

Dear Clarence,

In reading your account of the march from Oflag 64 and the memoirs of some of the other people that contributed their memories, it revived my memories of some of the events that occurred during that period.

Some of the events, I'm not real sure of the dates, but maybe somebody will remember the event and can place a date on it.

We look forward to the trip to San Diego. I was in San Diego the weekend that the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. We have friends and relatives in Los Angeles and plan to go see them when our reunion is over on Sunday.

In filling out your form as to which column or rail column we were in I am a little bit confused as to which one I was in. I left Hammelberg the next day after we were rounded up and returned to the camp. When we got to Nurenburg we were taken to that big outdoor stadium where the Nazis used to have their rallies. The day we were loaded on the boxcars at Hammelburg several american fighters flew over and dropped some bombs on trhe hill where Capt. Baum's tanks had stopped before entering the camp.

I had a fever when we left Nurenburg to go to Mooseburg and really don't remember too much. I remember travelling all night, and the next morning were at the same place we were the evening before. That was the train that was strafed by the P-51 fighters. I think somewhere in your memoirs you state that you were almost hit by the flying bullets on that episode. You must have been standing very close to where I was at the time.

We wish you the very best and look forward to seeing you in San Diego.

Bob Thompson  
7448 E 68th Place  
Tulsa, Oklahoma 74133  
918-252-2787  
Sept. 3, 1989

Remembered events, but no remembrance of dates. Perhaps somebody else can fill in some of the dates or places that I cannot recall.

Sometime after we received the Canadian Red Cross parcels we discovered that the real coffee grounds in the parcels were more valuable than gold. We could not stand to part with anything so precious as coffee grounds, so we did the next best thing, we recycled the coffee grounds and then sold them. We would make coffee with the grounds, then dry them in a can over a fire and trade them as if they were brand new. This lasted a couple of days, until the civilians learned what we were doing.

Sometime after the Latvian guards took over as security. We were in a big hayloft of a barn during the daytime. The door to the outside was in a sidewall of the loft and would swing out for entrance to the loft. A wooden ladder on the outside from the ground to the door was used to enter the loft.

One of the guards was coming up the ladder and the door was closed. As the guard reached the top of the ladder, one of our POWs kicked the door open and threw the guard off the ladder and down to the ground. The Latvian was really furious. He came up the ladder again and was pointing his machine pistol at everybody, but naturally everybody was innocent and had not noticed a thing had happened.

At Nuremberg.

We were locked in the boxcars at night with two guards. The two guards locked us in the boxcar and went to town and got drunk (VERY DRUNK). The next morning, one of the guards was on the floor of our car, passed out and lying on his back. As one of our men would walk back and forth they would grind the heel of their shoe into his stomach or face, when he finally woke up he was really in bad shape.

The train we were on, evidently the one for the trip to Mooseburg, was a passenger type train because it had compartments for the passengers. The train pulled out of town and stopped out in the country. I saw the engineer and the fireman with their suitcases, leaving the train. I walked up to the locomotive to get a can of hot water for coffee, but had to wait for a man that was already getting some hot water. He was a Scotsman in the British Army. He had an aluminum pitcher that he was filling. All at once it sounded as if the world had exploded. A group of P-51 fighters has spotted us and were making a run at us. The first plane unloaded all his guns at us, but the rest of them didn't fire. The man with the pitcher looked real surprised, took about three steps and collapsed. He had been hit in the

arm. I made a dive for the ditch alongside the road and two guards jumped into the ditch on top of me

#### AT MOOSEBURG

One day a flight of B-24 Bombers passed overhead going north. Later, they came back over heading south, but evidently one of them had been hit, because he was lagging behind and out of the formation. A short time later, we noticed the crew had bailed out and were coming down in their parachutes. A couple of hours later, an air force pilot still in his flight suit walked up to me and said, "How long have you been locked up in this place". I told him I had been locked up about 10 months. He put his face right in my face and blew his breath on me and said "I just came overseas and still have Boston air in my lungs. I think he was the pilot of the plane that had just been shot down.

#### AT MOOSEBURG

One day I noticed an L-5 Observation plane in the air and remarked to a friend. "The U.S. Army is just down the road a few miles". A few hours later, Gen. Patton drove up in a jeep followed by a tank. A group of us were talking to him and he remarked that we were in good hand "The U.S. Third Army". He stated that they would have lots of food brought in to us. If food was ever brought to the camp I never saw any of it. We would get out on the highway and have GI trucks throw food off the trucks to us.

#### AT INGOLSTADT (ON THE DANUBE OUR POE FROM GERMANY)

Our group was taken to Ingolstadt, an airbase for air transport to Rheims France. The first day there we didn't leave, so we spent the night at some kind of fort or castle in the city of Ingolstadt. The next day we went back to the airbase to await transportation. At about 3:00 P.M. an airplane was descending to land on the airstrip when it was discovered that the airplane was a German Stuka Dive Bomber. American anti-aircraft guns placed along the runway opened fire on the airplane, when somebody discovered that the war had been over since noon that day. The crew of the anti-aircraft gun also discovered that the war had been over for a few hours and ceased firing. The airplane circled the field to try to land again, but this time the man sitting in the back seat of the airplane flung the canopy open, stood up in the airplane and waved a white flag. This time he made an uneventful landing and naturally several hundred liberated prisoners ran out to the airplane for souvenirs.

JAN 23, 1945 CHARLOTTENBURG OR EICHFELD

This was the day of our temporary freedom.

We were awakened early in the morning and told that the Germans had left and we were on our own.

I rolled up my blue German army blanket and walked to the edge of the barnyard with the intention of leaving the column. Across the open fields the snow must have been about 2 feet deep. I could see footprints in the snow that escaping prisoners had made. Some of the footprints led up to shocks of grain and stopped. It was obvious that somebody was hiding in the shocks of grain.

I sat down on a log to try and decide what to do about leaving. I didn't know where I was, I didn't know where I had been and I didn't know where I was going.

I couldn't speak Polish, German or Russian. I was half frozen and half starving and had no food, so I decided I would hide in a root cellar next to the barn and wait for the Russians. After a while in the root cellar I heard voices outside that I thought were Russians. They weren't Russians, they were the Latvian SS guards. I opened the door of the cellar and was told to come out and climb into the truck in the street, which I did. Early in the morning of this day, the farmer that lived in the house at this place hung up a hog on a tripod in the barnyard and was going to cut it up and feed it to us. The guards came before the hog was cut up, but one of our POWs with a sharp knife, cut either a hind quarter or shoulder off the hog and took it with him. I tried to get some of the hog, but my knife was so dull it wouldn't cut through the thick hide of the hog. I never did know who this man was that had that big piece of that hog, but I remember smelling him cooking it at night when we would stop.

During that day, before the guards came to get us, we built a big fire in the barnyard and several of our people began singing patriotic songs. I thought this was a little bit premature.

Polish women and children passed cookies and cake over the fence to us.

When the Latvian guards arrived to pick us up, some of them walked over to the edge of the barnyard and saw the footprints in the snow that led up to the shocks of grain. They walked over to the shocks of grain and fired their machine pistol into the shocks. I know somebody was in the shocks at the time, but I didn't hear a sound come from the shock.

LOBSENS Jan. 24, 1945

Other persons letters and diaries revived my memory somewhat and I think that it was at Lobsens that as we were entering the town I saw some farmers scalding a hog in a small shack at the edge of the road. Scalding a hog requires hot water, just like making K ration coffee. I ran over to the barn and dipped my Klim can into the hot water. I then made coffee out of this water. That was the best sausage tasting coffee that I ever tasted.

As we were entering the town the people on the sidewalks were very friendly. One middle aged woman beckoned me to follow her, which I did. Two other POWs and I followed her down a side street about a block to her house with a guard brandishing his rifle and screaming at the top of his lungs.

All the POWs and the guard followed the woman into her front room where there was a big cake with icing sitting on the coffee table. It took us about 10 seconds to scoop up all the cake and leave. The guard didn't get any of the cake, because the POWs had decimated it.

On the way back to the column a woman gave me a big chunk of precooked meat (wurst?) about the size of a loaf of bread. Some POW had loaf of bread about the size of a no. 2 washtub. We pool some of our meat and bread and had a real feast.

This was the town where some woman asked one of our POWs to jump into bed with her. I remember everybody talking about it.

PLATTEN JAN 27, 1945

I think this was the town where the streets were lined with other country POWs. As we marched through, we passed some Russian POWs. I handed one of them a couple of cigarettes. Just as I did this a German guard hit the Russian in the mouth with the butt of his rifle. Blood and teeth flew all over the place and the poor man fell to the ground unconscious.

3  
JASTROW Jan. 2~~1~~, 1945

We spent the night in a small Catholic Church. The church was jammed full of people. They were in the pews, between the pews, in the aisles, etc. I crawled upstairs into the attic and spent the night between two ceiling joists. The next morning the townspeople were, I think, going to church. There was snow on the ground and about 300 little brown piles all over the front yard of the church that marked our shissen area.

JAN 29, 1945 ZIPPENOW

This was a polish army barracks. This was a camp with wooden barracks that were in pretty good condition. Our group occupied one room in one of the barracks that contained bunks and a cast iron stove with radiating fins on the side of the stove. We scrounged around and found wood and coal for the stove. We also found lots of potatoes. We built a roaring fire in the stove and stuck the potatoes on the radiating fins and were going to feast on the potatoes. About an hour later, our platoon leader, Lt. Col. ? walked into the room and demanded a place on the stove for his potatoes. He was told to wait his turn. He became very angry and tried to pull his rank. Some Lt. threatened him and the Lt. Col. backed off. The Lt. Col. had done a miserable job in caring for his platoon and we had lost all respect for him. In circumstances such as this it proves that you can't be given respect, you must earn it. The next morning as we were preparing to leave, we found a barrel of pickles and survived the next few days on pickles.

JAN 30, 1945 MACHLIN

One of our men had evidently reached the limit of his endurance on this day of the march. It was extremely cold and the wind was blowing hard. This man, I don't know who he was, left the column running and screaming. The guard in front of me raised his rifle to shoot the man but somebody from the column ( one of our POWs) grabbed his rifle and pointed it at the ground while some of our people ran after

the man , caught him and returned him to the column.

INTERROGATION, PRISONER OF WAR

(Your contribution to a revision of the book)

Name ROBERT T. THOMPSON

Rank 1ST LT.

Serial Number O-1179720

Unit and location BTRY B, 132 FA BN, 36 TH INF. DIVISION  
ITALY & SOUTHERN, CENTRAL FRANCE

Captured SEPT 19 1944

First (Temporary) Camps STRASBOURG, LIMBURG  
THEN TO OFLAG 64

Permanent (Oflog, Stalag, Hospital) Camps

OFLAG 64, HAMMELBURG  
NUREMBURG  
MOOSEBURG.

Forced Marches

OFLAG 64 TO PARCHEIM

Liberated

When 1 APR. 29, 1944

Where MOOSEBURG.

RAMP Camp/Odessa

RAMP CAMP (REIMS, CAMP LUCKY STRIKE)

---

This is a continuing project, so long as contributions, records, and memoirs keep increasing the known facts and expanding the reach of the story. Hoping to hear from you. CRM

ROADS TO LIBERATION

For the record, I'd like to know "the road" you took from Oflag 64:

To Parchim \_\_\_\_\_  
One   
Two   
Three

To Odessa \_\_\_\_\_  
Col Drury \_\_\_\_\_  
Wegheim Escape \_\_\_\_\_  
Wegheim Medical \_\_\_\_\_  
Wirnitz Escape \_\_\_\_\_  
Echfeld Escape \_\_\_\_\_  
Charlottenburg Escape \_\_\_\_\_  
Lobsens Escape \_\_\_\_\_  
Oflag IID \_\_\_\_\_

To Luckenwalde \_\_\_\_\_  
Flatow \_\_\_\_\_  
Jastrow \_\_\_\_\_  
Zeitlitz \_\_\_\_\_  
Stolpe/Usedom \_\_\_\_\_

Hammelburg to Nurnberg \_\_\_\_\_  
Rail #1 \_\_\_\_\_  
Simes Column \_\_\_\_\_  
Rail #2   
Juskalian Column \_\_\_\_\_  
Rail #3 \_\_\_\_\_  
Spicher Column \_\_\_\_\_  
Shulte Column \_\_\_\_\_  
( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Nurnberg to Moosburg \_\_\_\_\_  
Rail #4   
Bloom Column \_\_\_\_\_

Simes Column to Gars \_\_\_\_\_

(Other, ) \_\_\_\_\_

Date OCT 18, 1988

Name Bob Thompson

THANK YOU. Will Report at San Antonio.