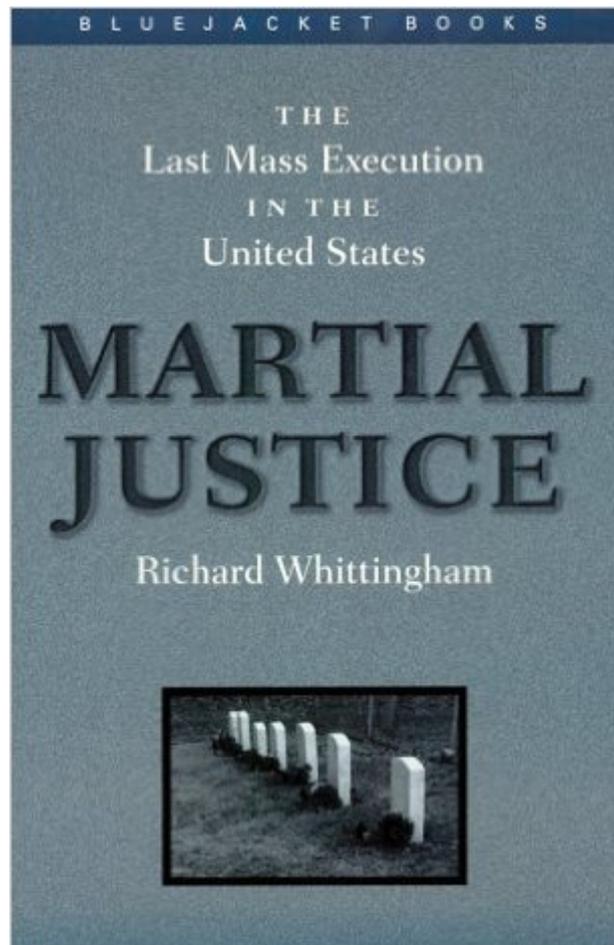


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# Martial Justice: The Last Mass Execution In The United States (Bluejacket Books)



## Synopsis

On August 25, 1945, seven young German POW submariners were hanged at Fort Leavenworth. It was the largest single execution in the United States in the twentieth century and the country's last mass execution. Their crime was the murder of a fellow German prisoner, a man they called a traitor because he helped interrogate other German prisoners. But why was their execution carried out four months after the end of the war for conduct many Americans would have expected of their own POWs in an enemy camp? And why was this "traitor" sent to the very camp where the men he had interrogated were imprisoned? Why did President Harry S. Truman, who signed the orders of execution, decline to be interviewed by the author, and why did all documents relating to the case vanish from the Truman Library after the author requested a research permit? Richard Whittingham probes the events that led to the murder, its perpetration, the brutal interrogation, the court-martial, and the execution, and he reveals how the seven were used as pawns by the U.S. government for the return of American prisoners in German hands before the war's end - then executed once Germany surrendered. The author also raises questions about military justice and the treatment of prisoners of war that are as controversial today as they were when this book was written more than two decades ago.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

**Martial Justice: The Last Mass Execution in the United States** is a compelling account of a conflict between honor and the fight against tyranny. A historical tragedy of German Submariner POW Werner Drechsler who was willing to sacrifice the bond of comradeship to save his homeland. On

the other side, seven fellow German Submariner POWs who see Drechsler as a traitor. The actions taken by the seven leads them down a twisted wartime legal path that ends with their execution after the surrender of Germany. The book examines the strong bonds of loyalty shared amongst these young men. A close-knit fraternity which became stronger through adversity. The many questions left unanswered by history begs the reader to examine the tarnished legacy left behind by the prisoner of war experience in the United States.

Completely fascinating. Most Americans don't even know we had hundreds of camps all over the U.S. that housed German POWs. We study all the heroes and villains of the war in broad terms, and tend to forget that there were thousands of little events that to the people involved were every bit as important as the publicized events. The U.S. Army executed a group of Germans who did what the American Army itself would have expected of its soldiers, and hushed up if American POWs did exactly the same thing. This is a frightening study of how the military bureaucracy is a law unto its own purposes. "The Killing of Corporal Kunz" and "Extreme Justice" are further fascinating looks at the same kind of situation.

Book dust jacket is completely different from the one shown. It is a small perhaps insignificant point as far as I am concerned; however, this could be a major issue to a collector. The seller should edit and update the image shown, so that it matches exactly with the book that will be shipped. This is a little known book on a very controversial subject--the mass execution of German POW's in an American military prison, "after" the official end of WWII under highly suspicious and possibly "illegal" circumstances. The remains of the POW's were given a dishonorable burial in a remote site on the grounds of Fort Leavenworth, KS. This is a must read for anyone interested in the military judicial system and how it operates. Many parallels to our treatment of prisoners in the global war on terror.

I did not learn of this book until after Father Towel had passed away, He had three sisters who were nuns in the Sisters of Charity in Leavenworth, Kansas. Ryan Michael O'Brien, Fair Oaks, California  
Ryan95628@hotmail.com

Looking forward to reading this. My great uncle Msgr. George Towle, ( God rest his soul) is the priest mentioned in it.

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