks just outside the barbed-wire fence for the internees' benefit. In contrast, he remembered, the prisoners preferred to bait the tirailleurs, making faces at them and hurling insults.²

In the summer of 1942, more than 550 servicemen were interned at Laghouat. Among the detained sailors were entire or partial crews from the HMS *Havock*, HMS *Duncan*, HMS *Legion*, and HMS *Manchester*, the last crew arriving in late August 1942. For a time, Commander Richard Jessel of the HMS *Legion* served as the Senior British Officer (SBO). In August 1942, Dr. Wyss-Dunant, a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), visited the camp. He found that the internees suffered from boredom and were not allowed to leave the camp, except for Sunday Mass at the local Catholic church.³ Laghouat was also overcrowded, which left the internees susceptible to disease and led to shortages of food and water. According to Charles Lamb, who was interned at Laghouat from December 1941 until its closure, the only ship's physician held in the camp succumbed to poliomyelitis.⁴

Because of their status as internees, not prisoners of war (POWs), the prisoners were entitled to send and receive letters and telegrams. Lamb, a Royal Navy pilot, used this privilege to communicate clandestinely with MI 9, the section of British intelligence tasked with escape and evasion. To do so, he employed a letter code that air crew members were trained to use in case of capture. His rescue plan for the camp, using a nearby field adequate for landing aircraft, came to the attention of the MI 9 director, Norman Crockatt, according to historians M. R. D. Foot and J. M. Langley. The plan was never implemented, Lamb recalled, because camp morale deteriorated.⁵

On the night of June 6, 1942, 29 internees tunneled out of the camp. The internees had been digging the 62-meter (68-yard) tunnel for seven months, ventilating it with disused Klim cans formed into a pipe. (A popular brand of canned milk during World War II, Klim was milk spelled backward.) The work began with the discovery of an unused cellar beneath the interned officers' quarters. Given the harsh desert conditions and the strong guard force, all of the escapees were recaptured within three days. Another escape took place on October 19, 1942, when seven prisoners managed to flee before being recaptured. Flight Officer James Douglas Hudson participated in both escapes. Oral histories collected by the Imperial War Museum (IWM) mention the killing of one escapee, but there is conflicting information on the circumstances and date of the incident and the victim is not named.⁶

Following the Allied landings in Morocco and Algeria during Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, the French authorities transported the internees by truck to Algiers for repatriation. After the assassination of Admiral Jean François Darlan, then the highest ranking Vichy officer in French North Africa, on December 24, 1942, Laghouat was used to intern many Algerian Jews on the orders of his successor, Générale d'Armée Henri Giraud. Among those arrested were members of the Jewish resistance in Algiers, including José Aboulker, an important figure in the clandestine negotiations leading to Operation Torch.⁷ The U.S. authorities ordered the closure of the Laghouat camp in February 1943.

SOURCES Secondary sources that mention the Laghouat camp are Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sahara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Édition du Lys, 2005); Jonathan F. Vance, *Objects of Concern: Canadian Prisoners of War through the Twentieth Century* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1994); and M. R. D. Foot and J. M. Langley, *MI 9: Escape and Evasion, 1939–1945* (Boston: Little, Brown, 1980).

Primary sources on the Laghouat camp can be found in IWM, including the private papers of W. E. Terry (Document 3619); the interview of James Arthur "Buster" Brown, December 15, 1988 (Cat. No. 10504, available at www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80010282); the interview of John Laraway, January 28, 2001 (Cat. No. 22361, available at www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80021093); and the interview of Alfred John Surridge, August 9, 1990 (Cat. No. 11455). Published testimonies by Laghouat internees include Charles Lamb, *War in a Stringbag*, foreword by Sir Charles Evans (1977; London: Cassell, 2001); and James Douglas Hudson, *There and Back Again: A Navigator's Story* (Heighington, UK: Tucann Design & Print, 2004). Shortly after repatriation, internee Richard Goulden Brickell published an account of the June 1942 Laghouat escape, "Laghouat Escape Tunnel," *The Engineer* (April 1943): 445–446. Ray "Taff" Davies posted an account of his internment at the Wartime Memories Project, www.wartimememories.co.uk. An interview with José Aboulker about his resistance activities and a mention of his internment at Laghouat can be found in Georges-Marc Benamou, *C'était un temps déraisonnable: Les premiers résistants racontent* (Paris: Éditions Robert Laffont, 1999), pp. 205–224.

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NOTES

1. Lamb, *War in a Stringbag*, p. 258.
2. IWM, interview with James Arthur "Buster" Brown, December 15, 1988 (Cat. No. 10504), available at www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80010282.
3. Ibid.
4. Lamb, *War in a Stringbag*, p. 281.
5. Ibid., p. 276.
6. IWM, interview of John Laraway, January 28, 2001, Cat. No. 22361, available at www.iwm.org.uk/collections/item/object/80021093; and IWM, Brown interview.
7. Interview with José Aboulker, April 25, 1998, and August 10, 1999, reproduced in Benamou, *C'était un temps déraisonnable*, pp. 223–224.

LA MARNE

La Marne was located in northwestern Morocco on a large farm next to the town of Sidi Hadjej (Sidi Hadjadj, Sidi Hajaj), approximately 15 kilometers (more than 9 miles) east of Casablanca and nearly 76 kilometers (47 miles) southwest of Rabat. La Marne was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940. It held the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE) GTE No. 5.

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942. When the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) representative Camille Vautier visited the camp on April 24, 1943, the total number of detainees was 296: 291 Italians and 5 former members of the French Foreign Legion. At the time the commandant was Capitaine Ménager. During May 1943, Heinz Steinberg was one of the detainees at La Marne, following his detention at Oued Akreuch and Ait Amar.¹ After 1943, the detainees at La Marne were progressively returned to civilian life.

SOURCES A secondary source mentioning La Marne is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources documenting the La Marne camp can be found in the AFSC Refugee Assistance Case files, available in hard copy at USHMMA as Acc. No. 2002.296.

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NOTE

1. Commandant Kiesele, Direction de la Production Industrielle et du Travail, Rabat, August 5, 1943, USHMMA, Acc. No. 2002.296 (AFSC), Casablanca Series, box 6 (R–S), folder “Sm–Sz,” n.p.

LE KREIDER

Le Kreider (today: El Kheither) is an oasis approximately 77 kilometers (42 miles) south of Saïda, Algeria. As a forced labor camp in World War II, it was also known as Saïda, probably because of its proximity to the city.¹ The camp was located at the railway juncture connecting Mecheria to Perrégaux via Saïda, not far from Le Kreider village. It housed the group of demobilized foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers Démobilisés*, GTED), GTED No. 1, most of whom worked in agriculture. The majority of prisoners were Italians, who had been detained in Algiers before being transferred to Le Kreider.

On January 11, 1941, there were 341 forced laborers at Le Kreider. This number decreased to 101 by July 20, 1942. The prisoners were forced to dig canals. There were no buildings in the camp, and so the prisoners slept in the open on mats. Many died of malaria as a result. There was a shortage of drinking water, although the neighboring village of Le Kreider had an abundance of water. Food was scarce, and access to an infirmary was limited.

The camp was mentioned during a French Army investigation convened in Algiers in late 1943.²

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the Le Kreider camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources documenting the Le Kreider camp can be found in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M); the France North African Colonies collection (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-43.062M); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

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NOTES

1. “Notice sur Saïda,” December 27, 1951, Rapport définitif No. 52, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371155.

2. “Le Colonel Lupy à Monsieur le Capitaine Juge d’Instruction au TM d’Armée—Algier,” December 27, 1951, Annexe 24, Rapport définitif No. 52, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371221.

MAGENTA

Magenta is located in central Algeria, 412 kilometers (256 miles) southwest of Algiers, 111 kilometers (69 miles) south of Oran, and nearly 136 kilometers (more than 84 miles) north of Mecheria. The Bossuet camp was located on the road leading to Magenta. Magenta was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940. Noted for being like a concentration camp, the camp at Magenta was known as “the trap of Magenta” (*piège de Magenta*).

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, after which the detainees at Magenta were progressively returned to civilian life; however, the camp was still in use well into 1943. It was not until late January 1943 that Algerian Jews interned in the Vichy labor camps were permitted to volunteer for active duty.

The Jewish volunteers were told they would have to serve as Algerians rather than as French citizens. Despite this, Algerian Jews naively volunteered for active duty en masse, thinking they were fighting for a good cause. But rather than fight as combatants, they were used as “Pioneers” to construct airfields, among other assignments, and many were killed by aerial bombing.

Lt. Klotz went to the Bedeau camp to recruit volunteers for the armored units. The entire 205th Company left Bedeau singing the Republican anthem (*Chant du Départ*) to infuriate the camp officials. Those who remained at Bedeau were sent to join “Pioneer” units in the Magenta camp. Once these hundreds of volunteers arrived, they realized that the living conditions at Magenta were far worse than those at Bedeau. The food, hygiene, and political climate at Magenta were deplorable. As Jews, the volunteers did not have any rights, and they

soon understood that their liberation was not on the agenda: they were literally trapped. The volunteers agreed that Magenta was nothing but a con (*attrape-nigaud*).

Jacques Soustelle, who represented Free France in Algeria in 1943 and 1944, commented, “More serious is the problem of the camps. They are found in two forms. The ones, Bedeau, Magenta, Oued Djer, are theoretically military camps, in fact actual concentration camps where the mobilized Jews are subjected to excavation work . . . and treated like convicts.”¹

SOURCES Secondary sources mentioning the Magenta camp are Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust’s Long Reach in Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975); Norbert Belange, *Quand Vichy internait ses soldats juifs d’Algérie: Bedeau, sud oranais 1941–1943* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2006); and Michel Ansky, *Les Juifs d’Algérie, du décret Crémieux à la Libération* (Paris: Éditions du Centre, 1950).

A primary source that documents the Magenta camp is the memoir of Jacques Soustelle, *Envers et contre tout, 2: D’Alger à Paris souvenirs et documents sur la France libre, 1942–1944; Souvenirs et documents sur la France Libre, 1942–1944*, 2 vols. (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1950).

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NOTE

1. Soustelle, *Envers et contre tout*, 2: 214.

MARRAKECH

Marrakech is in west-central Morocco, 286 kilometers (178 miles) southwest of Rabat and 138 kilometers (almost 86 miles) southeast of Safi. One of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940 was located in Marrakech. It has also been described as the local disciplinary camp of the 2nd Regiment of Moroccan Sharpshooters (*Régiment de tirailleurs marocains*, 2nd RTM). It is unclear from the little documentation available whether the labor camp and the disciplinary camp were one and the same. Moroccan soldiers probably guarded the disciplinary camp at Marrakech.

After the Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, the camp at Marrakech remained in use. In 1943, when the Algerian camp at Bedeau closed, 750 young Algerian Jews were transferred from it to the Marrakech labor camp. As of May 26, 1943, German nationals, antifascists and political suspects Willy Hark and Richard Orthman were incarcerated in the disciplinary camp of the 2nd RTM before being transferred to and interned with the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 7, at the Tamaran (Tanoundja) camp.¹

SOURCES Secondary sources mentioning the Marrakech camp include Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and David Bensous-

san, *Il était une fois le Maroc: Témoignages du Passé Judéo-Marocain* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2012).

Primary source material can be found in the AFSC Refugee Assistance Case files, available in hard copy at USHMMA as Acc. No. 2002.296.

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NOTE

1. USHMMA, Acc. No. 2002.296 (AFSC), Casablanca Series, box 5 (M–Q), “Division de Marrakech Décision,” folder AFSC Casablanca H, subfolder “Orthman, Richard,” May 26, 1943, and subfolder “Hark, Willy,” May 26, 1943.

MECHERIA

Located in the province of Naâma along the border with Morocco, Mecheria (or Méchéria) housed a *zouave* (light infantry) regiment of the French Colonial Army in Algeria in the early 1900s and was an important military station for the French Army at the Moroccan border. Mecheria is more than 467 kilometers (290 miles) southwest of Algiers and 241 kilometers (150 miles) south of Oran. The Mecheria camp was set up near the eponymous village on the road to Colomb-Béchar in the southern part of the military zone of Ain Sefra at the foot of the Ountal Mountain. It was designed to hold former members of the Foreign Legion (*Légion étrangère*, LE).

The camp consisted of brick buildings surrounded by a high wall and a deep canal with four guard posts. Although it was in a military zone, both civilians and military men, led by the head of the Algerian *tirailleurs* (sharpshooters), administered Mecheria. The camp received many European internees between 1940 and 1943. Most were Norwegian, Danish, Belgian, and British sailors. The 19 Belgian sailors were members of the crew of the merchant marine vessel, SS *Carlter*,¹ who were transferred from the Oued Zem camp in Morocco on September 10, 1942.² French and North African civilians were also held at Mecheria, but were classified as prisoners as part of the camp’s confinement center (*Centre de Séjour Surveillé*, CSS). Mohamed Aouad, Abdelkader Kadari, and Dahmane were important Algerian nationalists held in the camp. Kadari died in the camp of typhus.

The presence of many European internees at Mecheria prompted a number of governments to send representatives, religious leaders, and delegates from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to visit the camp prior to Operation Torch, November 8, 1942. In May 1942, as noted by historian Jacob Oliel, the Chief Chaplain of Protestant Refugees and Camp Internees in France (*Aumônier des protestants étrangers réfugiés et internés en France*), Pierre Charles Toureille, received permission to visit the Mecheria camp. On August 22, 1942, ICRC representative Dr. Wyss-Dunant visited.³ On October 15, 1942, a Danish delegation asked the French authorities in Algeria to release its nationals held at Mecheria.

The camp population increased dramatically between April 1, 1941, and November 22, 1942. On April 1, 1941, there

were 28 French and 57 indigenous prisoners; the population increased to 133 French and 359 indigenous prisoners, and 61 foreign internees (all Polish nationals) by January 7, 1942. On May 1, 1942, there were 117 French and 225 indigenous prisoners and 103 foreign internees.

A section of the French Saharan Army stationed at Ain Sefra ensured camp security, augmented by members of the Algerian tirailleurs. The detainees who sought work within the camp were paid for their labor. The sailors were allowed freedom of movement between the camp and the village, were not forced to work, and were not subjected to harsh treatment as were the French and indigenous prisoners.⁴ The sailors stayed at the Mecheria camp between September 10 and November 22, 1942, before being transferred to Casablanca.

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the Mecheria camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources on the Mecheria camp can be found in AFSC (available at USHMMA as RG-67.008M, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

Aomar Boum

NOTES

1. Annexe 10, “Liste des Belges, internés au Centre de Séjour Surveillé de Mecheria,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371193.

2. “Mecheria,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371128.

3. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), box 1, folder 15.

4. “Mecheria,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371130.

MEDIOUNA

Mediouna is 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) southeast of Casablanca on the road to Marrakech. Mediouna was a large French Army camp, in which one section (*nouala*) was converted into an internment camp surrounded by barbed wire to accommodate up to 250 internees in October 1940.¹ Under French military administration the camp had six internees, three from Belgium and three from Britain. The Belgians were held after attempting to escape by boat at Fedala (near Casablanca) and to return to Allied territory. Kept under armed guard, the internees were not permitted to leave the camp or to work. They slept on straw mats and were given two blankets apiece. On January 3, 1941, they were transferred to the Agdz camp. Later the camp was used for laborers of GTE 14 due to its proximity to Casablanca. According to a report based on a camp visit by a Red Cross representative in June 1943, there were 65 internees, all Italians, in the camp.

Former internee Paul Vekemans submitted a detailed account of the Mediouna camp to the Belgian authorities, which formed the basis of a report on the camp to the International Tracing Service.²

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the Mediouna camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources on the Mediouna camp can be found in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

Aomar Boum

NOTES

1. Annexe 33, Liste No. 2, “Liste des Belges passes par Mediouna,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371250.

2. “Mediouna,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. Nos. 82371118–82371119.

MEDIOUNA/GTE-14539

Mediouna/GTE-14539 was a Vichy transit camp for forced foreign laborers in Morocco. “GTE” stood for group of laborers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*). The camp was located on the route to Mediouna, a town located 12 kilometers (7.5 miles) southeast of Casablanca. Its capacity was 140 men. However, on April 22, 1943, when Camille Vautier of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited the camp, it held 246 laborers: 128 Italians, 88 Spaniards, 16 Legionnaires, and 14 volunteers engaged in the Foreign Legion for the duration of the war (*Engagés volontaires à la Légion étrangère pour la durée de la guerre*, EVDG).¹

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the GTE-14539 camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Cristina Bejan

NOTE

1. As summarized in Oliel, *Camps de Vichy*, p. 115.

MENABBA

The Menabba (or Menabha) forced labor camp was 718 kilometers (446 miles) southwest of Algiers. The group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 3, was held at Menabba, under the jurisdiction of the Directorate of Industrial Production (*Direction de la Production Industrielle*) in Rabat. On August 1, 1942, Dr. Wyss-Dunant of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited the camp

and recorded that it held 78 men, with 4 detached to Tanzaza and 38 to the Mengoub camp. The population of the Menabba and Mengoub camps together included 115 Spaniards, 1 Czech, 1 Croat, 2 Poles, and 1 Belgian. The capacity of Menabba was 100 men.¹

The camp initially consisted only of *marabout* (large) tents. After March 1942, the construction of cement barracks began. The barracks were two stories with chimneys and were divided into rooms that each held up to three people. The wooden beds had springs and mattresses. The prisoners were issued sleeping bags and a quilt. Prisoners were fed 600 grams (1.3 pounds) of bread daily, a half-liter (more than a pint) of wine a day, and meat five days a week. The camp had a well-managed canteen that sold various small articles.

Prisoners were provided a cloth work suit and shoes for the winter, a cape for the rainy season, and two shirts, shorts, and sandals for the summer. Showers were under construction during Wyss-Dunant's visit. Water was available at the Menabba oasis. There was no record of any serious illness. A doctor visited the camp once a week, and emergency cases were transferred to Bou Arfa.

The prisoners were paid according to their jobs: masons received 26.25 francs and laborers 11.26 francs a day in addition to room and board. They were allowed to go to Bou Arfa on Saturdays or to Colomb-Béchar to attend religious services. In terms of entertainment they had access to a guitar, a ball, and card games. Mail was delivered every two days. Overall Wyss-Dunant observed that the morale of the forced laborers was excellent and that there were no reports of disciplinary action against the internees. The sole complaint was made by non-specialist laborers who worked inside the camp, who felt that their daily payment of 5.25 francs was unfairly low.

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the Menabba camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources on the Menabba camp can be found in AFSC (available at USHMMA as RG-67.008M, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa).

Aomar Boum

NOTE

1. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), August 1, 1942, box 1, folder 15.

MENGOUB

Mengoub is located in Morocco near the Algerian border, 512 kilometers (318 miles) southeast of Casablanca, 460 kilometers (286 miles) southeast of Rabat, and 48 kilometers (30 miles) southwest of Bou Arfa. Mengoub is in a mountainous area at an altitude of 1,010 meters (3,313 feet). The camp was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

On March 22, 1941, Marshal Henri-Philippe Petain authorized the construction of the Trans-Saharan railroad, also

known as the Mediterranean Niger Company (*Chemins de Fer de la Méditerranée au Niger*, MN or *Mer-Niger*). The railroad was intended to connect ports in Morocco and Algeria with the port at Dakar, Senegal. The Germans wanted to transport Senegalese troops through Vichy-controlled territory rather than by hazardous sea routes. The detainees at Mengoub were some of the many prisoners in North African camps who were forced to sign contracts to work on the railroad. Mengoub was located on the railroad line at Kilometric Point (*Point Kilométrique*, PK) 384.

The camp was under the jurisdiction of the Directorate of Industrial Production (*Direction de la Production Industrielle*) of Rabat. The group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 3, was held at Mengoub. The camp had a capacity of 190 men and was full in the spring of 1942, when the majority of internees were transferred to the nearby Menabba camp. By the time that Dr. Wyss-Dunant of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited the camp on August 1, 1942, only 38 men, all Spaniards, were interned there. Among those who were left seven were detached to the station and three to the soup kitchen.¹

Wyss-Dunant surveyed Mengoub's accommodations and living conditions. Each barrack had an attic, a fireplace for heating in winter, and small rooms for two or three men. The beds were wooden frames with wire springs. Each detainee was given a mattress, one blanket with a comforter, and a sleeping bag. Each man received 600 grams (1.3 pounds) of bread per day, meat five days a week, and a half-liter (more than a pint) of wine per day. During the winter the detainees were issued a cloth work suit and shoes, whereas during the summer they each had two shirts, shorts, and sandals. Each inmate was given a rain cape for inclement weather. There was an abundant supply of water at Mengoub, which was unusual for camps in this area. The forced laborers were able to bathe and do laundry as desired.²

Detainees who fell acutely ill were taken to the infirmary at Bou Arfa. The MN company doctor came to Mengoub once a week. At other times, a refugee doctor and a male nurse looked after the ill, and medicine was provided by the MN Company. When Wyss-Dunant visited, there were no sick people in the camp. The forced laborers' salary varied. Those who worked as masons earned 12 francs per day. Unskilled forced laborers made 7.25 francs. Doing extra work could earn the laborers 3 or 4 additional francs. The working hours were set to accommodate the oppressive heat common in the middle of the day. The first work shift was from 6 A.M. to noon, and the second lasted from 4 P.M. to 7 P.M.³

The detainees at Mengoub had more freedom than those in other camps. They were allowed to play sports and enjoy football. On Sundays five people were permitted to take a day's excursion to Bou Arfa or Colomb-Béchar. They were also allowed to read and had access to several Spanish books and newspapers. Every two days they received mail. Wyss-Dunant could not find any disciplinary measures to mention, but did record that general morale of the camp population was excellent.⁴

The Allies landed on the Moroccan and Algerian coasts in Operation Torch, November 8, 1942, after which the forced laborers were progressively returned to civilian life. In a statement titled “The Problem of Concentration Camps in Morocco,” Leslie C. Heath, the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) delegate to North Africa, proposed a specific plan for Spanish refugees. On November 24, 1942, he wrote, “Arrangements should be made as soon as possible for most of the Spanish to emigrate to Mexico.”⁵

SOURCES Secondary sources on the camp at Mengoub include Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975); Michel Ansky, *Les Juifs d’Algérie, du décret Crémieux à la Libération* (Paris: Éditions du Centre, 1950); Joëlle Allouche-Benayoun and Doris Bensimon, *Les Juifs d’Algérie: Mémoires et identités plurielles* (Paris: Éditions Stavit, 1998); Michel Abitbol, *The Jews of North Africa during the Second World War*, trans. Catherine Tihanyi Zentelis (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989); Christine Levisse-Touzé, *L’Afrique du Nord dans la guerre, 1939–1945* (Paris: A. Michel, 1998); and André Labry, *Les Chemins de fer du Maroc: Histoire et évolution* (Rabat: Office National des Chemins de Fer, 1998).

Primary sources documenting the camp at Mengoub can be found in USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa); USHMMA RG-43.070M (selected records from collection LIV, Morocco and Tunisia 1918–1947); and RG-43.144M (Afrique du Nord: Congrès Juife Mondial—Maroc pays étrangers, reel 1). Also consider USHMMA RG-43.062 M (selected records from France’s North African colonies 1848–1962, reels 6, 7, 8, and 10).

Cristina Bejan

NOTES

1. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), August 1, 1942, box 1, folder 15.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. Ibid.
5. USHMMA, RG-67.008M, box 1 of 14, folder 33 of 36.

MÉRIDJA

A former outpost of the French Foreign Legion (*Légion Étrangère*, LE), the Méridja camp was located 69 kilometers (43 miles) west of the Algerian settlement of Colomb-Béchar and 799 kilometers (497 miles) southwest of Algiers. Méridja (or El-Méridj) is close to the Moroccan border, west of the Abadla camp. As a penal camp, the prisoners were subjected to cruel and humiliating treatment. Capitaine Fabre and Sergent Burgher stood out as particularly harsh members of the camp staff.

In January 1941, some young Jewish forced laborers from the group of demobilized foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers Démobilisés*, GTED) refused to participate in forced labor along the Mediterranean-Niger (*Mer-Niger*) railroad line around Colomb-Béchar. As a result, they were trans-

ferred to the Méridja camp. Also at the camp were 47 Spanish prisoners who revolted in June 1941 against harsh treatment by the guards. The guards shot at them, injuring two internees. When six internees attempted to escape the Méridja camp, the guards collectively punished the prisoners by depriving them of water for days despite the summer heat. After some months, the French authorities decided to relocate the internees to the subcamp of Bou Arfa in Morocco at Aïn el-Ourak. Some 18 internees died of malaria and malnourishment before the group reached Aïn el-Ourak.

The harsh treatment wielded by the guards at Méridja was well known to prisoners and was also known to members of the French community in Algeria.¹

SOURCES Secondary sources describing the Méridja camp are Jacob Oliel, *Les Juifs de Colomb-Béchar et des Villages de la Saoura 1903–1962* (Orléans: self-published, 2003); Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust’s Long Reach in Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006).

Primary sources documenting the Méridja camp can be found in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, CAHJP, available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M; and CAOM, available at USHMMA as RG-43.062M. A memoir that mentions the Méridja camp is Renée Pierre-Gosset, *Le coup d’Alger* (Montreal: Le Revue Moderne, 1944).

Aomar Boum

NOTE

1. Pierre-Gosset, *Le coup d’Alger*, pp. 45–46.

MISSOUR

Missour (also, Misur) was established between 1940 and November 1942 as a surveillance and detention camp not far from the settlement of Missouri on a plain overlooking the Moulouya River. Missouri is 144 kilometers (90 miles) southeast of Fes in Morocco. The camp consisted of six buildings encircled by a wall. Approximately 200 detainees were imprisoned in the camp. In its harsh living conditions, Missouri was similar to the Algerian camps of Djelfa and Djenien Bou Rezg. The Vichy authorities classified Missouri as a confinement center (*Centre de Séjour Surveillé*, CSS), CSS No. 3.¹

Between 1940 and 1942, the majority of the internees were communists, largely Spanish Republicans. In 1942, a typhus epidemic struck the camp, killing some internees and afflicting many others. Édouard Conod, a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), visited the camp on April 1, 1943, and reported that there were more than 70 prisoners of different nationalities. He noted that the prisoners slept on floor mats. The prisoners were free to leave the camp at night and on Sundays. They spent most of their days in enforced idleness, because they were not engaged in forced labor and did not have access to books or entertainment.

SOURCES A secondary source mentioning the camp at Missouri is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources documenting the Missouri camp can be found in ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

Aomar Boum

NOTE

1. “Missour,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371123.

MONOD

Located in an arid area 28 kilometers (more than 17 miles) east of Rabat, Morocco, the Monod camp was situated in a woodland. Also called Oued Monod (today: Sidi Allal el Bahraoui), it was named in honor of Lieutenant Maurice Monod, who was killed in the area between Mahdiya and Rabat on May 24, 1911. The camp for foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 10, consisted of tents and barracks. It was commanded by a French officer, and the Rabat colonial police was responsible for security. In addition to its original prisoners, approximately 300 men were transferred to Monod from the Oued Akreuch camp when it closed on May 27, 1941. These prisoners were of various nationalities, including four Belgians.¹ The Oued Akreuch guards were also in charge of Monod. According to historian Jacob Oliel, Monod held 75 prisoners on December 12, 1941. The prisoners worked on roads and felled trees, and were allowed to leave the camp for health and administrative reasons. According to former prisoner Gaston Vanderstocken, Monod was “similar but less comfortable” than the Oued Akreuch camp.²

SOURCES A secondary source mentioning the camp of Monod is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources on the Monod camp can be found in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

Aomar Boum

NOTES

1. Annexe 33, Liste 12, “Liste des Belges passes par Monod,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371264; “Notice sur Monod,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371152.

2. “Monod,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371144.

Oued AKREUCH

The camp at Oued Akreuch (today: Akrach or Oued Akrach) was 9.8 kilometers (6 miles) southeast of Rabat on the bank of the Akreuch River. Oued Akreuch served as an internment camp for a group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 10, and was under the jurisdiction of the Directorate of Industrial Production (*Direction de la Production Industrielle*) in Rabat. Its capacity was between 200 and 300. The prisoners were foreigners of various nationalities, including four Belgians.¹ On July 22, 1942, Dr. Wyss-Dunant of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited the camp and found that there were approximately 100 prisoners in the camp, in addition to 120 internees assigned to external projects.²

The camp consisted of 15 barracks made of stone and cement. Prisoners slept on the floor on branches and straw under two blankets. Each inmate received 650 grams (1.4 pounds) of bread per day. For breakfast, the prisoners were given coffee, bread, and eggs; for lunch, soup, steak, fried potatoes, and dessert; and for dinner, soup, meat salad, beans, bread, and a half-liter (more than a pint) of wine. The prisoners were issued a shirt, pants, jacket, and a pair of shoes. Although makeshift showers had been installed, the prisoners bathed in the river. Lavatories were in the open. There was one functioning washing machine in the camp.

Three refugee doctors and a refugee male nurse provided medical care, although there was a lack of medical instruments and medication. Serious cases of illness were referred to Rabat. There was no library in the camp, but the prisoners had access to newspapers and magazines. Mail was delivered daily. The workers were allowed to move around the camp freely.

The detainees worked on roads from 5 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. In the afternoon, they worked within the camp. They were paid 1.25 francs per day in addition to a possible bonus of 4 to 5 francs. Unskilled or unfit forced laborers were paid 1.25 francs a day. Despite prisoner complaints about the lack of medicine, fleas, poor bedding, and inadequate clothing, no one was sent to a disciplinary camp.

The Oued Akreuch camp was closed on May 27, 1941, when the prisoners were transferred to the Monod camp.³

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the Oued Akreuch camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources on the Oued Akreuch camp can be found in ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA; and AFSC (available at USHMMA as RG-67.008M, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa).

Aomar Boum

NOTES

1. “Oued-Akreuch,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371140.

2. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC collection), box 1, folder 15.

3. "Liste des Belges passés par Oued-Akreuch," Liste No. 11, Annexe No. 33, Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371264.

OUED-DJERCH

Oued-Djerch (Oued-Djer, le Pont de l'Oued Djer) is located in the Algiers Département in northern Algeria about 68 kilometers (42 miles) southwest of Algiers, 31 kilometers (19 miles) northwest of Médéa, and 34 kilometers (21 miles) southeast of Cherchel. The Oued-Djerch disciplinary camp was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

Oued-Djerch held Jewish forced laborers who faced the same inhumane conditions that internees faced at the notorious Magenta camp. Punishment by "tombeau" (the tomb) was common at Oued-Djerch. The internees were forced to lie in a ditch for an extended period and not move while being tormented by armed guards. According to Jacques Soustelle, governor general of Algeria from 1955 to 1956, Oued-Djerch was theoretically a military camp, but actually was a concentration camp where Jews were forced to work on excavations and fortifications. At Oued-Djerch they were leased to public works contractors and treated like convicts.¹

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942. After 1942 the detainees at Oued-Djerch were progressively returned to civilian life.

SOURCES Secondary sources mentioning the Oued-Djerch camp include Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); Henri Msellat, *Les Juifs d'Algérie sous le régime de Vichy* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1999); and Michel Ansky, *Les Juifs d'Algérie, du décret Crémieux à la Libération* (Paris: Éditions du Centre, 1950).

Primary source material is available in Jacques Soustelle, *Envers et contre tout, 2: D'Alger à Paris souvenirs et documents sur la France libre, 1942–1944; Souvenirs et documents sur la France Libre, 1942–1944*, 2 vols. (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1950).

Cristina Bejan

NOTE

1. Soustelle, *Envers et contre tout*, 2: 214.

OUED ZEM AND MOULAY BOUAZZA

There were two camps near Oued Zem, which is located roughly 118 kilometers (73 miles) southeast of Casablanca. The first, known as the Oued Zem camp, was under the authority of the Directorate of Political Affairs (*Direction des Affaires Politiques*). The second, called Moulay Bouazza, was under the ju-

isdiction of the Directorate of Industrial Production and Labor (*Direction de la Production Industrielle et du Travail*) in Rabat and was associated with the Administration of Forests and Waterways (*Administration des Forêts et Voies navigables*). Dr. Wyss-Dunant from the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited both camps between July and August 1942. Neither camp ever held Jews (North African or foreign) or North African nationalists. Both camps closed after the Allied landing, Operation Torch, on November 8, 1942.

The Oued Zem camp was originally designed as a military camp in 1940 before its transformation into an internment camp in October 1940 when European sailors were transferred there from the Sidi El Ayachi camp. The camp went from housing 40 political detainees to more than 200 political and civilian prisoners. They included Norwegian sailors (110); Belgian sailors (22); British (22); prisoners from Malta, Gibraltar, and Tangiers (51); and other nationalities (32). During his visit to the camp, Dr. Wyss-Dunant reported that there were 215 men in the camp and 188 in the hospital.

Built in a dry and hot zone, the Oued Zem camp was located almost 122 kilometers (76 miles) southeast of Casablanca. Dr. Wyss-Dunant noted that it was "composed of six semi-barracks of a military type, with tin roofing, without insulation. The floor is concrete. Each barrack houses 30 to 40 men, who sleep on iron beds with straw mattresses and one blanket. The cots are not too close to one another. The officers are housed elsewhere. There is no heating. In summer the heat is very great because of the tin roofing."¹ Wyss-Dunant provided a detailed description of the menu between June 16 and 22, 1942. In the mornings, the prisoners were given dates, tomato salad, cabbage goulache, potatoes with sauce, prunes, beetroot salad, carrot salad, two hard-boiled eggs, jam, and pork roast. In the afternoons, they were served noodle soup, English boiled potatoes, dates, vegetable soup, split-pea puree, prunes, chickpeas with sauce, green beans, figs, and puree of dried beans. Although water was scarce, the detainees were allowed to shower once a week. Mail and books were allowed into the camp. Prisoners with serious health conditions were sent to the hospital in Casablanca. An infirmary was in the camp, but it provided minimal health care. Clothes and shoes were scarce, especially in the harsh and cold winter. Wyss-Dunant noted how Norwegians complained of the heat, shortage of water, and the lack of books and games.

The nearby Ait Ammar iron mines made this site a good location for a foreign workers camp, in which forced laborers were deployed by the Mediterranean Niger Company (*Chemins de Fer de la Méditerranée au Niger*, MN), which was in charge of maintaining the railway link between Morocco, Algeria, and the coal mines in West Africa. The French Army was in charge of the camp. The prisoners were paid a small and inadequate salary for their labor. For instance, according to Wyss-Dunant, Belgian officers were paid 1,350 francs per month, Norwegian officers got 1,200 francs, and Greek workers received a lump sum of 2,400 francs. Reasons were not given for this difference in pay. Wyss-Dunant noted that the pay was increased.² Despite these conditions, Norwegian

workers refused to go back to their home country when given the opportunity to be released on condition that they leave for Norway.

Moulay Bouazza was located at a hot place in a hilly area about 60 kilometers (37 miles) northwest of Oued Zem itself and 142 kilometers (88 miles) southeast of Casablanca. The only way to get to the camp was through a difficult trail. The camp housed 56 prisoners: 10 of these were in the hospital, 15 were sick in the camp, and 1 died. There were Poles (15); Italians (4); Russians (5); French (2); Belgians (8); Spaniards (5); Czechs (3); Germans (4); Swiss (2); British (2; one was released); Yugoslavs (3); and one Dutch, one Slav, and one Luxembourgier.

The camp accommodations consisted of tents on muddy and wet ground. The prisoners slept on straw mats and were provided two blankets and acetylene lamps. There was a canteen in a tent, and prisoners had access to beer and cigarettes. As in Oued Zem, the foreign workers lacked shoes and clothes. During his visit to the camp Dr. Wyss-Dunant reported seeing five men barefoot and unable to walk to the coal mines about 7 kilometers (4.3 miles) from the camp. Unlike Oued Zem, workers had a hard time getting access to mail. Their pay was also lower. Dr. Wyss-Dunant noted that camp prisoners were given a fixed amount of 1.25 francs per day in addition to a reward for the assigned work. Hard work doubled the payment, but few succeeded in obtaining this pay because the assigned tasks were usually unbearable.³

Despite the poor hygiene and inadequate supply of drugs and supplies, the administrators of the camp were able to maintain discipline among the prisoners without difficulty: the foreign workers seemed to accept their situation, as expressed in letters they exchanged with the humanitarian activist, Hélène Cazès-Benathar, over a long period of their internment.⁴ In interviews with some prisoners, however, Wyss-Dunant described their morale as “very low due to the isolation, the heat and in the case for those who asked for repatriation, lack of responses to their letters. All are weakened by dysentery.”⁵

SOURCES Secondary sources mentioning the Oued Zem camp are Michel Abitbol, *The Jews of North Africa during the Second World War*, trans. Catherine Tihanyi Zentelis (Detroit: Wayne State University Press, 1989); André Moine, *La Déportation et la résistance en Afrique du Nord (1939–1944)*, preface by Léon Feix (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972); and Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources on the Oued Zem camp can be found in CDJC, collection CGQJ (414–50), regarding labor camps and transit camps; the private collection of Hélène Cazès-Benathar held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M); and AFSC (available at USHMMA as RG-67.008M). Two contemporaneous reports on the Aït Ammar mines are P. M., “Les chemins de fer du maroc,” *Ag* 41: 231 (1932): 327–328; and Jean Célérier, “L’activité minière au maroc in 1937,” *Ag* 47: 269 (1938): 540–541.

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NOTES

1. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), August 14, 1942, box 1, file 15, pp.4–5.
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
4. USHMMA, RG-68.115M (CAHJP).
5. USHMMA, RG-67.008M, August 14, 1942, box 1, file 15, pp. 4–5.

OUED-ZENATI-BONE

The camp of Oued-Zenati-Bone (Oued Zeni, Oued-Zenati) is more than 49 kilometers (nearly 31 miles) east of Constantine in northeastern Algeria, located near the town of Oued-Zenati. Oued-Zenati-Bone was one of the Vichy labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

Archival documents demonstrate that there were five sites where demobilized forced laborers (*travailleurs démobilisés*) were stationed in the Constantine Département, including Constantine, Oued-Zenati-Bone, and Sétif-Satne-Saint-Arnaud.¹ At one point Oued-Zenati-Bone held 250 internees.²

The group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 22, was stationed at the camp. As of August 31, 1942, Oued-Zenati-Bone had 220 indigenous forced laborers and 4 French forced laborers. The camp staff consisted of a commander, an assistant, and two heads of staff—one French and one indigenous. The camp also had one French and one indigenous auxiliary official. The French Army employed GTE No. 22.³

The Allies landed on the Moroccan and Algerian coasts in Operation Torch, November 8, 1942. Afterward the labor camps were slowly liberated, and the internees returned to civilian life.

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the Oued-Zenati-Bone camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources documenting the detention sites at Constantine, including Oued-Zenati-Bone, can be found in CAOM, available at USHMMA as RG-43.062M, reels 6 and 8.

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NOTES

1. “Lieux de stationnement du Groupement et des différents Groupes composant le Groupement,” October 7, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 8, n.p.; and “Encadrement,” October 7, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.
2. “Tableau Annexe I Organisation-Stationnement et Effectifs des Unités de Travailleurs Démobilisés,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 6, p. 4.
3. “Lieux de stationnement du Groupement et des différents Groupes composant le Groupement,” August 31, 1942, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, pp. 1–2.

OULMÈS/EL KARIT

El Karit is a tin mine just south of Oulmès in north-central Morocco. Oulmès is more than 147 kilometers (91 miles) southeast of Casablanca and almost 274 kilometers (170 miles) northeast of Marrakech. The camp at El Karit (El Karib, El Kartit, El Karrant) can also be found listed as El Karit par Oulmès. El Karit was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940.

In June 1940, the French Foreign Legion (*Légion Étrangère*, LE) was disbanded, and its “volunteers engaged for the duration of the war” (*Engagés volontaires à la Légion étrangère pour la durée de la guerre*, EVDG) were dispatched to camps in North Africa such as El Karit. The group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 6, was stationed at El Karit to do forced labor.¹ A census in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection counted a total of five detainees: three Jews (two German and one Austrian) and two Protestants (one German and one Austrian).²

One Jewish internee was a 48-year-old farmer, Maurice (Moritz) Feiner from Austria, who held the status of an EVDG.³ He also worked as a driver.⁴ He was interned at El Karit as late as March 1943.⁵ Two other engaged volunteers at El Karit in 1943 were 42-year-old Protestant mechanic Karl Zakratsek from Austria and 48-year-old Jewish accountant Alfred Kohn (or Kuhn) from Germany.⁶ Kohn was transferred from El Karit to GTE No. 14 that was stationed at Bou Azzer (Bou Azer) in March 1943.⁷

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch, on November 8, 1942, after which the detainees at El Karit were progressively returned to civilian life; however, the camp was still in use well into 1943, as the cases described earlier demonstrate.

SOURCES Secondary sources mentioning the El Karit camp include Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust’s Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006).

Primary source material documenting the camp at El Karit is available in the AFSC Refugee Assistance Case files, available in hard copy at USHMMA as Acc. No. 2002.296; and the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform and digital form at USHMMA as RG-68.115M).

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NOTES

1. Emplacement des Groupes de Travailleurs de la Production Industrielle et du Travail, n.d., USHMMA, RG-68.115M (CAHJP), n.p.

2. Degroupement des Internés par Nationalité et Confession, n.d., USHMMA, RG-68.115M, pp. 254–255.

3. “Agriculteurs,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-68.115M, p. 305.

4. “Chauffeurs,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-68.115M, p. 307.

5. “Feiner, Maurice,” March 20, 1944. USHMMA, Acc. No. 2002.296 (AFSC), Casablanca Series, box 2, folder AFSC Casablanca Interview forms F.

6. “Mécaniciens,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-68.115M, p. 318; and “Secrétaire et Secrétaires Comptables,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-68.115M, p. 320.

7. “Monsieur Leslie O. Heath,” March 30, 1943, USHMMA, RG-68.115M, n.p.

QUARGLA

Quargla (Ouargla, Wargla) was in the Sahara in central Algeria, 690 kilometers (429 miles) southeast of Oran, 574 kilometers (357 miles) southeast of Algiers, and 325 kilometers (202 miles) southwest of Biskra. It was located in the Oasis Territory of Quargla. The Quargla camp existed before the Franco-German Armistice as a station for soldiers of the French Foreign Legion (*Légion étrangère*, LE) and a military post for the French infantry. German Jewish Legionnaire Paul Hollander and German Jewish infantryman Herman Rothschild, the latter serving with the French Army, were posted to Quargla.

Before the Armistice, Hollander, who was later an internee at the Kenadsa camp, was sent to the Quargla camp with a group of members of the LE from its North African headquarters at Sidi-bel-Abbès after four months of basic training. Hollander described Quargla as “according to many people: one of the worst places on earth.” The contaminated water gave the Legionnaires “Quargla stomach.” The sanitary conditions were very primitive, and as such there were lice and flies everywhere. The prisoners had to sleep in a ditch, which was equipped with some railway sleeper beds.¹ There was a military hospital in Quargla.

A “loony” colonel was in charge of the camp, and he “played tough.” He was continuously fighting with the medical officer. The Legionnaires had to wake up at 5 A.M. and work or train until 11 A.M. when they marched back to camp to eat. They would work again from 4 P.M. until 6 or 8 P.M. The doctor did not start treating patients until 8 A.M., so the sick Legionnaires, who still had to wake up at 5 A.M., were given light labor to do until 8 A.M. The colonel was replaced toward the end of Hollander’s time at Quargla. By the time the Legionnaires returned to Sidi-bel-Abbès, France had already fallen to Germany.²

Herman Rothschild had a different impression of Quargla and described his 18 months stationed there before the Armistice as “quite nice.”³ Alfred Larsen, a Dane who enlisted in the Foreign Legion in 1939, was also interned at Quargla in the spring of 1940. The town of Quargla was also a center of forced residence for local arrested suspects, such as Albert Amselek and Joseph Bergel, who were involved in the Douieb Affair, the roundup of 14 Jewish businessmen from Algeria on June 27, 1941.

After the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940, Quargla became one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa. An autonomous group of demobilized foreign

workers (*Groupe Autonome des Travailleurs Etrangers Démobilisés*, GTEA) was sent to Quargla,⁴ which was classified as a camp of supervised stay (*camp de séjour*). As of April 1, 1941, the Quargla camp had 59 workers.⁵ The deputy chief was Commandant Maillard.⁶ At one point the forced laborers of the one company stationed at Ben-Chicao might have been transferred to Quargla.⁷

In 1941 the workers at Quargla were employed by three military services: the Artillery Engineering and Electric Company, the Artillery Engineering Subsistence Service, and the Artillery Engineering Radio Service. The majority of camp supervisors were French. The workers themselves were mostly foreign, and there were a small number of Jews.⁸ By 1943 the Jews' employment was listed as simply being in the service of the Artillery Engineering Corps (*Génie Artillerie*).⁹

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942. Commandant Maillard communicated to the head of the Vichy French army squadrons and military commander of the Quargla Territory, Fouchet, that the Spaniards interned at Quargla were the cause of disorder and unrest following the Allied landing. This resulted in heavy surveillance by the French authorities. Most of these Spaniards requested relocation to Mexico.¹⁰

After 1942 the detainees at Quargla were returned to civilian life, but the camp was still in use well into 1943.¹¹ Quargla is listed as a North African detention site by the German Federal Finance Ministry (*Bundesfinanzministerium*) for its survivors' pension program. The Conference for Jewish Material Claims against Germany attained recognition for Quargla to become an approved camp on the list.¹²

SOURCES Secondary sources describing Quargla include Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Magbreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); and Jacques Cantier and Eric Jennings, *Empire colonial sous Vichy* (Paris: Éditions Odile Jacob, 2004).

Primary source material for Quargla can be found in CAOM, available at USHMMA under RG-43.062M, reels 6 and 8; and the AFSC Refugee Assistance Case files, available in hard copy at USHMMA as Acc. No. 2002.296. The personal papers of Paul Hollander, 1939–1944, are held at WL (Doc. collection 963; Acc. No. 52278). VHA holds interviews on the camp by Paul Hollander (#20060; October 3, 1996) and Herman Rothschild (#44110; April 23, 1998).

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NOTES

1. VHA # 20060, Paul Hollander testimony, October 3, 1996.
2. Ibid.
3. VHA # 44110, Herman Rothschild testimony, April 23, 1998.
4. Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie, GTED, August 31, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.
5. Groupements des travailleurs étrangers, USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 6, p. 5.

6. Gt. Gnl. de l'Algérie, GTEA, Quargla, Exécution des prescripts de la N. de S. No. 7566, November 6, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.

7. "Note de Service," n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.

8. Gt. Gnl. de l'Algérie, GTEA, Quargla, Exécution des prescripts de la N. de S. No. 7566, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.; Gt. Gnl. de l'Algérie, GTEA surveillance suspects (travailleurs), June 11, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.; and Gt. Gnl. de l'Algérie, GTEA Prescriptions de la N. de S. No. 7566, November 6, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.

9. Gt. Gnl. de l'Algérie, GTEA Quargla, March 31, 1943, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.; and Gt. Gnl. de l'Algérie, GTED, April 30, 1943, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.

10. Le Chef d'Escadrons Fouchet Commandant Militaire du Territoire des Oasis, April 2, 1943, USHMMA, RG-43.062M, reel 8, n.p.

11. Ibid.

12. See http://www.bundesfinanzministerium.de/Content/DE/Standardartikel/Themen/Oeffentliche_Finzen/Vermögensrecht_und_Entschädigungen/Kriegsfolgen_Wiedergutmachung/Haftstaetten_Liste_engl_.pdf?__blob=publicationFile&v=3.

RAM RAM

Ram Ram (today: Camp du Ramram) is located just over 10 kilometers (more than 6 miles) northwest of Marrakech and 206 kilometers (128 miles) southwest of Casablanca. The scant documentation for the existence of a confinement center at Ram Ram in Vichy Morocco is a brief notice submitted by the Belgians to the International Tracing Service.

The Vichy military police arrested Belgian citizen Auguste Brasseur on June 10, 1940, in Marrakech. Brasseur was immediately dispatched to Ram Ram, which was located in the middle of the desert. The Belgian report classified this site as a confinement center (*Centre de Séjour Surveillé*, CSS), given that the prisoners remained under strict surveillance and were only permitted to leave the camp once per month with authorization.¹

Better documented is the repurposing of Ram Ram as a prisoner of war (POW) camp for Axis prisoners after the liberation of Morocco. German sources report that the site held 3,500 German POWs. It seems likely that the Free French Army built out the CSS, the remnants of which are still visible on satellite maps, to create a larger camp.

SOURCES Although there is no scholarly study on the Vichy camp at Ram Ram, some information on the subsequent POW camp can be found in Kurt W. Böhme, ed., *Die Deutschen Kriegsgefangenen in französischer Hand*, vol. 13 of Erich W. Maschke, ed., *Zur Geschichte der deutschen Kriegsgefangenen des Zweiten Weltkrieges*, 15 vols. (Bielefeld: Ernst und Werner Giesecking, 1962–1982).

A primary source documenting the Ram Ram camp under the Vichy authorities can be found in ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, which is available in digital form at USHMMA.

Joseph Robert White

NOTE

1. “Notice sur Ram Ram,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 8237112.

RELIZANE

Relizane (Rezaline) is located in northwest Algeria, 251 kilometers (156 miles) southwest of Algiers, 109 kilometers (67 miles) due east of Oran, and 256 kilometers (159 miles) north-northeast of Mecheria. Established in April 1941, Relizane was one of the Vichy forced labor camps in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940. At one point the group of demobilized foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers Démobilisés*, GTED) at Relizane and Nemours had 543 laborers.¹

Antoine Colombani served in World War II as a noncommissioned officer (NCO) and aviation mechanic based at the Meknès air base. After the Vichy regime took over, he was transferred to the Relizane camp because of his antifascist behavior. Colombani wrote,

The commandant sent unskilled officers to Relizane and their responsibility was to comply with the dogmas of the Vichy regime. Under the brutal sun in the valley of the Chilef River, and in the hot barracks, we were charged with the instruction of thousands of engaged volunteers . . . The officers also had to remember the commands of the camp doctor, who did not know anything about illness or injuries, even when all these young men (were panicked when) their feet were bleeding after twenty-eight kilometer [17.4 mile] marches.²

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, after which the detainees at Relizane were progressively returned to civilian life; however, the camp was still in use well into 1943.

SOURCES Secondary sources mentioning the Relizane camp include Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust’s Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); André Moine, *La Déportation et la résistance en Afrique du Nord (1939–1944)*, preface by Léon Feix (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972); Henri Msellati, *Les Juifs d’Algérie sous le régime de Vichy* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1999); Norbert Belange, *Quand Vichy internait ses soldats juifs d’Algérie: Bedeau, sud oranais, 1941–1943* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 2006); Robert Attal, *Regards sur les Juifs d’Algérie* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1996); Andrée Bachoud and Bernard Sicot, *Sables d’exil* (Perpignan: Mare Nostrum: 2009); and Michel Abitbol, *Les Juifs d’Afrique du Nord sous Vichy* (Paris: G. P. Maisonneuve et Larose, 1983)

Primary source material documenting the camp at Relizane can be found in CAOM, available at USHMMA under

RG-43.062M, reel 6. A published testimony is Antoine Colombani, *Viêtname 1948–1950: La solution oubliée* (Paris: L’Harmattan, 1997).

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NOTES

1. “Tableau Annexe I Organisation-Stationnement et Effectifs des Unités de Travailleurs Démobilisés,” n.d., USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 6, p. 4.

2. Colombani, *Viêtname 1948–1950*, pp. 19–20.

SEBIKOTANE

Sebikotane (or Sebikoutane) is located 34 kilometers (just over 20 miles) east of Dakar. From July 30 to December 12, 1941, it was the site of a small French-run internment camp for Belgian and British merchant sailors. The internees were held in a building on the grounds of the William Ponty School for well-to-do Senegalese. The camp consisted of four classrooms converted into dormitories for the officers, cadets, and sailors.¹

Originating from the Belgian Congo, the Belgian freighter SS *Carlrier* docked at the port of Dakar to take on coal on June 10, 1940. It was forced to stay in port after the signing of the Franco-German Armistice on June 22. On August 4, 1940, the captain attempted to escape to an Allied port, but after being bombed and badly damaged, the *Carlrier* was unable to flee enemy waters. The French authorities proposed to the sailors that they either steer the ship to a German-occupied port or work for the French. On July 30, 1941, the commander of the Dakar maritime police, assisted by 30 armed sailors, boarded the vessel, arrested the captain and the officers, and interned them at Sebikotane.

The French police controlled the camp, which held 24 sailors. A French lieutenant and sergeant ensured discipline. All the prisoners were from Belgium, except for two, who were British. The sailors were considered civilian internees and were guarded by up to 35 Senegalese soldiers in the French Army. The internees were not allowed to leave the camp to visit Dakar. When the camp closed in December 1941, they were relocated to the Sidi El Ayachi camp in Morocco. A Belgian report submitted to the International Tracing Service in 1951 listed the names of the 22 Belgian sailors held at Sebikotane and dispatched to Sidi El Ayachi.²

SOURCES Primary sources on the Sebikotane camp can be found in ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

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NOTES

1. “Camp de SEBIKOUTANE,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. Nos. 82371114–82371117.

2. "Liste des Belges passés par Sebikotane," Annexe No. 33, Liste No. 1, Rapport définitif No. 52, December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. Nos. 82371248–82371249.

SETTAT

Located 2 kilometers (1.2 miles) from the city of Settât, the camp of Settât (also known as Fqih ben Salh) was built on a woody slope. The camp was almost 66 kilometers (approximately 41 miles) south of Casablanca and housed the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 12. The camp consisted of four stone barracks covered with foliage and adobe, each of which housed 30 men. The beds were made out of branches, and the prisoners were given two blankets per person. The camp was cool in the summer, but during the winter rainy season, the leaking roofs made it hard for the forced laborers to sleep. In 1942, the Settât camp was under the direction of J. de Charant.

Settât was a very crowded camp. Its capacity was 120 men, but it actually held 255 men at its peak. According to a report by Dr. Wyss-Dunant of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), who visited the camp on July 16, 1942, the camp included prisoners from many countries: Austrians (6), Belgians (39), Czechs (7), Dutch (7), French (5), Germans (28), Greek (1), Italians (34), Poles (42), Russians (14), Swiss (6), and Yugoslavs (10), as well as others.¹ Ten prisoners were Jews.

Initially, the camp housed 200 political prisoners who worked in the forest industry. At the end of 1942, Settât had approximately 100 workers, 31 of whom were volunteers engaged in the Foreign Legion for the duration of the war (*Engagés Volontaires pour la Durée de la Guerre*, EVDG).

A canteen provided beer and necessary goods. Prisoners were given clothes, shoes, and hats during the summer and winter, but not socks or raincoats. Once a week, the internees were forced to shower at the local infirmary in Settât. On Sundays, they were also allowed to go to the swimming pool in Settât. Drinking water was accessible from a nearby well. In general, the prisoners were allowed to go to town from 6:00 p.m. to bedtime without any restrictions.

There was no infirmary in the camp. The prisoners had little access to medications or surgical dressings. Many were sickened with malaria and were unable to continue working. The prisoners also suffered from flea infections.

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the Settât camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Magbreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources documenting the Settât camp can be found in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M); and AFSC (available at USHMMA as RG-67.008M, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa).

Aomar Boum

NOTE

1. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), July 16, 1942, box 1, folder 15, pp. 20–21.

SIDI EL AYACHI

Sidi El Ayachi is located near Azemmour about 76 kilometers (47 miles) southwest of Casablanca, on the right bank of the mouth of Oum Rabia River between Casablanca and El Jadida (Mazagan). Also known as Kaid El Ayachi or Azemmour, the camp was first used as a reception center for members of the French Foreign Legion (*Légion étrangère*, LE) living in Morocco before 1940. On October 22, 1941, it was repurposed as an internment camp, first for sailors from allied and other nations, then in mid-1942 for individuals and families, including women and children. The good weather conditions and ocean breeze made life inside this camp better than in other camps in North Africa.

The camp consisted of about 20 masonry buildings with wired windows and concrete floors; the masonry was covered with sheet metal.¹ Each building was divided into rooms that housed no more than 20 internees each. A tall wall encircled the camp. The main gate was guarded by Moroccan soldiers, and the camp administrators were members of the local police force of Casablanca. Capitaine Conte de Menorval, a French officer, was in charge of discipline inside the camp.

The internees were allowed to move freely and were grouped by families. They had access to individual beds with linens and blankets. On August 17, 1942, Dr. Wyss-Dunant of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited the camp and reported that there were 236 adults and 5 infants interned in Sidi El Ayachi.² In addition, 29 of the internees were on leave, 9 were in the local hospital, and 9 were transients. The total population was thus 288, 86 of whom were Spanish. Of the 288 internees, 138 were male, 99 were female, and there were 51 children. Wyss-Dunant described the living conditions in the camps as "comfortable." Jewish inmates had the opportunity to attend the synagogue at Azemmour. The majority of foreign refugees had been living in Casablanca.

On July 23, 1942, General Charles Noguès, the French resident-general in Morocco, visited the camp and expressed his satisfaction with its management. Later the French authorities claimed that the British and Americans tried to remove some internees from the camp. This claim triggered the transfer of Norwegian and Belgian sailors to the Oued Zem camp. On April 6, 1943, Édouard Conod, a representative of the ICRC, reported that the camp held 217 internees. However, there were only 122 present at the time, a group that included 69 people from Spain. He returned on April 13, 1943, and confirmed the number.³ On July 3, 1943, another ICRC representative, Camille Vautier, visited the camp and reported that there were 53 men, 42 women, and 7 children in the camp.⁴

The conditions were relatively good in the camp. About 625 grams (1.4 pounds) of bread and 65 grams (2.3 ounces) of meat were served per internee per day. Various articles were available for sale, and clothes and sandals were distributed. The sanitary conditions were excellent, and the camp had one male nurse and three doctors who were also prisoners. The internees did their own laundry and had access to eight showers with

SIDI-EL-AYACHI
AZEMMOUR

Permission de TROIS JOURS

Il est permis au Monsieur LANDESBERG

d'aller à CASABLANCA

Il devra rentrer le 26 JANVIER 1943, à _____ heures

A EL-AYACHI, le 22 Janvier le 22 1943

AVIS TRÈS IMPORTANT. — Pendant le trajet en chemin de fer, ne jetez aucun objet par la portière, vous vous exposeriez à une grave condamnation.

Imp. Rapide — Casa-Fez

Permit issued to Hans Landesberg in the Sidi El Ayachi concentration camp, allowing him to go to Casablanca for three days, January 26, 1943. USHMM WS #65538, COURTESY OF HANS LANDESBERG.

drains and a sewer system. They were allowed to go outside the camp and visit the neighboring community of Azemmour. Many Jewish internees were in close contact with Azemmour's Moroccan Jewish community, which helped feed many of the internees. Overall, Sidi El Ayachi was one of the few camps where the conditions of life were relatively comfortable.

SOURCES Secondary sources mentioning the camp at the Sidi El Ayachi are Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939-1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories from the Holocaust's Long Reach in Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); Christine Levisse-Touzé, "Les camps d'internement en Afrique du Nord pendant la seconde guerre mondiale," in 'Abd-al-Ġalīl at-Tamīmī and Charles-Robert Ageron, eds., *Mélanges Charles-Robert Ageron*, 2 (Zaghouan, Tunisia: Fondation Temimi pour la Recherche Scientifique et l'Information, 1996), 2: 601-608; and Zosa Szajkowski, *Jews and the French Foreign Legion* (New York: KTAV Publishing House, 1975).

Primary sources on the Sidi El Ayachi camp can be found in the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMMA as RG-68.115M); AFSC (available at USHMMMA as RG-67.008M, records relating to humanitarian work in North Africa); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und

Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMMA.

Aomar Boum

NOTES

1. "Enquêtes sur les prisons et les camps d'internement," Rapport définitif No. 52, Annexe No. 14, December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371199.
2. USHMMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), August 17, 1942, box 1, folder 15.
3. Ibid.
4. "Enquêtes sur les prisons et les camps d'internement," Rapport définitif No. 52, Annexe No. 14, December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371199.

SKRIRAT

Skirrat (Skhirat or Skhrirat) is located in present-day Morocco, strategically situated 61 kilometers (almost 38 miles) northeast of Casablanca and more than 26 kilometers (over 16 miles) southwest of Rabat. Skirrat was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940. It was classified as a group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE) camp.

The camp was located in an ancient citadel (*kasbah*) very close to the Atlantic Ocean. The barracks were simple and covered with sheet metal. Each one housed 100 detainees, who were each assigned a single bed, a mattress, and two blankets. The conditions in the camp were poor. There was a shortage of fresh drinking water, and many internees suffered from stomach ulcers, typhus, malaria, asthma, and/or tuberculosis. Sick detainees were not quarantined, and therefore disease spread throughout the camp. Many detainees were taken to neighboring hospitals in Rabat and Casablanca. Others did not survive the bad hygienic conditions.

The Allies landed on the Moroccan and Algerian coasts in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, after which the detainees progressively returned to civilian life; however, some remained in the camp. During this period a representative of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Camille Vautier, visited the camp on several occasions.¹ In April 1943, he counted 238 internees (236 Italians and 2 Germans). On June 29, 1943, the number decreased to 148 detainees (146 Italians, 1 German, 1 French Foreign Legionnaire); and on September 3, 1943, the camp had 97 inmates (95 Italians, 1 German, and 1 French).

SOURCES A secondary source that mentions the Skrirat camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources documenting the Skrirat camp can be found in *RICR* 25 (1943): 784–785; and www.claimscon.co.il/new/files/wordocs/N_Africa.pdf.

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NOTE

1. *RICR* 25 (1943): 784–785.

TALZAZA MENABBA

In 1941, the Vichy authorities established a forced labor subcamp of Colomb-Béchar at Talzaza Menabba (Menabba), Algeria, for the purpose of quarrying stone for the construction of the railway for the Mediterranean Niger Company (*Chemins de Fer de la Méditerranée au Niger*, Mer-Niger).¹ Located very close to the Moroccan border, Talzaza is 35 kilometers (22 miles) north of Béchar and 727 kilometers (452 miles) southwest of Algiers. The camp consisted of the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 3, and had the capacity to hold 100 men. However, according to historian Jacob Oliel, when Dr. Wyss-Dunant of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited the camp in August 1942, there were 120 prisoners, including in Menabba and Mengoup. At the time of Wyss-Dunant's visit, all but five of the prisoners were Spanish. Initially consisting of a group of tents, Talzaza became a barracks camp in 1942. The majority of forced laborers worked at Menabba. As a subcamp of Colomb-Béchar, Talzaza reported to Colonel Liebray, the military commandant of the Ain Sefra Territory, and was under the overall command of Commandant Viciot of Colomb-Béchar.²

According to documentation submitted by the kingdom of Belgium to the International Tracing Service (ITS), a Belgian citizen was confined in Talzaza Menabba. Albert Rosenberg, who passed through a number of Vichy-run camps in Morocco and Algeria, was held at Talzaza from October to December 1941. Before October 1941, he was held at Bou Arfa. On December 15, 1941, he was dispatched to the Colomb-Béchar camp.³

SOURCES A secondary source that describes the Talzaza Menabba camp is Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005).

Primary sources documenting the Talzaza Menabba camp can be found in ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA.

Joseph Robert White

NOTES

1. “Notice sur Talzaza Menaba,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371156.
2. USHMMA, RG-67.008M (AFSC), August 1, 1942, box 1, folder 15.
3. Annexe 33, Liste 15, “Liste des Belges passés par Talzaza Menaba,” Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d’Afrique du Nord), December 27, 1951, ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371269.

TAMANAR (TANOUDJA)

Tamanar (Temanar, Tamana) is located in southwestern Morocco, 344 kilometers (214 miles) southwest of Casablanca and 553 kilometers (almost 344 miles) southwest of Fes. The camp was situated more than 1,000 meters (3,281 feet) above sea level and was approximately 25 kilometers (16 miles) from the town of Tamanar, halfway between Agadir and Mogador (today: Essaouira). In the sources, it was also called Tanoundja Tamanar, Tamanar par Mogador, or Tamanar (Mogador). Tamanar was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940. It housed the group of foreign workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Étrangers*, GTE), GTE No. 7.¹

The camp consisted of small barracks that each held 8 to 10 men. Every internee was allocated a rudimentary bed with a single mattress and two blankets. As of April 30, 1943, when Camille Vautier of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) visited the Tamanar camp, it had 219 internees, of whom 211 were Italians, 7 were former Legionnaires, and one was of an unknown origin.

A notable person at Tamanar was the German refugee, Alfred Haase, who served as GTE's medical officer from January to June 1943.² GTE No. 7 internees Willy Hark and Richard Orthman requested transfer to the British Pioneer Corps in the summer of 1943; that is, more than six months after Operation Torch and the Allied landings in Morocco and Algeria. Hark and Orthmann were originally from Germany and were veterans of the International Brigade (Interbrigade)

in Spain.³ They were known antifascists when they arrived in Casablanca in 1940,⁴ and the French authorities wanted to keep them under surveillance.⁵ Italian national Jean La Rocca was also interned with GTE No. 7 at Tamanar starting in February 1943. La Rocca suffered from malaria and incurred a skull fracture.⁶

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, after which the detainees at Tamanar were progressively returned to civilian life. As evidenced by the cases of Haase, Hark, Orthmann, and La Rocca, however, the camp was still in use well into 1943.

SOURCES Secondary sources describing the Tamanar camp include Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006).

Primary source material documenting the Tamanar camp can be found in the AFSC Refugee Assistance Case files, available in hard copy at USHMMA as Acc. No. 2002.296 and the Hélène Cazès-Benathar collection, which is held at CAHJP (available in microform at USHMMA as RG-68.115M).

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NOTES

1. Emplacement des Groupes de Travailleurs de la Production Industrielle et du Travail, n.d., USHMMA, RG-68.115M, n.p.

2. "Haase, Alfred," n.d., USHMMA, Acc. No. 2002.296 (AFSC), Casablanca Series, box 3 (G–K), folder AFSC Casablanca Subject File H, subfolder "Haag, Paul."

3. HQABS Civil Affairs APO 759, June 9, 1943, USHMMA, Acc. No. 2002.296, Casablanca Series, box 3 (G–K), folder AFSC Casablanca H, subfolder "Hark, Willy."

4. Base Headquarters Civil Affairs Office Delegation, October 15, 1943, USHMMA, Acc. No. 2002.296, Casablanca Series, box 3 (G–K), folder AFSC Casablanca H, subfolder "Hark, Willy."

5. Confidential, CIC Section Fifth (United States) Army, APO No. 464, May 23, 1943, USHMMA, Acc. No. 2002.296, Casablanca Series, box 5 (M–Q), folder AFSC Casablanca H, subfolder "Hark, Willy."

6. Bureau des Groupements des Travailleurs Étrangers, June 17, 1943, USHMMA, Acc. No. 2002.296, Casablanca Series, box 3 (G–K), folder L.

TELERGMA

Telergma (Telergma) is located in the Mila province in northeastern Algeria, 36 kilometers (more than 22 miles) southwest of Constantine and approximately 152 kilometers (over 94 miles) northeast of Biskra. Telergma was one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940. The Telergma camp, which was created in 1941, was initially located in barracks from the nearby town of Constantine. It housed a group of Jewish workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Israélites*, GTI) that was

supervised by French Army officers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs). This contingent was also described as a group of civil workers (*Groupe des Travailleurs Civils*, GTC), GTC No. 22.¹

As of October 31, 1941, GTI No. 22 had one indigenous and two French supervisors. In addition, there was one French superintendent and one indigenous superintendent. The 242 indigenous and three French forced laborers were deployed by the French Army.² As of February 1, 1942, 6 Vichy officers and NCOs supervised 261 GTI laborers. After March 1942 the work became particularly brutal: the internees were required to chop wood and haul big bags of stones on their backs under the blistering sun. George Barkatz was detained in the Telergma camp for two years for being an "indigenous Jew."

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, after which the detainees at Telergma were progressively returned to civilian life.

SOURCES Secondary sources describing the Telergma camp include Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); and *L'Arche*, 461–464 (1996).

A primary source documenting the camp at Telergma can be found in CAOM, available at USHMMA under RG-43.062M, reel 8.

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NOTES

1. Gouvernement Général de l'Algérie, Groupement de Travailleurs Demobilisés du Département de Constantine, December 2, 1941, USHMMA, RG-43.062M (CAOM), reel 8, pp. 1–2.

2. Ibid.

TENDRARA

Tendrara (Tendarra, Tandara) is a town located in eastern Morocco, almost 522 kilometers (324 miles) east of Casablanca and 161 kilometers (almost 100 miles) north of Béchar, Algeria. The Tendrara camp, one of the Vichy forced labor camps established in North Africa after the Franco-German Armistice in June 1940, was located nearly 10 kilometers (6 miles) east of the town.

On March 22, 1941, Marshal Henri-Philippe Pétain authorized the construction of the Trans-Saharan Railroad, also known as the Mediterranean-Nigerian (*Mer-Niger*) railway project. The railroad was intended to connect ports in Morocco and Algeria with the port at Dakar, Senegal. Tendrara was along the stretch of the railway line from Oran, Algeria, south along the Moroccan-Algerian border, in which forced laborers built the railroad under extreme and inhumane conditions. According to author Robert Satloff, the prisoners included Polish, German, Austrian, and Romanian Jews, Spaniards, and others. Overseeing the camp were French soldiers, local Arab guards, and the paramilitary staff of the Railroads of Eastern Morocco (*Chemins de Fer du Maroc Oriental*, CMO) and of the Mer-Niger Company.

The internees lived in tents. All of the camp buildings, except for one intended for the camp administration and the railway officials, faced the west side of the railway. The station house was at the center, and behind it were several buildings divided into small cubicles that were most likely used as kitchens. At the back of the camp were basic stone structures that were also divided into cubicles. A large house was located 183 meters (600 feet) south of the station. The buildings were well laid out for use by soldiers or railway representatives. The more sophisticated quarters closer to the tracks were most likely for the Europeans, whereas the simpler buildings located toward the back of the camp were meant for the Arab guards.

The Allies landed on the coasts of Algeria and Morocco in Operation Torch on November 8, 1942, after which the detainees at Tendirara were progressively returned to civilian life.

SOURCES Secondary sources describing Tendirara include Jacob Oliel, *Les camps de Vichy: Maghreb-Sabara 1939–1945* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2005); Robert Satloff, *Among the Righteous: Lost Stories of the Holocaust's Long Reach into Arab Lands* (New York: Public Affairs, 2006); André Moine, *La Déportation et la résistance en Afrique du Nord (1939–1944)*, preface by Léon Feix (Paris: Éditions Sociales, 1972); David Bensoussan, *Il était une fois le Maroc: Témoignages du Passé Judéo-Marocain* (Montreal: Éditions du Lys, 2012); and Martin Gilbert, *The Macmillan Atlas of the Holocaust* (New York: Macmillan, 1982). For footage of what remains of the site, see www.jewishmorocco.org/en?page_id=435.

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TOMBOUCTOU

Between October 1941 and at least August 1942, the French Army operated an internment camp for captured seamen of the Royal Merchant Navy at Tombouctou (Timbuktu or Timbuctoo). Today a major city in Mali, Tombouctou was part of the French Sudan (*Sudan Français*) in French West Africa (*Afrique occidentale française*, AOF) during World War II. It is located 706 kilometers (439 miles) northeast of Bamako and 1,562 kilometers (971 miles) northeast of Dakar, Senegal. The Tombouctou camp held more than 50 internees in a two-building, walled compound, guarded by French noncommissioned officers (NCOs) and indigenous troops. The commandant, originally from the French Caribbean, was named Moreau.¹

Armed French sloops patrolling the waters off West Africa intercepted several British merchant vessels and captured their crews, among them the SS *Criton* and the SS *Allende*. After an initial internment at Conakry (1,412 kilometers [874 miles] southwest of Tombouctou), the crews were dispatched on an arduous journey by rail, bus, and barge along the Niger River to Tombouctou. The lengthy trip adversely affected the health of many of the prisoners. A few additional merchant seamen were dispatched to Tombouctou from the Dakar hospital and the Sebikotane camp, just east of Dakar. Another internee, too sick for repatriation, from the already exchanged crew of the SS *Jbelum* was also sent there.² Before their transfer to the prisoner of war (POW) camp at Koulikoro (655 kilometers or 407

miles southwest of Tombouctou), the camp also held an officer from the Royal Naval Reserves (RNR) and a pilot officer from the Royal Canadian Air Force (RCAF). The RNR officer was attached to the SS *Criton*, whereas the RCAF officer crashed over AOF territory while ferrying a Hawker Hurricane fighter plane from Freetown, Sierra Leone, to Cairo, Egypt.³ Captain G. T. Dobeson of the *Criton* was the senior internee. After the arrival of the *Allende's* crew in April 1942, he and Captain Williamson of the *Allende* jointly represented the internees before Moreau.

The conditions at Tombouctou were horrible. The internees subsisted on a diet of couscous, thin gravy, rice, and peanuts, with few vegetables and little meat. Although the camp had a physician, medicine was nonexistent. Basic amenities, such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, and razors, were lacking. The internees wore their merchant marine uniforms until they were threadbare. As recalled by Bernard Peter de Neumann, “Our uniforms wore out, so we took sheets off our beds and made rough skirts.”⁴

As Protecting Power, the U.S. consulate in Dakar relayed aid parcels from the British Red Cross Society (BRCS) to the camp. The internees did not receive any of those parcels, however, until they were subsequently transferred to the Kankan internment camp. U.S. Consul General Fayette J. Flexer served as a conduit between the governor general of French West Africa, Pierre Boisson, and the British West African Governors' Conference, through the offices of the U.S. consulate in Lagos, Nigeria. Although Flexer never inspected Tombouctou, he took an interest in the fate of the internees and transmitted proposals that secured the eventual exchange, in July and December 1942, of the crews of the *Allende* and *Criton*, respectively. The *Allende* crew reached British West African territory in July 1942. The *Criton* crew was transferred in August 1942 to the Kankan internment camp (984 kilometers or 611 miles southwest of Tombouctou in Guinea) before their release in December 1942.⁵

As civilians, interned merchant seamen were not entitled to POW status under the Geneva Convention of 1929, and the conditions at this camp were substantially worse than at other internment camps in the AOF and French North Africa, even those holding Britons. Witnesses recalled that the French NCOs enjoyed substantial meals in their view and that the commandant fashioned an elaborate but fictitious menu for the benefit of the Protecting Power and London that bore little relation to the rations actually distributed. The internees attributed the poor conditions to the commandant's anglophobia.

Two internees, both from the crew of the SS *Allende*, died in the Tombouctou camp and were buried (presumably) in a nearby cemetery. Able Seaman John Turnbull Graham, aged 23, died of heatstroke on May 2, 1942. Chief Engineer William Soutter, aged 60, was unable to digest solid food, even rice, and died of starvation on May 28, 1942. Other internees suffered from serious physical ailments, including chronic dysentery.⁶

It is not clear if the transfer of the *Criton's* crew in August 1942 resulted in the Tombouctou internment camp's clo-

sure. As late as November 23, 1942—that is, two weeks after Operation Torch—the U.S. consulate in Dakar reported, probably based on dated intelligence, that two Britons and two Poles were held in “administrative internment” in the camp.⁷

SOURCES Secondary sources describing the Tombouctou internment camp are David Miller, *Mercy Ships* (London: Continuum, 2008); and Wayne Ralph, *Aces, Warriors & Wingmen: Firsthand Accounts of Canada's Fighter Pilots in the Second World War* (Mississauga, Ontario: John Wiley & Sons, Canada, 2005). An unpublished but detailed account of the camp is Bernard de Neumann, “Sand in their Seaboats: The Story of the SS CRITON” (unpub. MSS, 2004). The account is based in part on documentation about his father's internment. Information on the two burials at the Tombouctou camp can be found at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, “Timbaktu (Tombouctou) Cemetery,” www.cwgc.org.

Primary sources documenting the Tombouctou internment camp can be found in TNA, collections ADM 116, ADM 199, FO 317/31938, FO 371/32035 and 32036, and FO 916; NARA, RG-84 (Textual records from the Department of State U.S. Consulate, Dakar, Senegal, 1869–1960); and ITS, 2.3.5.1 (Belgischer Katalog über Konzentrations- und Zwangsarbeiterlager in Deutschland und besetzten Gebieten), available in digital form at USHMMA. Contemporaneous newspaper accounts are in *DE(L)* and *AP&J*. Testimonies by internees can be found at IWM: 14823, sound recording of an oral history interview with D. M. R. Maxwell, n.d.; and Doc. 11851, the private papers of W. Williams, 2002. A published testimony can be found at www.bbc.co.uk/history.

Joseph Robert White

NOTES

1. Report of Captain Williamson, SS *Allende*, July 1942, TNA, ADM 199/2140 Enc 54, excerpted in de Neumann, “Sand in their Seaboats,” p. 155.

2. For the internees dispatched from Dakar, “On U-Boat and at Timbuctoo Camp,” *AP&J*, January 2, 1943; and Annexe No. 2, Procès-Verbal d'Interrogatoire, Charles Staes, July 7, 1950, Rapport définitif No. 52 (Camps d'Afrique du Nord), ITS, 2.3.5.1, folder 19b, Doc. No. 82371177; on the *Jbelum* crew member, Flexer to U.S. Department of State and American Embassy, London, July 23, 1942, re: British Interests, with attached medical report on internee H.F.L., NARA, RG-84, box 1, folder 704.

3. Testimony of Allen Robert McFadden, June 3, 1974, available at www.bbc.co.uk/history/ww2peopleswar/stories/90/a8043590.shtml.

4. As quoted in “The Man from Timbuctoo,” *DE(L)*, February 10, 1943.

5. Flexer, Telegram No. 291 to U.S. Secretary of State, July 30, 1942, NARA, RG-84, box 1 (1940–1948), folder 711.4 (Air Corps, USA); on the *Allende* and *Criton* exchanges, U.S. Consulate, Dakar, Memorandum, ca. April 11, 1942, with a name list of *Criton* internees; Memorandum, May 28, 1942; and Memorandum for files, stamped July 7, 1942, available in NARA, RG-84, box 1, folder 704 (British).

6. Flexer to U.S. Department of State and American Embassy, London, July 23, 1942, re: British Interests, with attached medical report on internee H. F. L., NARA, RG-84, box 1, folder 704.

7. U.S. Consulate, Dakar, to U.S. State Department, Telegram No. 481, November 23, 1942, NARA, RG-84, box 1 (1940–1948), folder 700 (Relations of States General, 1942–1943).

