List of Illustrations	ix
Acknowledgments	xi
Introduction	1
Part One From War to Postwar	17
CHAPTER ONE Impending Defeat: Military Losses, the Wehrmacht, and Ordinary Germans	19
CHAPTER Two Confronting Defeat: Returning POWs and the Politics of Victimization	43
CHAPTER THREE Embodied Defeat: Medicine, Psychiatry, and the Trauma of the Returned POW	70
Part Two Making Citizens	95
CHAPTER FOUR Survivors of Totalitarianism: Returning POWs and the Making of West German Citizens	97
CHAPTER FIVE Antifascist Conversions: Returning POWs and the Making of East German Citizens	126
CHAPTER SIX Parallel Exclusions: The West German POW Trials and the East German Purges	153
Part Three Divergent Paths	177
CHAPTER SEVEN Absent Presence: Missing POWs and MIAs	179

## viii • Contents

CHAPTER EIGHT Divided Reunion: The Return of the Last POWs	203
Conclusion Histories of the Aftermath	227
Notes	233
Bibliography Index	307
	359

## List of Illustrations

FIGURE 1. German POWs in Berlin being marched off into	
Soviet captivity (April-May 1945)	20
FIGURE 2. A mother welcoming her son home from Soviet	
captivity.	54
FIGURE 3. Without Home, without Possessions, taken by the	
Berlin photographer Friedrich Seidenstücker	55
FIGURE 4. Female auxiliary forces after their capture by	
the Red Army, 1945	61
FIGURE 5. A returnee in the Friedland transition camp	72
Figure 6. The Crowned; by K. Sieth	103
FIGURE 7. The Crucified, a bronze relief by Fritz Theilmann	104
FIGURE 8. Paul Merker, the SED's expert on POW issues,	
addressing a group of returned POWs in October 1948	132
FIGURE 9. Returnees leaving the transition camp in Gronenfelde	
in April 1949	137
FIGURE 10. Returnees in the Gronenfelde transition camp	
reading a party advertisement for the SED, October 1948	138
FIGURE 11. A two-minute traffic stoppage in Berlin on the occasion	
of the POW remembrance week in 1952	188
FIGURE 12. The wife of a still missing POW arrives in Berlin to han	d
over the light for the memorial candle to be lit on the occasion	
of the POW commemorations in 1954	190
FIGURE 13. An enthusiastic welcome of returned POWs in the	
Hessian town of Eschwege in October 1955	205
FIGURE 14. Poster advertisement for the film The Bells of Friedland	
a documentary on the experience of returned POWs produced	
by the Association of Returnees (VdH) in 1957	208
FIGURE 15. East German officials assisting returnees in crossing	
the border from East to West Germany in September 1953	220