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Documents on Prisoners of War

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DOCUMENT NO. 41

**CONDITIONS OF AN ARMISTICE BETWEEN THE ALLIED AND
ASSOCIATED POWERS AND GERMANY
(Compiègne, 11 November 1918)**

SOURCES

2 Bevans 9
13 AJIL Supp. 97
Parl. Papers, "Misc., No. 25 (1918)"
3 Malloy 3307

NOTE

This is the armistice agreement which brought about a cessation of the hostilities of World War I (1914-1918). The war itself was brought to an end by the Treaty of Versailles of 28 June 1919 (DOCUMENT NO. 44). Like many of its counterparts which have followed the complete victory of one side and the complete defeat of the other and a dictated armistice agreement (see, for example, DOCUMENT NO. 50 and DOCUMENT NO. 64), the provisions in this agreement for the repatriation of the members of the armed forces of the victor nations who were being held as prisoners of war by the defeated side were not matched by a similar requirement for the repatriation of the members of the armed forces of the vanquished nation who were being held as prisoners of war by the victors; that had to await the peace treaty. This situation was not improved by the provisions of Article 75(1) of the 1929 Geneva Prisoner-of-War Convention (DOCUMENT NO. 49) and the excesses in this respect which followed each termination of hostilities in World War II (1939-1945) (see, for example, (DOCUMENT NO. 115) led to the drafting and adoption of Article 118 of the 1949 Geneva Prisoner-of-War Convention (DOCUMENT NO. 108). However, even the unambiguous provisions of that article have not proven successful in accomplishing their purpose. (See DOCUMENT NO. 167.)

EXTRACTS

X. The immediate repatriation, without reciprocity, according to detailed conditions which shall be fixed, of all allied and United States prisoners of war, including those under trial and condemned. The allied powers and the United States of America shall be able to dispose of these prisoners as they think fit. This condition annuls all other conventions regarding prisoners of war, including that of July, 1918, now being ratified. However, the return of German prisoners of war interned in Holland and Switzerland shall continue as heretofore. The return of German prisoners of war shall be settled at the conclusion of the peace preliminaries.

XI. Sick and wounded who can not be removed from territory evacuated by the German forces shall be cared for by German personnel, who shall be left on the spot with the material required.