

CPT Tony Benson Lumpkin, Sr.

1908 - 1978

This chronicled biography of Tony Lumpkin contains *italicized* passages and insights from the book, CAPTURED YESTERDAY, extracted from wartime diaries kept hidden from his German captors throughout his experiences during World War II. Some are expansive and written daily, while others are minimal: both provide readers with the sense of being there.

Tony Benson Lumpkin, Sr. was born in Orangeburg, South Carolina, on June 25, 1908. His postsecondary education was spent at the Citadel, a senior military college in Charleston, South Carolina, advancing the heritage of other family members who had distinguished military records. After graduation, he accepted the Commandant's position at the Missouri Military Academy (MMA) in Mexico, Missouri, until America was under attack when he became a serving officer in the U.S. Army.

ASSIGNMENT NORTH AFRICA

Lumpkin's initial diary entries began on May 3, 1942 at Ft. Dix, New Jersey, where he was assigned as Assistant Commandant with Headquarters Battalion of the First Armored Division. Lumpkin soon learned to complete important duties quickly and assigned lesser ones to others. Training the troops was a monumental task, one which required immediate action as they were due to depart on the *Queen Mary* in a week—destination Scotland, then Northern Ireland for additional training and war games, London, and finally aboard *The Duchess of Bedford* bound for Africa in late November 1942.

Arriving in Algeria on December 6, 1942, Lumpkin's notes about procedures and duties are extensive. America was a newcomer in the war; interaction with Allied troops combined with misinterpreted orders caused chaos in some channels, but unloading continued with the result that the First Armored Division was in place. Entries contained notes on personnel, including those on officers and commanders who were dedicated and those deficient in their leadership skills. Challenges included rainy weather, mud-packed roads, bivouac issues, the reality that Krauts were using captured American equipment against U.S. troops, and daily existence, often under undesirable conditions, in a foreign land. Despite these hardships and situations, battles were often continual and conducted within war zones between Rommel's forces and those of the Allies. Lumpkin's February 25, 1943 entry states: "*We are definitely chasing the Afrika Korps from the Kasserine Pass and beating the Hell out of them.*" His March 10, 1943 entry includes this observation: "*General Montgomery and General Patton visited us today. I remember his red-hot band and the plated pistols of Patton's.*"

Lumpkin's letters included his visits to Roman ruins, insights into multiple cultures and interactions with people both military and civilian. He met the famous war correspondent

Ernie Pyle, saw General Doolittle's plane, "Dee II" and learned that "Blood & Guts" Patton was the new II Corps Commander.

CAPTURED BY THE TIGERS

On April 1, 1943, Captain Lumpkin was captured in the pass outside of Maknassy, Tunisia, by a German unit whose officers were courteous and efficient, their unit emblem a tiger. He was not seriously injured but took a bullet through the hand. Loaded the next day into a cramped boxcar with 53 others bound for Tunis, they were taken to an old schoolhouse and supplied with a meal by the Red Cross of Tunis. Others accompanied their captured group as they awaited transport which occurred on April 15. Landing at Naples, Italy, they were taken by truck to Capua where they joined others from the African campaign, including two British officers off a sub which was lost because of a depth bomb off the coast of Capri. The captured men were next loaded on train cars on May 2, proceeded north via Rome, the Brenner Pass, into Munich and on to Moosburg, arriving on May 6.

Conversation with a lady in charge of the Red Cross counter at the Nurnberg train station (where they received a bowl of hot soup and German coffee) came back to Lumpkin as the trip ended: "We are not all happy with what the Fuhrer has done in getting America into the war with Germany. It looks like we are going to repeat the same mistake we made in 1918."

Many other nationalities were present at the Moosburg camp: Russian, French, English, Greek and Chinese. Lumpkin wrote that American Colonels Waters, Oaks, and Drake were also present. Placed within the British group, the Americans were welcomed and provided for. The camp was extensively guarded and contained a dirt moat around the perimeter to discourage tunneling. Organized and administered by the British, Moosburg was a well-run camp, personnel paired with specific jobs.

"Col. Drake, the senior American officer, asked me to prepare a paper on the United States. This, with my work in the package hut, and the study of accounting, keeps me busy. One learns that this is very important in POW life, and it is also important that you learn to eat any and everything."

May 11, 1943 - "Morale is high, as Tunis has fallen, with a large number of prisoners taken. I understand from the British that basically the Germans realize they are losing the war and are much more humane in their treatment of prisoners now than they were back at the time of Dunkirk. A large number of the prisoners in my block were veterans of Dunkirk."

June 2, 1943 - News spread quickly that moving day was in 48 hours. Captain Lumpkin was assigned by Colonel Drake to ensure "everything is packed up ready to leave at 2:00 pm tomorrow." They are being transported by train "to a camp location in the Polish Corridor, somewhere south of Bromberg."

A NEW POW CAMP: OFLAG 64

Schubin, Altburgund, Poland was the location of a new camp — 21B, Oflag 64. The campsite consisted of an older, stone building and six barracks.

Between June 7, 1943 and November 30, 1943, Lumpkin made 175 entries in his diary. Escape and evasion a much-discussed topic. Many inserts outlined the accountability and distribution of parcels. These included official brands from Red Cross Organizations and privately sponsored ones from family, friends, etc. Some contained a special designation: Security Parcels. These were quickly secured and hidden from the Germans as they contained “merchandise” which fell outside the parameter of acceptable contents according to camp rules. Captain Lumpkin who had been responsible for all parcels in previous locations was given this responsibility again with a large parcel storeroom [the parcel hut] where he and a small staff organized and distributed parcels and boxes. Entries below represent a chosen few and many have been abbreviated.

June 9, 1943 (Wednesday) – “About 150 officers from Rotenburg came in at 9:00 in the morning. Amon Carter Jr. and several others that I knew were among the group. All of these men were not cleared up by inspection and had to remain in the barracks.” [Carter later became a designated person concerning the security parcels]

June 12, 1943 – “We issue 50 cigarettes per man, a gift from the British at Eichstadt. Some of the Germans are very interesting and come from all walks of life. One, Knorr, is a lawyer from Berlin and is absolutely sure his side will win. Hauptman Menner teaches Italian and geography at the University of Munich.”

July 4, 1943 – “We have a memorial service in the chapel, a real meal, and singing at night.”

July 5, 1943 – “The Swiss commissioner is here and found that the Germans had not sent our telegrams relative to food. We learned from the Swiss that times are bad in Germany. The quality of their food is poor and there is not much of it. Col. Drake raised holy hell about not sending our telegrams. Shrewdly, Col. Drake had kept a copy of every telegram he had sent to Geneva relative to parcels.”

July 15, 1943 – “Radio is on after being off for two days. The 1st Armored Division had a beer party. 500 British Red Cross parcels received at camp.”

July 18, 1943 – “News is good about Italy. Allies have given them 72 hours to capitulate before a great mass of bombs will start falling. Went to church.”

July 29, 1943 – “Mussolini rumored assassinated. There is a ban on fascist meeting in Italy.”

July 30, 1943 – “Another German general shows up today. Have been told by one of the guards that he is looking for heroes for the Russian front. Joe, the

Russian orderly, came in last night. He reports that the Poles say that Mussolini is dead. Many Russians surround the Germans."

August 1, 1943 – "Rumor has it that there are 100,000 dead in Hamburg due to an air raid. They are evacuating all large German cities. One German said that in Hamburg the fire was so hot that even the asphalt streets were burning."

August 4, 1943 – "Received 800 parcels from Geneva. When picking up parcels I was able to observe some interesting things about Schubin. All of the buildings have very steep roofs, probably to keep the snow off, and the gutters are concealed in the roof. The Poles are a very sturdy people. They are able to hitch themselves up to the milk carts, potato carts, etc. Tried to pick up a train schedule today at the train station, but was unable to do so. German kids at the pump."

August 5, 1943 – "We went on a parole walk and saw the outline of some military trenches. I understand that this area contained some of the very last Polish resistance."

August 6, 1943 – "The canary went kaput. Used too much current. (This refers to our first radio). It seems that the condenser will have to be rewired."

August 9, 1943 – "Issued parcels and almost made a mistake. (I am not sure, but I believe this refers to one of the secret parcels getting involved, and we did not get it out of the parcel hut. Lots were drawn today for seven parcels addressed to 'Any American POW.' We received some amusements parcels from the Swedish YMCA. Had quite an argument with Col. Drake regarding the orderlies' share. They did not participate in these parcels, but they were issued wooden suitcases."

August 30, 1943 – "Letter from Betty, Martha Barksdale and many of old MMA boys. I am sweating out a letter to Geneva. (Believe this refers to the fact that we are attempting to get Schubin to be designated a warehouse point for Red Cross parcels.)"

September 2, 1943 – "Letters and photos from home. Col. Drake called to Posen to talk with British high command."

September 9, 1943 – "Believe Italy is kaput."

September 18, 1943 – "The Germans show us a motion picture in the camp, including a newsreel. There is no doubt that the news is heavily censored in Germany, and to listen to them discuss the merits of our equipment compared to theirs made the whole thing rather ludicrous."

September 30, 1943 – "Talked to one of the guards in the parcel hut about the Hitler Youth Movement in Germany. The kids are divided into two groups: 8 to 14 and 14 to 17. For six months they are in attendance at a camp where there is much exercise and some study. They then return home and

attend school for six months. There is no cost to be borne by the parents. He seemed to be thoroughly sold on this movement. Times are bad in Germany. Retreating is happening on both fronts."

October 7, 1943 – "Rumors and more rumors – one of which is that the camp had better be ready for a big shakedown search by the Gestapo. (The Germans were very anxious that the Gestapo not find anything in the camp that would indicate that we are not good little boys.)"

October 18, 1943 – "We are starting some studies in camp and I am enrolling in one of the courses on common law."

October 19, 1943 – "Thirty new officers came in. It seems that they were in a POW camp in Italy when the Italian government fell. They report that the senior officer held all of the camp under orders to remain in the camp and to make no attempt to escape. Received a private parcel from home."

November 1, 1943 – "We wrote to the Swiss Legation and the International Red Cross. 14 new officers came in. Got into quite a fuss with the German security regarding the storage of Red Cross parcels. Col. Drake certainly has the Germans under his thumb. (I am quite certain this refers to an incident in which the Germans wished to move some of the parcels across the street to their barracks for what they call 'safe keeping'. Col. Drake insisted that everything addressed to us be brought to the compound, opened in our presence, and remain in the compound. He won his point.)"

November 2, 1943 – "The argument still continues with the Germans. We finally moved some of the parcels to another building in order to relieve the weight on the floor. There was a great deal of face-saving in this maneuver."

November 7, 1943 – "Getting very cold. Spent much of the afternoon reading and helping Lt. Col. Files with analytic geometry. Files, by the way, is studying college math with the idea of finishing his degree. He lacks only a few hours of having a bachelor's degree from the University of Maine. (As I recall, the university gave him this privilege, and he did complete his college education while a POW)."

[Files' reply—"Yes, my wife received it with hers in December 1943."]

November 13, 1943 – "The news is good from the canary and also in letters from home. (In case I did not mention it, all outgoing and incoming mail was very severely censored. Sometimes they would merely cut out the pages they did not wish to fall into our hands, and sometimes they simply withheld the entire letter. I am quite certain that many of our letters were never mailed, for the same reason. The attitude towards Col. Drake has changed considerably. He is looked upon more favorably than he was at first. This group certainly needs a strong hand if we are not going to be thrown out into the streets to sweep them along with the Poles.)"

November 29, 1943 – “Went on parole walk and had an opportunity to talk to Hans, one of the armed guards, on this parole. We protested to the Germans that since it was a parole walk there should not be an armed guard. The guard is along to protect us from the Poles--according to the Germans! I am surprised that the battle of Africa is still being fought so much. Everybody rehashes his little part.”

CAMP DAYS CONTINUE

From December 1, 1943 to June 5, 1944, 184 entries were included in Lumpkin's war diaries.

The existence, actual count, and storage of parcels continued through this series of entries on a grand scale. The stubbornness of Colonel Drake and Lumpkin helped to establish consistency of parcel delivery to the Kriegies at Oflag 64. War news continued to ebb and flow as details came in through the canary (radio) about the bombings of Berlin and the Allies calling on Germany to quit the war.

Cold weather had a deleterious effect on camp morale as Christmas Day approached and camp numbers continued to increase, resulting in shortages of heating supplies and food. Lumpkin received a parcel from *“The War Prisoners Benefit Association, 156 Fifth Ave., NY #2966.”* Contents included *“a towel, sugar and a deck of cards.”*

December 31, 1943 – “There is a big party tonight, with much gambling, games of chance, using lagermarks. It is amazing what people can do with improvisations. Received a tobacco parcel from Betty. She has certainly been excellent in preparing and getting the right things to me.”

Captain Lumpkin filled his hours by reading, learning Russian and writing comments about camp activities, such as sports, parole walks and well-received shows put on by the Little Theatre. Continual rumors existed about a Gestapo search of the camp. New hiding places for personal articles and “security items” were sought.

February 28, 1944 – “German papers certainly lay on the propaganda. Many caricatures on the actions of our soldiers in Naples, of President Roosevelt, Vice-President Wallace, and Winston Churchill.”

March 1, 1944 – “Goebbels predicts in the papers that the very worst will happen if the invasion succeeds. There is a rumor of 50,000 POWs being repatriated. Rumor has it that Finland wants to quit the war. Matches from British Red Cross came and are given to POWs. OK to take from parcel room, but Germans raised hell about the issue.”

March 15, 1944 – “The Inspector General - or the General of all POW camps - visited the camp today. The German discipline, as evidenced by the local troops, was excellent.”

March 22, 1944 – “The Swiss are here and say that they expect the war to be over in six months.”

March 29, 1944 – “For the first time, we are having a problem with the packing of Red Cross parcels.” [Contents vary]

A later entry on April 19 concerned the issuance of medical parcels as they were intended for Oflag 64, but suspicion is that they were redirected and used by the German Army for items they could no longer obtain.

April 23, 1944 – “We kept the Germans busy looking in obvious places for tunnels. This was the time of year to dig up our garden so I told Knorr that I was going to let him in on something—that I had been kept out of the escape group and the others were building a tunnel but would not let me participate. When asked where the tunnel was, I insinuated that it was in the garden area. The next day 150 Germans came in with spades and dug up the entire area and broke up the ground nicely for us to do our planting!”

May 10, 1944 – “Took a long hike around the compound and it made me feel weak. We just don’t get enough food.”

May 11, 1944 – “The War Department commands us not to write home about the conditions in POW camps. (I am not sure but believe he refers to the fact that we were told by the German Oberst that these letters would simply not be forwarded.)”

May 15, 1944 – May 18, 1944. “Issued some parcels to boys in jail. (As I recall, we had several boys in the ‘bunker’. Due to the efforts of Col. Drake, we insisted that they be allowed to have their regular Red Cross parcels. In the particular instance, we had some boys who had created a scene in the compound by feigning drunkenness. This caused their arrest by the German guards and they were given a small sentence in the ‘bunker’. The reason for this is that it would be easier to escape from the ‘bunker’ than from the compound. The drunkards got out last night for a short time. Three were caught and two are still out. Van Vliet was unable to get out of the ‘bunker’ as he could not work the lock. Two were caught at twilight. Higgins and Aten were caught and returned by the Germans but they would not let Col. Drake talk to them. He immediately fired off a blistering letter to the Swiss. That guy certainly has the measure of the Germans.”

June 1, 1944 – “Everyone is getting ready for the anniversary which is to held on the 6th. (Believe it or not, this date was selected by us as an anniversary day, and had no connection whatsoever with the Normandy invasion date.)”

CAMP AND D-DAY CELEBRATIONS

June 6, 1944 – “Our anniversary program is a great success. The fact that we had the celebration on the date of the invasion absolutely confused the German sentries.”

Kriegies were questioned about this ironic occurrence, but continued to express ignorance of the date. Certainly, the canary had “sung” its invasion news, but not before it was announced world-wide. Guards were doubled and the Germans did not announce it officially, but Kriegies noted *“anxious discussions among groups across the wire.”*

Both sides continued to use “barbed” wording as Kriegies were told that the 1st AD would be destroyed. Kriegies countered with threats about serving in salt mines.

June 10, 1944 – “The German Wehrmacht announces that they will push the invasion force into the sea.”

June 15, 1944 – “Our canary needs a transformer. This was purchased for cigarettes from the Germans. If you can soften one of these goons you can buy almost anything. Of course, the German takes his life in his hands when he deals with us.” [New transformer was installed but was missing a part.]

June 23, 1944 – “News is good, both the straight and the indirect. (Believe this refers to good news from our canary as well as from German papers which slanted everything to sound like either a very costly gain by the allies or a smashing victory for the Germans.)”

Camp routines return to normal with another rumor that Gestapo search is in their future.

July 8, 1944 – “Strong rumors that we will receive many more POWs at Schubin.”

July 13, 1944 – “We requested that no future security parcels be sent to anyone working in the hut, as it made a very difficult problem of hiding the parcel before the Germans could see the label.”

July 16, 1944 – “POWs from the West Front are coming in. It must have been quite an affair.”

July 18, 1944 – “Many explosions can be heard from time to time.”

[General Waters stated that the explosions probably happened at Posen where airplane engines were assembled. Lt. Col. Files believes it was an attack on a V1 site]

July 25, 1944 – “Col. Drake left today and gave me his last box, which was most gratefully received.”

[Col. Millet was next in line for S.A.O.]

July 27, 1944 – “There are many rumors of moving and great plans.” [Some initiated by the Germans and some by the Kriegies.]

August 11, 1944 – “The German papers make a big to-do about ‘We are not going to crack as we did in 1917. I believe it is dawning on everyone in Germany that they are losing the war.’”

August 24, 1944 – “We now have about 650 POWs and 60 orderlies.”

September 1, 1944 – “We have orders not to discuss anything with anyone when the war is over. This came from our G-2 Section in Washington.”

September 20, 1944 – “2,000 parcels stolen by the Germans. No protest by Millet, and finally Col. Waters jumps in and writes the letter.”

September 30, 1944: - “Six copies of the International Red Cross Convention arrived and the Germans refused to geprüft [inspect] them. Demands were made but to no avail. On October 3, Germans take a copy and return it checked.”

The opening and possession of canned foods, called “tins” continued to be a source of debate between Germans and American POWs. The same issue concerned sacks of mail which were either delayed or taken away by the captors.

October 16 and 17, 1944 – “Col. Paul B. Goode and 100 officers arrive. I believe Col. Goode is going to handle the Germans better. He understands these goons, is very aloof and refuses to talk to anyone except other colonels. This leaves the Gestapo Lt. Col. foaming at the mouth.”

November 14, 1944 – “The Gestapo arrive on time and very quietly start a search, but find nothing. I find that they can be bribed just as well as the others, as I gave one of them a cigarette to leave my log book alone. Protests are being made regarding the retrial of POWs previously tried. German courts have not heard of double jeopardy.”

November 18 to December 19, 1944 – “We have been without parcels for six weeks and then three cars came in. They are storing some parcels at Dietfurt. I insisted on going there to see where they are stored. They had confiscated a Polish Catholic Church, moved out the pews and that was our warehouse. I unloaded some parcels and talked to some Poles. The camp is much excited relative to the issue of parcels, and the new POWs are to be issued a full parcel on arrival.” [During this time period, a POW contracted diphtheria, placing the barracks under quarantine. This was also Amon Carter’s barracks and as he was the “key man” in securing security parcels, this issue caused a grave concern.]

January 4, 1945 – “I am relieved from work in the parcel hut. Col. Goode and Col. Waters said they appreciated my work but after my second warning, I should not take any more chances. I asked that my name and address be written in code in this book.” [No action was taken against Lumpkin.]

ANOTHER ROAD TRIP: FORCED MARCH AND ESCAPE

January 20 – 21, 1945 – “We have no inspection, but do get an alert order to move. The road in front of the camp is filled with refugees, all of them heading east. It looks just like what one sees of war pictures on the newsreels. The decision was made to move Kriegies closer to Berlin for our protection

from the Russians. No one believed this but all started packing, including the half loaf of bread given to each POW.”

Lumpkin packed every bit of clothing he owned plus old newspapers and cartoons. The march began early on January 21, 1945, with 1,471 officers and enlisted personnel. Eighty-six men were left at Oflag 64 in the custody of Col. Drury. Guards were spaced every 50 feet and the march continued for 16 hours. They averaged walking 15 to 18 miles per day and slept in structures like barns at night. Lumpkin recalled thinking about his survival and chances of escape as the column would be facing hard days ahead. The weather was very cold with frost clearly evident.

During the camp break-up, all security items which had been sent over were taken out, allocated to many POWs and the remainder destroyed. The camp had six or seven radios by this time and several cameras. They *“burned about \$90,000 worth of allied currency (English pounds, Belgian francs, German Reichsmarks, etc.), and distributed American flags and a compass for each man.”* Lumpkin rose early and talked to Germans he had worked with, Merck and Knorr. Both were actively nervous and fearful of the Russians. Lumpkin reconsidered escape, even with the threat of being shot, but when sharing news with other officers, learned that the “herding-instinct” was compelling. *Appell* was held in the morning but with almost 1,500 marchers, an accurate count was impossible. Deciding that the odds were in their favor, Lt. Col. Skells and Lumpkin hid until the column marched off, leaving one guard to bring the stragglers. Entering the cattle stalls room, they encountered a Polish youth who agreed to distract the guard.

After the disengaged guard left to catch up with the column, Lumpkin discovered that they had company: 25 other Americans plus 3 Polish officers. The group split up as Skells and Lumpkin headed southeast, walking cross-country. Sighting a barn in the late afternoon, they were spotted by an old Polish man, Jarosz Michal. As he had been a POW himself and had no use for the Germans, he graciously invited them to spend the night and fed them well. Later they were joined by two other Americans, Thomas and Crocker. Early the next afternoon, they made contact with personnel from a Russian self-propelled antitank battery, convinced them that they were a group of four *Amerikanski*, and were escorted to the Division Command Post to spend the night. Both were treated graciously but watched carefully. The next morning, they met Marshall Zhukov, the leader of the Red Army, and after celebrating with the Russians and exchanging insignia, they were taken back to Schubin in a Russian staff car, finding on their arrival that 20 other Kriegies had returned as well.

Lumpkin regretted that he was unable to convince Zhukov’s chief of staff about the forced march moving towards Berlin which placed so many Americans’ lives at risk.

January 25, 1945 - Max, the battery commander they had come to know, consented to let them retrieve Red Cross parcels stored at Dietfurt. They rode over on a commandeered tractor to find that the Germans had taken the complete supply. Since they were liberated allies, the Russians then slaughtered three cattle—enough to feed personnel still waiting at Oflag 64.

THE LONG, LONG ROAD HOME

January 29, 1945 - Russian trucks arrived at Oflag 64 to convoy remaining Americans, French, British and Belgians toward Warsaw. That night was spent at a Polish house in Hohenzohlza. Continued travels brought Lumpkin and others to the outskirts of Warsaw—a city in total ruins. They crossed the Vistula River, joined continually by others, and were billeted in a building west of Warsaw occupied by 3,000 people. Previously, it had been used as a training center for SS troops. Many refugees were also present and morale was high. Marshal Zhukov arranged for better quarters in the four-story building where Americans and Max occupied a cubicle. Lumpkin often walked to the nearest town, Rembertov, where he shopped, mostly by using the barter system.

Lumpkin included many details about his daily life including a League of Nations dance with Russians, British, Americans, French, Belgians, Serbs, Czechs, Slovaks and Fins. By February 15, 13,000 refugees now occupied the building—time for a reorganization of meals, etc.

February 22- 23, 1945 - A train has been obtained on a reverse lend lease. The group walked to Warsaw, moved onto the tracks and boarded the train. Stories were shared throughout the long train ride.

March 1, 1945 - Train arrived in Odessa as adventures continue about relationships and plans for going home.

March 5, 1945 - "Major Paul Hall is the U.S. Military Commissioner in Odessa. After much wrangling around we are able to get a British boat to haul us out. Hall says that we should be prepared to load on Wednesday and leave on Thursday."

March 7, 1945 - Up at 6 am, Lumpkin packed his gear and headed to the docks, accompanied by a Russian band playing British music. Boarding the *Moreton Bay*, Lumpkin surveyed his surroundings and shared a cabin with five others. By March 9, the boat was anchored in the Istanbul area but passengers were unable to go ashore. March 11, they passed by Crete, arrived in Port Said on March 12, and moved to a camp at the edge of the Suez Canal.

March 16 - 21, 1945 - Lumpkin caught a ride to the docks and arranged to board the *Samaria* out of Liverpool. A much larger boat than the *Moreton Bay*, the conditions were better and the captain agreed to take Lumpkin and friend, Bernie Bolton, to Naples. A USO troop was aboard, along with other Americans, French, and wives of POWs. The ship arrived in Naples harbor on March 20, 1945, where Bolton and Lumpkin experienced an adventure as they were picked up by the British Military Police who thought they were British enlisted men. This was put to rest when they admitted that they were "*actually Americans.*"

Scouted out by the American Provost Marshall, they were held until the necessary forms were filled out, then taken to the American Hospital Officer's Club for food and lodging. This was followed by an order from the commanding officer to remain on hospital

grounds until “arrangements have been made for a plane to take us home.” *Stars and Stripes* wanted to interview them about their escapes.

Evading the American M.P.s, Lumpkin shopped and visited tourist sites, Caserta and Pompeii, ran into old friends, and relaxed—still healing from medical issues. Arriving at the airport on Easter Sunday (April 1) they were flown first to Tunis, Casablanca and on to the Canaries.

April 3, 1945 – “The plane landed at Stephenville, Newfoundland, and later continued toward Washington, landing at 1:00 pm. They passed us through customs and medical examinations. The War Department sends a jeep over to take me to see the other end of the parcel business. They are extremely clever-radio, balls, etc.” [This refers to the MIS-X operation at Fort Hunt, Virginia where the security parcels originated.]

Lumpkin was debriefed at the Pentagon on April 3, 4, and 5.

Finally making connection with Betty on April 7, in St. Louis, CPT Lumpkin completed his diary entries with this statement: “It was a long time!!”

CIVILIAN LIFE

After leaving the U. S. Army, Tony Lumpkin became a successful business man, owning Dairy Queens in several states. Returning to his home in Mexico, Missouri, he was known as “Mr. Tony” and enjoyed sharing stories about growing up in South Carolina, attending college at the Citadel and mentoring cadets at MMA. Tony and Betty traveled widely until his death on December 19, 1978.

Biography written by Kriegy Research Group writer Ann C. Rogers