

Prisoner's drawing of Oflag 64, reproduced from The Item of January 1, 1945 BY JAMES BICKERS  
 Drawing does not show the three, high, barbed wire fences surrounding the 900 feet by 1200 feet area of the P.O.W.-Camp; nor are the eleven guard towers shown.

VOL. XXV # 5

POST OFLAG 64 ITEM DECEMBER, 1988

GLADWYNE, PA So many different things have accumulated to mention that I better start talking about each one of them right from the start of this letter. So hold your hat! It will be a busy one!

Let's start off with a belated Joyous Thanksgiving to each of you and your fine families. The Spam Thansgiving in '64 were a real highlight way back!

For Christmas & New year's Day Celebration a great time for all. Shower all you love and a limited amount of money on your children, young or old at this joyous time of the year, for all religous groups.

Many of you will probably travel so drive carefully and fly or go by train and watch your step! Love to see you all in San Diego next year.

San Antonio was a unique affair and a good one.

The Texas Committee found different things to work with and put them to-gether in a most beautiful program that displayed the blessings of God on the entire week-end. At least this is the sense that I got from many Kriegies & Kriegies Wives with whom I chatted. Congratulations to a great Kommittee! See enclosed epistles for futher info. on the Reunion.

Contributions by many members at the Reunion made a tremendous impact on the Postal Fund, among those contributing listed in no special order were: Vernor Siebert, H. Morris Jones, Cox, Ike Franklin, Ted Garrett, Bill Corbin, Syd Thal, Bob Eckman, Jim Sherman, Bob Thompson, Ted Pawloski, Steve Barhavic, Ted Roggen, Tom Drake, II, Orpha Zie gler, Bill Bingham. Jim Ball, Mrs James Lisenbe,

John Shirk, There may have been others and I apolgize if I didn't make a note of it. Thanks much to each one of you. This makes the Postal a very healthy one at this point. Thanks! Thanks! Thanks!

I pulled a real faux pas on Sunday morning. A very charming lady wanted me to chat with her about Kriegie life and I set a date for Sunday morning at eight o'clock. Needless to say I never made it, I've even forgotten her name but she was the daughter of one of our group. Just let me know who you are and I'll call you back and answer to the best of my ability, any questions you may have. 215-642- 9473. Thanks and I'm really sorry.

We usually read the names of those that have left us since the previous Reunion. This was overlooked this year so here is the list to my knowledge.

- Robert Britton 7/24/84
- De L. Hinckley 3/1/86
- Donald Wilkenson 10/16/87
- Gertrude Etta Buckley 11/29/87
- Stanley "Jerry" Bernacki 11/87
- Lori McCullough Dew 2/26/87
- Col. James E. Dew 2/26/88
- Boyd R. Drewry 11/19/87
- Dwight Applege 1983
- Frederick Drury
- William Hansen 1982
- James Fraser October 1987
- Ronald E. Shulz May 4, 1988

The enclosed Flyer on "The Welcome Swede" is a book I'm sure makes for extremely interesting reading. Frank Diggs wrote it from some 30 odd tapes that Henry recorded for him from his diaries, notes and papers of his experiences while serving as International YMCA secretary to some 45 Krigie kamps during W W 11. You'll recognize Henry as your reading the book. Highly recommended by yours truly. To get your copy just follow the instructions on the Flyer.

I enclosed a copy of the background on Father Brach for all. This was originally distributed at the Reunion and I believe was written by Helen and Roy Chappel. Great Job!

Frank Diggs very graciously in the midst of his wedding preparations put together the write-up on the West Texas trip taken by 14 of our group leaving from San Antonio.

This is just to let you fellows know what a great time you missed! Texas is not all flat and its not all dry! Thanks, Frank.

Certainly, not the least of our contributors is Nan Mac Arevy who faithfully expresses her reactions to the ostensibly all male arrangement of our reunions. Make sure you read Nan's column to see what another great reunion was staged by the Texas Kommittee. Thanks Nan and Jim doesn't object, a great Big Kiss in the Kitchen to you.

You will find enclosed two list of names both of which are self-explanatory.

Jame D. Sanders and Patricia Wadley are working together on a doctoral thesis on P.O. W's. Look over the list and check it off by voting your individual knowledge of the names listed as to their status, next to each name

Place it in an envelope and mail both lists to:

James D. Sanders  
104 Arena St.  
Williamsburg, VA 23185

He'll appreciate it and we'll eventually all know the status of these P.O.W'S. Thanks for doing this. Just received the latest issue of the Klarion, Stalag Luft III's Newsletter.

They still are meeting every 2 years and in 1990 are planning on meeting in Frank Hancock's little City of Norfolk, VA in April of that year and have the schedule all set as well the Hotel which will be the Omni, on April 26 thru April 30th. It will be their 45th Reunion.

The History of Stalag Luft III has now been compiled and is available thru them at a discount price of \$ 24.95. It is only available thru them at this price.

Write:

E. F. Schrupp, Treas.  
Stalag Luft, III Former P.O.W'S  
Rt 2 Box 340 Lake Sara  
Effingham, IL 62401

If, I receive them in time you will each receive a brochure which tells about "The Historical collection of the Stalag Luft III Former Prisoners of War."

This collection is at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO

Some of you have already visited it and it contains the diaries and papers of Henry Soderberg.

General A. P. Clark USAF(RET) is largely responsible for the assembling of these materials and personally helped sort out the papers from Henry's collection for inclusion at the Academy.

Contact General Clark if you have anything you would

like to contribute to this fine collection. One other item from the Stalag Luft III of

interest. For many of their reunions their arrange to have their favorite guard attend, Herman Glemnitz. Word was received that he passed away April 22, 1988. He expressed the feeling on many occasions that the relationship between the ex-Kriegles and him did a great deal to help better understanding between the U.S. and Germany and furthered Peace in the World.

I think this will be the last item I have to cover. It was interesting to note that our Bus Tour of West Texas, five different times things occurred which related to our status as Ex-P.O.W.'S

The most outstanding was the fact that our Tour Director was an EX, P.O.W. of Japan.

Robert L. Renfro now of Ft. Worth Texas spent 42 months most of which was spent in Japan, working as 'slave labor' in steel mills.

On the last night of the Tour he was able to confide this information to John Shirk with John providing the opener by the use of an excellent drink or two.

Robert's ordeal is still with him and does not have a very good support group as we Oflag 64ers have.

Maybe you would like to join us in San Diego, Bob.

We have a very garrulous and loquacious group. Thanks for sharing this info with those of us that traveled with you.

It was a great trip!

Thanks also for sending me the info. about yourself.

\*\*\*\*\*

KERRVILLE, TX This is the hometown of the President of Stalag III. They were looking forward to joining us at San Antonio.

However, another reunion intervened. They dropped me a nice little note to say how sorry they were not to be able to be with us at the Palacio Del Rio. I'm sorry to, Bob & Nina, I'll put Norfolk on my list for 1990 in April.

\*\*\*\*\*

LONDON, ENGLAND Ken Finlayson with his sister arrived in San Antonio. How nice to meet Ken with whom I have been corresponding for at least the last five years.

It was a pleasure to chat with him and I know he had a great time reviewing some acquaintance and reliving experiences

he had at '64 as an Medic Orderly working with the Late Doc Ferguson and others. Sure glad you were able to make it Ken and look forward to seeing you again.

\*\*\*\*\*

LEESBURG, FL Col. John Van Vliet desires to let you know that the Video Tape of the Katyn Forest murders maybe obtained from:----  
Roy Towers, Jr.  
25105 Vista Greens Ct.  
Hayward, CA 94541  
Phone-415-582-4871  
Cost \$ 35.00 Runs 35 Mins.  
Specify VHS or BETA  
This makes for an interesting evening. Thanks,  
Colonel.

\*\*\*\*\*

FAR HILLS, NJ Joseph Freylinghuysen has done it again by making a fabulous contribution to the Postage Fund. Sorry, you didn't say hello Joe but I'll make it a point to see you next time or even maybe in Far Hills.  
Joe also said it was the "best" reunion of any kind he had ever attended". Thanks Joe and Texas Committee take note. Thanks much Joe. See you soon.

\*\*\*\*\*

FT. DAVIS, TX Russ Gardinier first was noticed at Sol Russ University in the town of Ft. Davis. It was at the Big Bend National Park Museum that several of our group on the West Texas Tour saw his POW License Plate. Found out he lived in Ft. Davis which we were to visit in a couple of days. We tried hard to visit him but we were on a tight schedule at Prude Ranch (close by, Ft. Davis) and eventually had to give up on what I'm sure would have proven to be a fine wine & cheese party at Russ's house. Some of you were at Chieti may remember Russ. Just write him at Ft. Davis, TX and I'm sure it will reach him!  
Sorry, we couldn't meet with you, Russ I know, I express this for the whole group.

\*\*\*\*\*

Oak Hill Park, TX I may be wrong on the State in which this town is located. anyway its the last dwelling place of Col. Frederick Drury. I received from someone (Jim Ball, I beleive) the complete file of a trek that Col. Drury and Capt. Jim Ball took to Szubin, Poland in May 1947.  
Army orders were issued for the both of the above individuals including transport orders.  
Col. Drury (Fred) went back with the express purpose of paying tribute to the nuns of the hospital where he was confined on several occasions while being held in '64.

He and Jim Ball succeeded in reaching Szubin. and chatting with the nuns not without numerous problems.

Fred gives a complete description of the status of '64 in 1947; He left several PX gifts with the nuns at Schubin Hospital.

This may be of interest to many of you. Then again no one may be interested in it. Drop me a line if you have an interest and would like a copy of this 9 page official report/story.

When I send you a copy there may be a invoice in it which then you can send to me. If I get beaucoup request I will make a mass mailing of it to each one. in any event some kind of fee would be necessary due to the number of pages and postage involved.

\*\*\*\*\*

N. RICHLAND HILLS, TX What a complete dossier on Captain Ronald E. Schulz submitted by his son Christopher. According to Chris, Ron was looking forward to joining us in San Antonio. However, he passed in May and his son said was without a doubt with us in spirit. See his obituary on one of the inserts with this mailing.

On behalf of Clarence Meltesen and myself I want to thank you for attempting to complete the questionnaire which was distributed with the previous issue.  
Mrs Schulz maybe addressed at:-  
Mrs Marion Schulz  
7428 College Corcle S  
N. Richland Hills, TX 76180  
Thanks Chris for all the info forwarded to me.

\*\*\*\*\*

SAN ANTONIO, TX Another result of the Reunion and the program presented were the beautiful music presented by Tess M. Valle. All of the songs presented may be obtained on Audio Cassette tape and may be obtained from her by writing :-  
Tess M. Valle  
5803 Hollyhock  
San Antonio, TX 78240  
512-641-9639

\*\*\*\*\*

GROVE CITY, OH There is only one Kriegie who lives here, the man with the "khaki wool hat" and Otis Bradford was unable to join us in San Antone due to illness of his wife. He wrote that she was improving slowly and we all wish Jean the best recovery. Look forward to seeing you both in San Diego.

MONTEZUMA, IA Tried to get Carl Coffey to come to San Antonio but he wasn't able to do it, due to his health. Too much exertion causes breathing problems.

It is interesting to note that he is over 80 years old and on Oct 16 th 1988 celebrated 50 years of marriage. Congratulation to Helen & Carl Coffey. Hope an improvement in Carl's health will bring him to the warm climate of San Diego.  
Best to you both,

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Thanks for the great letter and also the contribution to the P.F.

\*\*\*\*\*

SAN FRANCISCO, CA Another note on the book "Roads to Liberation" What a fantastic job Clarence Meltesen has done and is continuing to do. Pls.read carefully the additional questions that have been raised as a result of your comments and questionnaire replies. I am enclosing a copy of a letter to each of you from Clarence. If you know the answers to any of the questions raised send them to Clarence at the address shown on the bottom of the letter.

Sorry, I wasn't able to get this out before the Reunion Clarence.

\*\*\*\*\*

VISALIA, CA Mayor Edwin Haggard was unable to join us in San Antonio due to the fact that his wife cece fell and broke her leg July 8th 1988 and was unable to travel. Hope that Cece is fully recovered by now. See you in San Diego, Major.

\*\*\*\*\*

GLADWYNE, PA Comment will wind up this Newsletter with the next one in the works, already. I most certainly hope you enjoy all the material enclosed, and Have a WONDEROUS HOLIDAY

San Diego, CA  
 OCT 12, 13, 14, 15 1989

NORTHWOOD, IA. Charlie Jones missed the reunion because of conflict in schedules. Thanks for the contribution to the P.F. Charlie and sorry not to have seen you and chatted with you. We had a lot of time for that. Sure hope no complications come up for San Diego. It will be Oct 12, 13, 14, 15 1989. Put 'em down, now. We did have a ball glean from the enclosed report.

\*\*\*\*\*

ARLINGTON, VA Had a call from "Welcome Home Swede!" author Frank Diggs reminding me to note to you that his book would make a wonderful gift for Christmas or even birthdays to any of your friends or relative. If, you need a last minute gift, call me 215-642-9173 and I'll rush it right out to you. I won't even wait for your check. Thats better than Sears would do!

\*\*\*\*\*

LEXINGTON, VA What a nice neat letter from "Jonesy" known better as H. Morris Jones. His first reunion was in Alexandria and expanded his knowledge of more than one person, mainly Gen. Waters to several others including Hatch, George Kerr and his wife, and Frank Hancock. He also wrote that a good friend of his was attending a reunion of the legion of Valor group. (Those who have won the D.S.C.) This friend spent quite a bit of time with Abe Baum now retired and living in California. He also read Clarence Meltesens "Roads to Liberation" and gleaned a lot of information from it as well as Clarence. Sorry, your wife was ill and sure hope she has fully recovered and that we will have the pleasure of your company in San Diego. It will be another memorable event.

104 Arena St.  
Williamsburg, VA 23185  
November 2, 1988

Mr. John F. Slack  
1314 Youngsford Rd.  
Gladwyne, PA 19035

Dear Mr. Slack,

During my research on POWs that were kept by the Soviet Union at the end of World War II, I came across a list of Oflag 64 personnel that were in Poland on February 24, 1945. Wright Bryan carried this list to Moscow and gave it to our Military Mission. The following names were on the list, but not on the Veteran's Administration list of returned POWs (to date, approximately 5% of the names found in the National Archives, but not on the VA list, did in fact return).

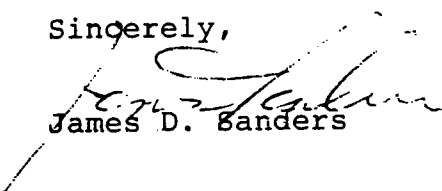
J.T. Alden, Webstergroves, Missouri  
Daryl G. Betten, Orange City, Iowa  
J. Blaisse, Algiers, Algeria  
O.C. Dyer, Glen Echo Heights, MD  
Leo G. Ennie, Rockville Center, Long Island, NY  
J.B. Huyett, Jr., no address  
W.H. Jarrett, 2251 Jackson St., Philadelphia, PA  
Robert L. Kanipe, Henshaw, Kentucky  
Orville Kelman, 2907 Buckingham Rd., Los Angeles, CA  
Robert W. McBride, Buffalo, Wyoming  
T. Miyashiro, Honokaa, Hawaii  
Fritz W. Mueller, Houston, Texas  
E.C. Nelson, North Mankato, Minn.  
Louis Otterbein, Bloomfield, NJ  
J.A. Riley, Pottsboro, Texas  
Arnold Rubin, Rockaway Beach, New York

Did any of these people return? and does anyone know what happened to those that did not?

I have located the original, hand-written list of Oflag 64 personnel transferred to Luckenwalde. Approximately 75 are not listed as returning. Would you be interested in printing this list?

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

  
James D. Sanders

All

Give peace, Lord, to those who wait for you; listen to the prayers of your servants, and guide us in the way of justice.

Father Brach

God of the universe,  
we worship you as Lord.  
God, ever close to us,  
we rejoice to call you Father.  
From this world's uncertainty we look to  
your covenant.  
Keep us one in your peace, secure in  
your love.

All: Amen.

All

Stuart K. Hine

### 55. HOW GREAT THOU ART

Org. Acc. 834

1. O Lord my God! When I in awesome wonder consider all the \*worlds thy hands have made.  
I see the stars, I hear the \*rolling thunder, thy pow'r throughout the universe displayed.  
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to thee; how great thou art, how great thou art!  
Then sings my soul, my Savior God to thee; how great thou art, how great thou art!
2. When through the woods and forest glades I wander and hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;  
When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur and hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze;
3. And when I think that God, his Son not sparing, sent him to die, I scarce can take it in;  
That on the cross, my burden gladly bearing, he bled and died to take away my sin;
4. When ~~death~~ shall come with shout of acclamation and take me home, what joy shall fill my heart!  
Then I shall bow in humble adoration and there proclaim, my God, how great thou art!

\*Author's original words are "worlds" and "mighty." \* Copyright 1983. Renewed 1981, by Marva Music, Inc., 2111 Kenmore Ave., Burbank, CA 91504. International Copyright Secured. Printed in U.S.A. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

Father Brach  
All

Reading (L 587) Is. 49:1-6; Acts 13:22-26

Responsorial Psalm 139

R/. (14) I praise you for I am wonderfully made.

All: R/. I praise you for I am wonderfully made.

O Lord, you have probed me and you know me;  
you know when I sit and when I stand;  
you understand my thoughts from afar.  
My journeys and my rest you scrutinize,  
with all my ways you are familiar.

R/. I praise you for I am wonderfully made.

Truly you have formed my inmost being;  
you knit me in my mother's womb.

I give you thanks that I am fearfully, wonderfully made;  
wonderful are your works.

R/. I praise you for I am wonderfully made.

My soul also you knew full well;  
nor was my frame unknown to you  
When I was made in secret,  
when I was fashioned in the depths of the earth.

R/. I praise you for I am wonderfully made.

Father Brach

Lord our God,  
in you justice and mercy meet.  
With unparalleled love you have saved  
us from death  
and drawn us into the circle of your life.  
Open our eyes to the wonders this life  
sets before us,  
that we may serve you free from fear  
and address you as God our Father.

All: AMEN

All

### 62. AMERICA THE BEAUTIFUL

Org. Acc. 510

O beautiful for spacious skies,  
For amber waves of grain,  
For purple mountain majesties  
Above the fruited plain!  
America! America!  
God shed his grace on thee,  
And crown thy good with  
brotherhood  
From sea to shining sea.

O beautiful for pilgrim feet,  
Whose stern, impassioned stress  
A thoroughfare for freedom beat  
Across the wilderness!  
America! America!  
God mend-thine ev'ry flaw,  
Confirm thy soul in self-control,  
Thy liberty in law.

## THE POST-REUNION TOUR OF WEST TEXAS

After a great Oflag 64 reunion at San Antonio, it takes a strong constitution to press on to the wilds of West Texas for another week. But that's what 14 stalwart Kriegies did, urged on by Len Vaden and the fine hand of Maupintour and the USAA Travel Agency.

Being already in San Antone where the tour started, the stalwarts shifted over to the plush St. Anthony Intercontinental Hotel and got things started with some spirits and a banquet. Next day, they drove around the city, then headed west in their chartered bus to the real cowboy town of Del Rio. A long drive that grew drier and more picturesque hour by hour.

Off again they went the following day to Big Bend country, stopping along the way to visit the Judge Roy Bean Saloon and Museum at Langtree. Arrived at the border town of Lajitas, for a three-night stay at the Officers' Quarters, copied from the original quarters at old Fort Davis. That night, the Kriegies marched across the border and had dinner in old Mexico, accompanied by much Mexican music and beer at a nice native restaurant.

A long drive around Big Bend National Park followed the next day, through unbelievably arid mountainous country, arriving back at Lajitas in time for a steak cookout on the banks of the Rio Grande. Highlight of the tour, though, occurred the following day, when everybody got into old clothes and took an all-day float trip down the Rio Grande, with a picnic lunch half-way along and enough rapids to get all hands thoroughly wet.

Next came a drive north to Fort Davis and Fort Leaton, Texas' oldest historic site. We arrived that afternoon for a two-day stay at Prude Ranch, which had to be seen to be believed. There was chow of sorts, a side trip to McDonald Observatory, a mini rodeo, some promised horseback riding, a hayride and a grand finale Texas-style outdoor barbeque. The survivors arose the last morning before dawn and rode like real cowboys off to Midland-Odessa Airport.

###

10/20/88

Dear John,

I am always grateful when you give me an opportunity to express how a woman reacts to the reunions. I think the main way we differ from the men is in appreciating the attention to small details. The care and effort this committee exhibited was superb.

First - the star of the reunion - Father Brach. There was a rumor floating around that a woman conceived the idea of taking the whole group to San Antonio to honor Father. Whether it was true or not, I'm sure each woman there was eager to show her love and respect for the man who did so much for her husband in Of/flag 64. What an achievement for a man to be so revered by the ladies, who only knew of his superior performance from the stories their husbands told them. Father, we love you.

Next - to you Texans. If you were trying to prove to us that Texas is all you ever said it was, you succeeded. If all or most of Texas is as beautiful as San Antonio, we are convinced. To quote one lady, she said, "This is the prettiest setting we have had for a reunion." In 1945, Jim and I (newly married) went to Camp Hood. To say the least, we were not impressed with Texas. Thank you for changing our opinion 43 years later.

To the committee - I don't know if men always appreciate the many, many small details which demand attention in planning an affair as big as the reunion. Women notice all the little things which add up to the perfect whole. You folks certainly accomplished this -perfection! Finding enough adjectives to describe everything is nearly impossible!

The outstanding hotel, the scrumptious food, Tess' gifted and appropriate music and verses, Tom Drake's informative presentation (we are looking forward to San Diego, Quincey), the clever name tags, and the Texas magnets (Thanks, Ruby and Roger), - these are all things women appreciate. Most of all, we are grateful for being a part of such a close-knit, capable group.

See you all in San Diego!

Nan MacArevey



FATHER STANLEY C. BRACH

FATHER STANLEY C. BRACH is the second son of Leon and Ana Brach, who were "first generation" U.S. Citizens. Leon and Ana's parents of Austro-Polish nationality emigrated to the U.S.A. in the late 1800's. Stanley C. was born November 23, 1910 in Newark, N.J. where his parents (neither of whom has any "formal" education) were employed. Leon worked as a wagon and wheel craftsman and later as a carpenter. Ana was a skilled cigar maker.

Stanley "grew up" in St. Catherine's Parish but attended public elementary and high school. He was quite active in basketball, track, and gymnastics. He had no serious childhood diseases, but did break his arm when he was seven. He graduated in 1928 after completing the usual public high school program of college "prep" courses.

Although he has never been an altar boy, he entered a 100 year-old Catholic Diocesan College, Seton Hall University in South Orange, N.J. as a "church student". After three years he received his Bachelor of Arts degree. He continued his church studies at the Immaculate Conception Diocesan Seminary (an extension of Seton Hall) for five more years. Then, he was ordained as a Diocesan Priest on June 11, 1938 by Archbishop Walsh at Sacred Heart Cathedral in Newark, N.J.

His first assignment came two weeks later to the Parish of "Our Lady's" in Jersey City, N.J. when he was 27 years old. He took up his duties here with great sincerity and enthusiasm, which continued for four years.

Shortly after World War II was declared, Stanley felt God's call to serve his country. He volunteered for the U.S. Army Chaplancy Service in February 1942. After his acceptance in New York City as a First Lt. he was assigned to the First Arm'd Division at Ft. Knox, Ky. Before he had time to orient himself or obtain any basic training, the Division Chaplain Father (Lt. Col.) Martin told Stanley that overseas movement for the Division was imminent. In April the 1st Arm'd Division moved East to Ft. Dix, N.J. for amphibious training (very new then) and "staging" for overseas shipment.

On May 7, 1942 Stanley sailed with his "new troops" on the Queen Mary (unescorted, of course) to Scotland and by ferry to North Ireland, South of Belfast. Here,

during the summer of 1942 he learned about life in the military as a "tanker" (to the shouts of: "Grease those bogies and keep 'em rolling"). The 1st Arm'd Div. trained intensively for amphibious landings and desert warfare until embarkation in late September at Liverpool, England. For six weeks Chaplain Brach and his troops were rendezvousing in Mid-Atlantic with other convoys. They were all trying with might and main to avoid the German U-Boat Packs while massing in preparation for the First Allied attack against the Axis. This was the North African amphibious invasion of Algeria and Morocco on November 8, 1942.

Father Brach and the American Armor, which was designated as Combat Command B of the First Armored Division, sailed through the Strait of Gibraltar (under cover of night) and launched its pre-dawn attack across the beaches just west of Oran, Algeria. After three days of combat - our Padre's first exposure to the perils and horrors of violent death - the French troops, loyal to the Vichy Gov't, surrendered.

Rest and respite were quite short, however. The First Battalion (light tanks) of the First Arm'd Regiment, with Father Brach as Chaplain, and commanded by (then) Lt. Col. John K. Waters, was ordered east to Tunisia by forced march via rail and overland to strengthen British troops, who had gone there directly from Algiers in an Allied effort to deny the port and capital city of Tunis, to the Axis. Lt. Col. (now four star General) Waters's light tanks did great destruction to German war planes at Tunis Airport and other German material in surrounding area. The Axis reaction (mostly German) was incredibly swift and unfortunately more rapid than the Allied. The Germans achieved superiority and began forcing the British and Americans to fall back to the west to Tebourba and Medjez-El-Bab. Whatever "front" that may have existed was truly fluid and poorly-defined. Lt. Col. Waters's Battalion of light tanks began to suffer increased casualties, especially from dive-bombing Stukas, in its heroic delaying action. Our Padre, with his dedication and sensitivity, had an instant overload administering last rites and giving comfort and reassurance to green troops. At this point, amid much confusion of battle, on November 23rd (Padre's 32nd Birthday) Father Brach received his 'famous' (and last) order from Lt. Col. Waters: i.e. "Padre, will you and Doc please take care of these men (wounded and dying) and bring them on back to the Battalion Aid Station"? Fortunately, Lt. Col. Waters did "make it back", fought again until February 15, 1942, and later became our only European Theater P.O.W. four-star-General. However, our Padre, the "Doc", and his Medical Personnel, along with the wounded, soon heard those all too familiar

words: "For you the war is over", spoken by two helmeted Germans\*(1) astride motorcycles and with Tommy guns at the ready.

These words (spoken very persuasively and successfully to most of us) thus began Father Stanley Brach's life-long ministry of service to those in need--a ministry he served most faithfully and totally without regard for his own safety, welfare, or future.\*(2)

At this point Father Brach's "story", in general, parallels most other E.T.O. "early" P.O.W.'s "horror tale". He was taken to Tunis for interrogation(s), attempted intimidations, and finally to await air transportation\*(3) to Naples, Italy. Fr. Brach still feels, even today, that this period probably was at least "one of his 'finest' hours'". This feeling is due to the fact that although Our Padre was as equally "green" and inexperienced as those to whom he was ministering, he took his role, support, and guidance from Our Lord. Thus, he could provide continuing reassurance, comfort, and strength to his fellow P.O.W's. He maintained this role fully and victoriously by doing whatever was necessary to persuade and convince the terror-stricken and frequently frantic newly-captured medical personnel, along with those less seriously wounded, that they need not fear abuse, torture, nor death at the hands of their captors. (God provided the necessary strength, faith, and confidence to Fr. Brach).

From this beginning, mandated by the emergencies and exigencies of the moment. Our dedicated Padre continued to grow and expand his ministry to stabilization and restoration wherever he went. He simply "had to" show confidence and stamina to the other P.O.W's---ALWAYS!\*(4) This "need" was clearly demonstrated in early December, 1942 enroute to and during time spent in the British P.O.W.Camp at Chieti, Italy. Since Fr. Brach was among

\*(1) These Germans were from the "Crack" Hermann Goering Parachute Regiment, very recently arrived by "bunches" who were supplemented with limited advance elements of Rommel's Aerika Korp.

\*(2) Father Brach was actually administering last rites and comforting severely wounded men - totally heedless of any other activity - when the half-track, complete with Doctor, other medics, wounded, driver, and newly acquired German escort apprehended him.

\*(3) Normal air transport for Hitler's newest guests was aboard a Junkers 52, tri-motor, all metal low wing, monoplane flying at barely fifty feet above the Mediterranean Sea, captured American Officers were given evacuation priority just following German wounded.

\* (4) Projection of such an image to others was an especially difficult task when these "early" P.O.W.'s were paraded through the streets of Naples, Italy like animals and subjected to the taunts, threats, insults, and gratuitous over-ripe vegetables from Italian civilians.

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the very first American Ground Force Officers in Italian captivity, it was important to exhibit fearlessness, confidence, dignity, and faith to our earlier captured British allies, as well as to the "wavering" Italian captors (who, themselves, would soon be prisoners of the Third Reich).

Upon the collapse of Italy in late 1943, Germany decided to move all American P.O.W.'s into Deutschland where "Alles ist besser". Father Brach and his P.O.W. companions (less a few escapees enroute) went by box car to Moosburg (Stalag VII B--40 miles North of Munich) and soon on to the newly-prepared (and only) American Ground Force Commissioned Officers P.O.W. Camp -- OFLAG 64, located at Schubin, Poland.\* (5) It was located about 60 miles southwest of what was then Danzig, and is now Gdynia. Here Fr. Brach, initially in cooperation with Fr. Stephen Kane (Father Kane was shortly transferred to another camp) continued and expanded his amazingly effective work and ministry of the restoration of individual faith and belief. He was quickly recognized by all for his new dimension of service to P.O.W. inmates through individual counseling of all beliefs. This new ministry re-established and/or instilled in the prisoners a strong confident hope for the future. This attitude is an absolute prerequisite for the mental health of the P.O.W.'s. Many were suffering from depression, as well as frost-bite and considerable weight loss due to cessation of the weekly Red Cross parcels.\* (6)

The unexpectedly wide-spread and very rapid advance of the Russian Armies (moving by U.S. trucks, food, and supplies, in January, 1945 caused the O.K.W. to suddenly order the evacuation and abandonment of OFLAG 64. On January 21, 1945 all able-bodied P.O.W.'s were marched out of OFLAG 64 at Schubin and "headed" west through snow on roads choked with refugees fleeing for their lives

\* (5) This location had previously been occupied by Polish, French, and British P.O.W.'s. Also Russian P.O.W. "work parties". However it had been made much more "secure" (addition of or more, guard towers, barbed and concertina wire, trip wires and sanded "NO TRESPASS ZONES") to contain the American "Gangsters" --per Herr Goebbols.

- \* (6) The devastation of the German Railway Systems by "round-the-clock" Allied bombing, made it most difficult to continue to ship Red Cross Food and medical parcels completely across the Third Reich from west to east.
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back into the Fatherland. The remainder of the P.O.W.'s who were disabled and/or too ill to walk were simply abandoned at the Campsite. Again, our Padre was given the job of remaining with those in need---North Africa repeated! Who could have been more qualified or possessed such a willing and dedicated heart? The SAO was Lt. Col. Cheal. Hauptman Minner gave the keys to the front gate of THE CAMP to Father Brach at the order of the departing Kommandant, Herr Oberst Schneider. Therefore, it was our own selfless Fr. Stanley C. Brach who took up his post at the Main Gate of OFLAG 64 to greet, meet, explain, and mediate, if necessary, with the savage-looking Russian hordes, who were to sweep by in hot pursuit of the fleeing rabble of Hitler's supermen. He did his job very wekk, as usual\*(7) and accompanied his group--- constantly ministering---through devastated Warsaw to Rembertow and later by box car to Odessa on the Black Sea. He left by British ship about March 7, 1945, which traveled through Straits of Bosphorus, Constantinople, to Port Said, Egypt and on to Naples, Italy (to UNITED STATES CONTROL) and extensive debriefings. At the end of March, 1945, he, along with most of the OFLAG 64 disabled and some 300 escapees from the retreating P.O.W. column, which was heading deeper into Germany. He left Naples, Italy on the U.S.S. MARIPOSA, which was a convalescent ship. He arrived at Boston, Massachusetts and thence to CAMP MYLES STANDISH on April 9, 1945. Further "de-briefing" (and/or interrogations), and physical examinations followed by unlimited good U.S.A. food restored everyone physically.

Only a 30-day leave was given to Father Brach due to the perceived great need for Chaplains in the Pacific Theater. Fr. Brach next was sent to Ft. Sam Houston, TX. to Chaplains Training School. (Here the clear hand of the Bureaucracy manifests itself. i.e. "It is high time this man was properly taught how to be a combat chaplain").

Then on to GUAM where he integrated into the REGULAR AIR FORCE as Chaplain. Subsequent assignments were KELLY A.F.B. and LACKLAND A.F.B. (for indoctrination and orientation of new recruits).

- \* (7) Even though Fr. Brach had suffered severe "frost bite" and excessive weight loss.

In 1955 after numerous severe and recurring problems of health, Fr. Brach was retired from the AIR FORCE with rank of Major for medical reasons and returned to Newark Diocese.

Later, he was assigned to Corpus Christi Diocese with Bishop Garriga, then on to the Rio Grande Valley, McAllen, Tx. Parish, "Our Lady of Sorrows" Church in 1950.

He then went to Pharr, Tx. as a Parish Priest for St. Jude's. Fr. Stanley was appointed "The Director to the Propagation of Faith" and represented the Diocese of Brownsville at the annual conference with the Most Reverend Francis J. Furey, Bishop of San Diego in 1969. He also served as a chaplain to the Mercy Hospital for 2 years.

In 1970 he went to St. Mary's University for a refresher course. He did much work as a priest relating to the student's role.

Fr. Stanley served the Rio Grande Valley Diocese until he moved back to San Antonio and served at the local parishes of St. Matthews, St. Luke's, and St. Brigid.

Fr. Bernard Kachan met Fr. Brach and invited him to St. George Maronite Church. Here he was received with open arms and spiritual people dedicated to the Parish life and community. On June 12, 1988 the people of this fine church showed their love, dedication, and appreciation of Fr. Brach by a magnificent service, celebration, and recognition of his years --FIFTY-- of exemplary service as an ordained DIOCESAN PRIEST.

Now, we, his P.O.W. BROTHERS, want to show our recognition of his unsung, unselfish, and totally DEDICATED life of LOVE AND CONCERN for the P.O.W.'s by having OUR BELOVED FATHER STANLEY C. BRACH declared the FIRST and ONLY GUEST OF HONOR at an OFLAG 64 REUNION!

The purpose of this list is to try to LOCATE members of our group who have been on our LIST or may have been mentioned in correspondence. LOOK IT OVER carefully and then try to locate someone you remembered or lives nearby. Do it by phone or town records or any other neat way that you may know. The list is getting longer please help to reduce it. Thanks

YOUR EDITOR

<u>NEED NEW ADDRESS</u>	<u>NEED NEW ADDRESS</u>	<u>NEED NEW ADDRESS</u>	<u>CHANGE OF ADDRESS</u>	<u>NEW ADDRESS</u>
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Fred Sommers 5 Wroe Ave Dayton, OH	Lt. Paul C. Wiley 29 Federal St So. Portland, ME	<i>Lt Armandoo Arias P.O. Box 417 Nogales, AZ</i>		
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**EVERETT**

**BILL B. EVERETT.** MAJ U.S. Army Retired, 67, passed away Sunday, October 16, 1988. He had been a resident of El Paso since 1962 and was preceded in death by his wife, Mable F. Everett, June 10, 1988. Mr. Everett served in WWII and was a former X-POW of O-Flag 64 in Schubin, Poland; was decorated with the Bronze Star Medal, The Purple Heart, American Defense Service Medal, European-African-Middle Eastern Theatre Ribbon with 1 Bronze Star and 2 Overseas Service Bars. He retired from the Military after 23 years and was an active member of X-POW's, VFW #8919, The American Legion Post #58 and The Texas Association of Realtors. After retirement, he owned and operated Everett Realty. He is survived by his 4 sons and 2 daughters-in-law, William A. Smith, Glen M. Everett, Howard E. Everett & wife Joy, Gary F. Everett & wife Cheryl; 6 grandchildren, Christi Hicks, Shawn Ball, Jennifer Ball, Desere Everett, Sarah Everett and Emma Leigh Everett; 3 brothers, Truman Everett of Oklahoma City, Floyd Everett of Odessa and Clyde Everett of California. Graveside service will be 1:30 p.m. Friday at Fort Bliss National Cemetery with Dr. Levi Price, Sr. officiating. **WE'LL MISS YOU. DAD!** Arrangements by Kaster-Maxon & Futrell Funeral Home. 4848 Alps 751-1287



A SPECIAL REPORT

DEL RIO, TEXAS Knowing that time will be of the essence when I return to Gladwyne, PA. I felt that it would be a good idea if I started writing some of my thoughts about the Great Reunion in San Antonio now instead of when I return.

Arriving on Thursday gave me an extra late afternoon and early evening perspective that I don't normally get.

The reception area and hospitality room were very spacious and both places were humming with chatter on my arrival even though it was early Thursday. It was a real pleasure to be able to sit down in the hospitality room where coffee or tea were the order of the day.

Friday starts with a great beautiful day and winds up with a brief program after a delicious dinner. This was topped by the first appearance of Father Brach. A warm round of continued applause resulted. An emotional moment, for many at this reunion.

A few remarks by Roy Chappell giving us the background on Father's health and his care.

He was accompanied by Dr. and Mrs Valle, lifelong friends who have both been very supportive of Father Brach in all ways.

Many chatted with him but briefly and that was it for Friday night.

Saturday was a continued beautiful day and winding up with an outstanding program of music, presentations by various persons eulogizing Father Brach and his 50 years of priesthood, approximately 45 years of association with a P.O.W. Family, as he most often likes to refer to us as his Family.

Sunday Morning Memorial Service to my mind the highlight, as Father Brach gives a more than brief dissertation at the service. He was certainly in top form and as the service indicated (see enclosed copy) gathered us all to gether as his Family. Thus it will always be as far as Our Padre(yours & mine) is concerned. We are his Family. John F. Slack