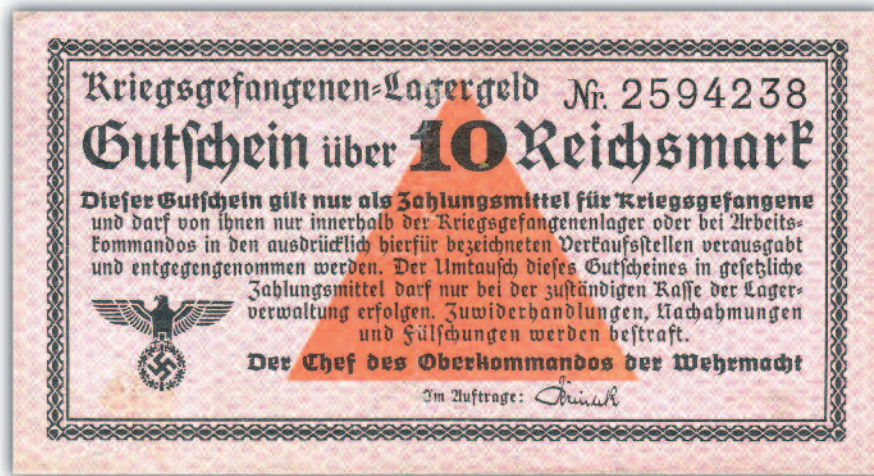
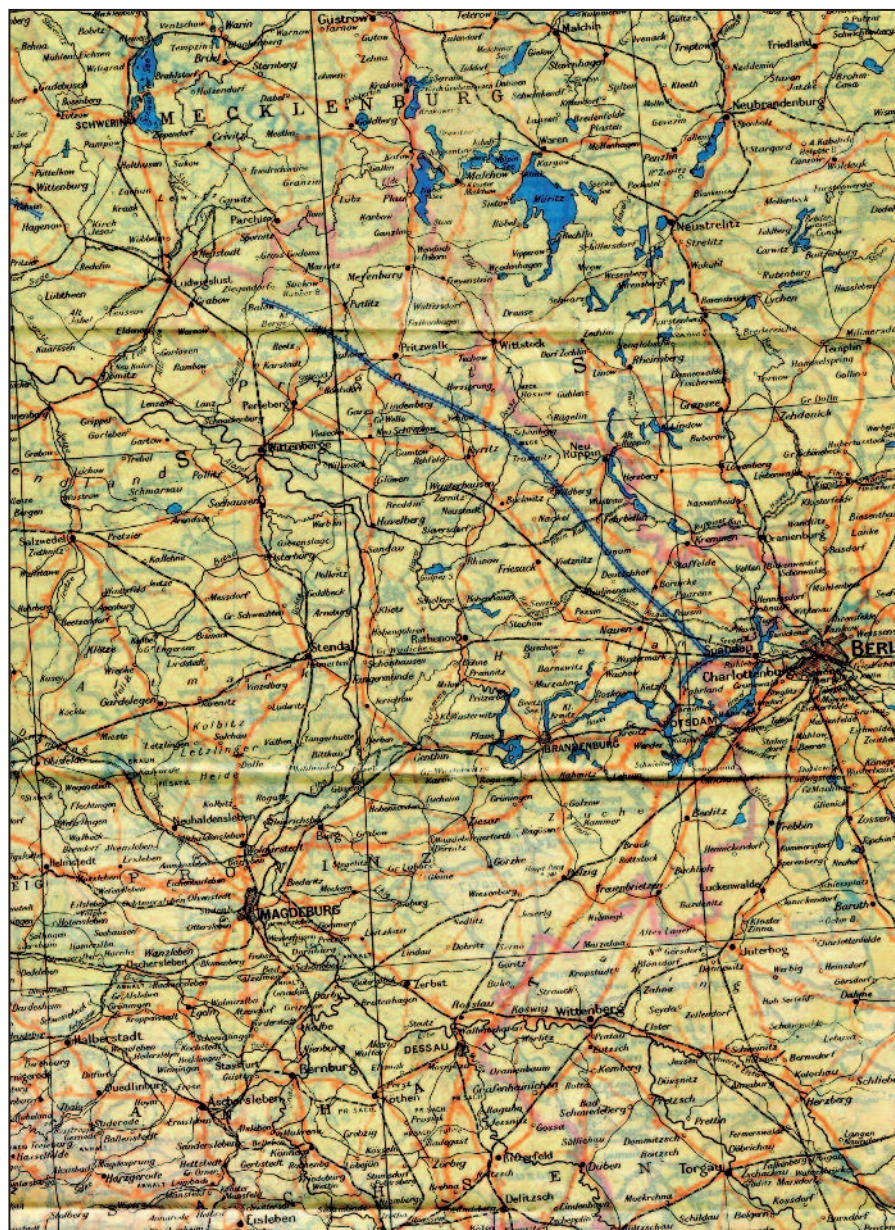


MONEY, MAPS AND MONOPOLY

Board games did more than relieve monotony for POWs by Tony James



10 Reichsmark POW generic issue for all German POW camps with identifying red triangle



Allied map printed on silk / rayon showing part of Central Germany- Magdeburg and Berlin.

It was a British state secret, only declassified in 2007 when the surviving craftsmen from the famous Waddington's games company were finally honoured in a public ceremony for their contribution to the war effort. These were the people who developed and put together during WWII, in conditions of the highest secrecy, special editions of the board game Monopoly. The sets were destined for an unusual and different group of players – Allied servicemen, held in prisoner of war camps in enemy countries such as Germany, Poland and Italy. These “escape” edition Monopoly sets were specially marked with what appeared to be printing blemishes, which were in fact code for where the games should be sent. This was because they contained different maps hidden inside for camps in various countries such as Germany and Italy. The games were forwarded through the International Red Cross, under the category “games and pastimes” in CARE packages to Allied POWs. These editions of the game were manufactured under strictest secrecy by a special department of Waddington's, who held the licence for Monopoly, from the original American manufacturers. The workmen printed silk maps; a new technology perfected by Waddington's and inserted them into pieces of the Monopoly games. The workmen also managed to add small magnetic compasses and a two part metal file to the sets. In addition, hidden in the monopoly money was genuine German, Italian and French currency.

Paper currency for aircrew

In addition to the currency notes secreted in the Monopoly games, nearly one hundred and fifty thousand money purses were distributed to the US air personnel during the War. These packs variously included French francs, Belgian francs Dutch guilders Norwegian and Danish kroner, Italian Lire, US dollars, Spanish pesetas and even gold French 20 franc coins, depending upon where the missions were being flown. With all this currency, including gold coins, it is no wonder that there was tight control over their distribution and strict policies regarding return of unused packs. Any souvenirs that have been retained by flyers are usually found without the currency, the only exception being the aviators' Philippine packs used in the Pacific theatre of war.

German local currency

The Allied POWs held in camps deep in Germany and Poland were reliant on Red Cross parcels to supplement the meagre rations that they were entitled to under



20 Reichsmarks, 1939 P185, Woman with Edelweiss flower and mountain scene on back.

the Geneva Convention. The canteens run by the prison authorities stocked a few basic necessities that could be bought with prison currency that was paid as wages to the prisoners, again under the Convention. This currency was used to prevent prisoners hoarding and using the local currency to bribe guards and aid in escapes. A few camps had their own series of notes, while most had a generic series used throughout the German camp system.

The domestic series of paper currency used in Germany during the War had been in use since the early 1930s. Series from the Rentenbank through to Reichsbank issues of 1939 and 1942 were in circulation. The references for the story on the silk maps indicate that high denomination banknotes were hidden within the piles of Monopoly money. I find this a little difficult to accept as the last thing that escaping Allied POWs would want is to draw attention to themselves by exchanging high denomination notes at railway stations or shops! However, inflation did cause the denominations of currency to rise during the war years.

The low value 1 and 2 Rentenmark issues of 1937 were soon joined by a new 20 Reichsmark issue in 1939, and a 5 mark note issued in 1942. These issues were in stark contrast to the earlier issues depicting famous Germans and art works. The 10 and 20 reichsmark issues from 1929 remained in circulation. At the end of the war the 10 mark was photo-

mechanically reproduced and all notes had the same serial number and authentication clause, to satisfy emergency currency demands. The 1933 fifty and 1935 100 mark notes were also reissued in the same manner.

Maps for flyers in Europe

Prior to WWII, maps were made of cloth-backed paper or tissue and were subject to rapid wear and tear when folded and quickly fell apart if they got wet. In addition, the noise made when being opened and folded could also place those escaping at greater risk.

MI-9 was a secret government agency set up to assist resistance behind enemy lines and recover Allied troops being held prisoner. A member of this secret organisation, Christopher Clayton-Hutton, was responsible for many ingenious ideas to help in this work. He overcame much government red tape and many technical obstacles, and was responsible for a variety of escape aids - flying boots and uniforms that could be converted easily to look like civilian dress, powerful torches concealed inside bicycle pumps (for use by the French resistance) as well as the development of silk maps and compasses that would be included in Monopoly games.

Maps printed on silk and later rayon could be folded into a tiny space and



Allied map printed on silk / rayon showing parts of Holland, Belgium France and Germany



Philippines 1 Peso P89 series of 1941 similar to those issued to American flyers in the Far East.



Allied map printed on silk / rayon. South East China No.34

Reference numbers	pesos	Serial numbers	Issued	Cat. value
P89c S&B 2308	1	E6324001E-E6524000E	200,000	\$15
P91c S&B 2309	5	E1328001E- E1348000E	20,000	\$75
P92c S&B 2310	10	E870001E- E890000E	20,000	\$125

Serial numbers of Philippines Series 1941 currency included in U.S. aviator packs

hidden in clothing, cigarette packets or game pieces. The special edition Monopoly sets were identified by a red dot on the free parking space; while the "straight" boards were marked "Patent applied for" with a full stop. The different sets containing maps for different regions were coded by the Secret Service. A full stop after "Mayfair" meant that the game was intended for Norway, Sweden and Germany, A full stop after Marylebone Station meant it was destined for Italy. Sets so marked were donated to the International Red Cross by fictitious charitable organizations so as not to compromise the integrity of the Red Cross, along with warm clothing and other small comforts to the prisoners, for distribution to camps in the particular areas.

Some maps gave much more than general information to flyers who had been shot down over Germany. Prisoners held in camps in Poland and Austria received maps showing escape routes from Salzburg in Austria to Mojstrana in Yugoslavia, which was held by forces sympathetic to the Allies. The routes, while avoiding the easier mountain passes, showed a harder but less populated way over the hills and gave matter of fact advice on throwing stones at pursuers!

Maps produced by the British for the European theatre of war included France, Belgium, Holland, Portugal, Spain, Germany, Switzerland, Poland, Hungary, Slovakia, Croatia, Serbia, Montenegro, Greece including Crete, Albania, Romania, Bulgaria and Turkey.

Maps and Philippine paper currency

The US Navy Department requisitioned Series 1941 of Philippine currency for inclusion in naval aviators' emergency money packets. Five thousand packets were prepared, each containing 40 pesos in tens, 20 pesos in fives and 40 pesos in ones; the notes were identifiable only by the serial number ranges (see table below).

These and other requisitioned notes were aged by a special process before being issued to flyers in 1944 and it is presumed guerilla fighters received them in 1943.

These aviator notes are eagerly sought after by military and Philippine paper money collectors and command much higher prices than other circulating pieces. The Americans produced maps of North and South Burma, French Indochina and central, southeast and northeast China, as well as a series for the Philippines and East Asia – Japan, Korea and Russia. Maps of the South West Pacific theatre, including Borneo, Malaya and the East Indies, New Guinea, Brazil, British and French Guiana and parts of India, were also issued and some of these maps included a blood chit in several languages as explained below.



\$10 US Yellow seal P415y used in North Africa and included in evasion kits.

Blood chits

The Blood Chit story is a story in itself and described in the reference below as “a device issued by a government to an air crew member bearing a message in one or more languages that identifies him as a member of a particular military establishment and promises a reward for his return to friendly control.” The blood chit became a part of what was known as pre-capture evasion aids –maps, phrase cards and compasses.

They were particularly useful in combat areas where there was no common language or singular difficulty in communication. The chits became a standard part of equipment during the latter days of the War, as maps and currency were

included in Evasion Currency purses issued to aircrews: French francs for flights over France, Italian Lire for Italy and US dollars for the Balkans. Three denominations of US dollars, \$1, \$5 and \$10 with yellow seals and blue serial numbers, were initially used by American troops in North Africa and could be quickly demonetized if a large amount fell into enemy hands, later in the War they were included in the flyers evasion kits issued for missions over Yugoslavia from Italy. Money, Maps, and Monopoly sets were a fascinating combination of aids to military personnel while in combat and also of vital assistance should they be captured. These banknotes and maps still surface in personal effects of

returned servicemen while collectors can still hunt for one of the special edition Monopoly sets, it is believed that any remaining sets have been destroyed.

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