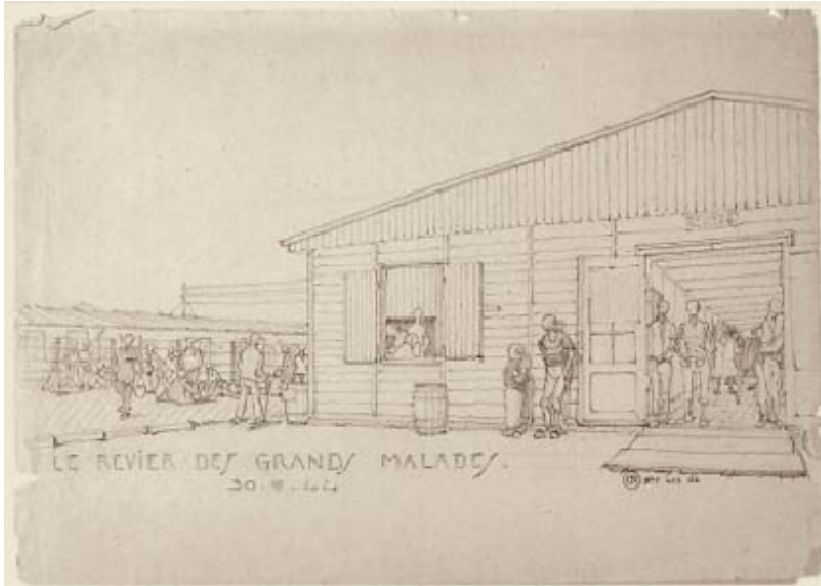


The Treatment of Sick and Weak Prisoners



Pencil Drawing by Félix Lazare Bertrand entitled "Le revier des grands malades" ("The Sick-Bay for the Seriously Ill") and dated "30.8.44". The title refers to sick-bay 4. View through the open door with some patients in the hallway and two more outside the hut. Félix Lazare Bertrand, a former prisoner from France, was imprisoned in the camp section for "prominent prisoners" at Neuengamme concentration camp from July 1944 to April 1945. (MRD)

Physical exhaustion led to many illnesses among the prisoners, but it was very difficult for sick prisoners to obtain treatment at the sick-bay because there were not enough beds or medications even to treat gravely ill or seriously wounded prisoners. Licensed doctors among the prisoners were not allowed to work at the sick-bay until late 1941. In 1942/43, prisoners who were ill for a prolonged period of time faced the threat of death by lethal injection. Weakened prisoners from the satellite camps, who had been transferred back to Neuengamme because they were no longer fit to work, were housed in so-called "convalescence blocks", where conditions were dreadful and the mortality rate was exceptionally high.