

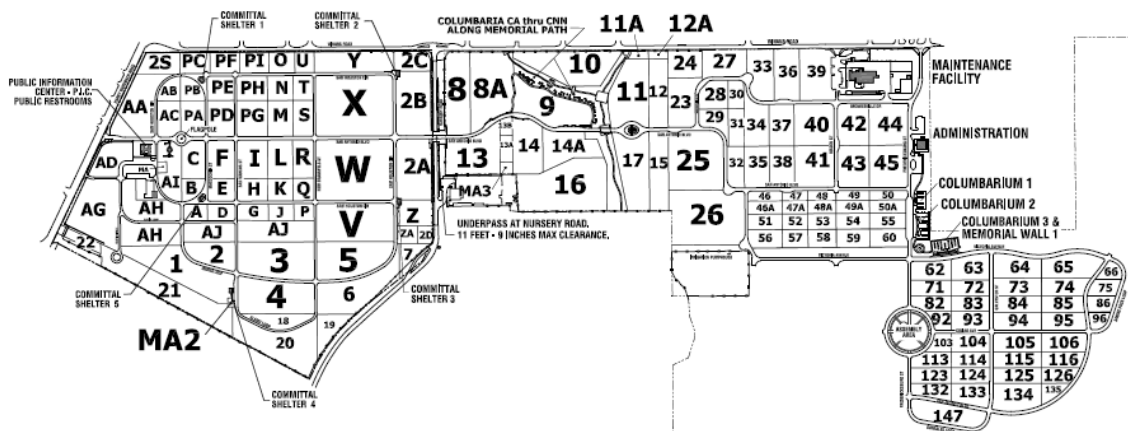


Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, Texas

The POW section in the southeast corner of Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery was described as both a “cemetery” and a “POW Section” in 1946 and 1953 U. S. Army reports, respectively; the Army established it in 1947 some distance from the active sections that were filling with deceased veterans and eligible family members. Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery contains a total of 140 World War II POW graves – 133 German POWs, 4 Italian POWs, and 3 Japanese POWs. As POW camps across the United States closed after World War II, the Army consolidated the graves from camp cemeteries and the remains were interred permanently at federal cemeteries. Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery contains POW remains from eight camps that operated in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas – including Camp Bowie, TX, where two of the German POWs, Alfred P. Kafka and Georg Forst, were originally interred. Their headstones are inscribed with the 1939 Iron Cross medal center top (with a centered swastika and “1939” in the bottom arm of the cross), date of birth, and at the bottom a German inscription translating roughly to “He Died Far From/ Home, for Commander/People and Fatherland.”

The POW burial area was originally located at the back of the national cemetery, surrounded by a chain-link fence with two swinging gates, and the interior perimeter was lined with tall evergreen shrubs and ornamental trees. With the continued expansion of the cemetery to the east, the POW cemetery/section (now section ZA) is completely surrounded by burial sections containing U.S. veterans and their eligible dependents. All of the POW graves are marked with standard General-type government-issue upright headstones inscribed with the decedent’s name (often spelled per the English equivalent of the foreign name, or with first and last names reversed), date of death, and some identification of the decedent’s foreign military service, including rank.

The original General-type headstones for Kafka and Forst were likely altered between their placement at the camp between 1943 and 1946-1947, when the remains and headstones were relocated to Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, and the inscription described above was added. These headstones are two of only three known POW headstones inscribed with the swastika found in NCA properties.



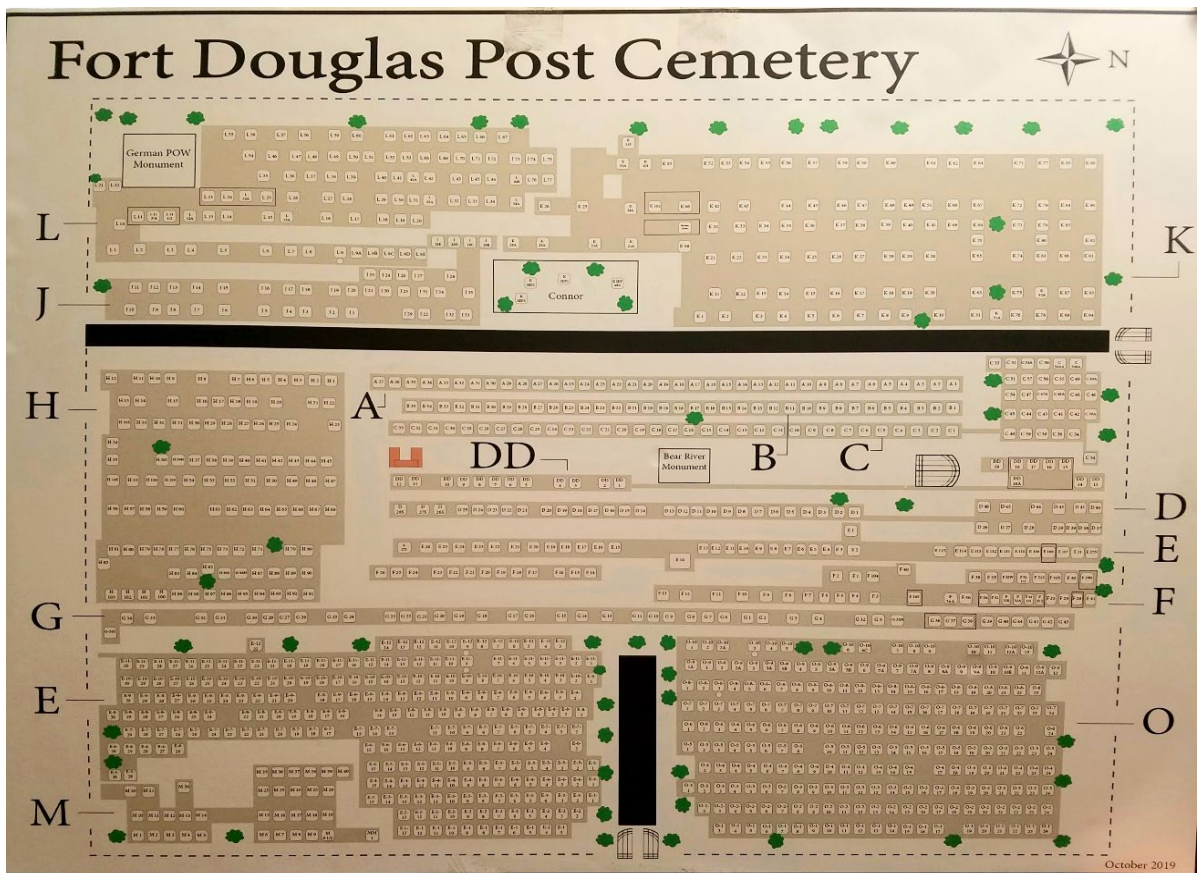
Map of Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, San Antonio, Texas: See Section ZA.

Fort Douglas Post Cemetery, Utah

Paul Eilert (died 1944) was the first German prisoner to die at the POW Camp at Fort Douglas during World War II. Fellow prisoners at the camp gave their allowance - 50 cents per day - to buy a private marker for Eilert's grave. The granite monument they purchased measures 33" H x 33" W x 8" D. In addition to his name and years of birth and death, the 1939 Iron Cross is inscribed at the top center along with a band of flowers. The cross is 5.5" square and contains a 1.5"-square swastika at its center. Placement of the headstone was reported in the October 6, 1944, edition of the *Salt Lake Tribune*.

Another 32 World War II POWs (20 German POWs, 12 Italian POWs, 1 Japanese POW) died at the Fort Douglas camp before the end of the war; their gravesites are marked with standard-issue government General-style headstones inscribed with the decedent's name, rank, affiliation, and date of death.

In addition, there are 21 World War I German POWs buried in Fort Douglas Cemetery, for a total of 54 World War German POW interments.



Fort Fort Douglas Post Cemetery, Salt Lake City, Utah: Paul Eilert Grave (Section M Grave 6)

Existing Historic Headstones

Fort Douglas Post Cemetery, Salt Lake City, Utah: Paul Eilert grave marker, 1944, and detail.



Fort Sam Houston National Cemetery, San Antonio, Texas: Headstones of Alfred P. Kafka, Georg Forst.



Replacement Headstone

Representative government-issued General-style headstone for replacement.

