

Staff Sergeant John Hogge

On 22nd May 1945 three British servicemen on infantry patrol at a checkpoint in Bremervorde, Germany were responsible for the capture of Heinrich Himmler.

One was Staff Sergeant John C.D. Hogge of 1003 Field Security Reserve Detachment, whose family were living at Rusko, outside Gatehouse.

At first the British soldiers did not recognise Himmler or his S.S. aides. The person they arrested was not the well groomed, moustached Nazi, but a clean shaven, ill looking individual with a black patch over one eye going by the name Heinrich Hizinger. One of the other men was acting as the senior officer.



After a quick check of the men's (false) documents the soldiers realised that the group were in the automatic arrest category and they were handed over to headquarters, where under interrogation, Himmler admitted who he was. Whilst being searched Himmler bit into a potassium cyanide pill hidden in his mouth and committed suicide.

The event was reported in Galloway News June 16th 1945

Himmler was the chief of police in Germany, developing the Gestapo (German Secret State Police, known as SS) and having control over the concentration camps. Being responsible for mass murders, he was one of the most wanted war criminals in Germany.

When Himmler realized that Germany was losing the war he attempted to open peace talks with the Allies without Hitler's knowledge. When Hitler found out, Himmler was dismissed and his arrest ordered. Himmler went into hiding but was arrested in May 1945. He died 23rd May 1945.

John Hogge is understood to have worked for the Aspirin Company in Paris, where he met his French wife and where his daughter Evelyn was born. Presumably the family relocated to Scotland for safety when the war broke out. Mrs Hogge and Evelyn (both French speakers) first lived in a house near Cardoness and then later near Rusko.

Evelyn was a clever girl and won prizes at Gatehouse School and later went to Kirkcudbright Academy.

Extra information from Leo McClymont