

FOREWORD

My family, and particularly my daughter Judy, have been after me for years to type up my Prisoner of War diary. This diary is in a small pocket notebook with some six months of prison life crammed into it in writing as small as I could make it. As it is, it is difficult to read and thus not really useful to my family.

Judy has now given us her old computer (a 286) so that it is now feasible to work on the diary at odd and free moments. It is late 1991 as I do this so many years have passed since the events recorded in the diary. Consequently I am trying to copy the diary faithfully as it was written. When necessary for understanding, I have added comments or parenthetical remarks for purposes of clarity or explanation of events omitted or not fully covered.

This diary is a unique document. It is the only prisoner of war diary from the ground officer POW camp (Oflag 64) covering the last six months of the war (*the time from my capture on 15 November, 1944 until my return to the American lines on 8 May 1945*). It is certainly a valuable family document which I hope will be retained by my descendants. Shortly after my return from Europe and while I was on leave in Lincoln, Nebraska, a representative from some agency of the government (he would not tell me which) came to Lincoln, asked to see the diary and then receipted for it from me. The diary was not returned to me until several months after the end of the war crimes trials. I see nothing in the diary that would have an impact on the trials. The food, or lack of it, would seem to be the main item.

Some of the abbreviations and "Kriegy" slang need definition for understanding. "Kriegy" was our term for ourselves, a shortening of the German word "kriessgefangen" meaning prisoner of war. "Goon" was our contemptuous term for the German POW guard. It later became our term for any German. "SBO" and "SAO" were the abbreviations for Senior British Officer and Senior American Officer. "Bash" or "bashing" was essentially a food orgy during the times when we had American food parcels and could attempt to make familiar dishes out of the odd ingredients at hand. "CP" is the military term for command post.

Note the multitude of rumors toward the end. This was a time of great stress and uncertainty. As I read it now it seems that many of the rumors were inane or naïve. But in those days anything affecting us was very important and got our full attention.

DIARY OF A POW

This is the story of my POW days, how I was captured, my experiences as a POW; the sum of all this makes a story that may be of interest to my descendants. (I became a POW on 15 November 1944 and returned to American lines on 8 May 1945).

I was a captain, commanding A Company of the 81st Chemical Mortar Battalion. This was a unit armed with a 4.2 inch caliber mortar capable of firing both HE and WP (high explosive and white phosphorus). We would normally be in support of an infantry regiment and had supported elements of many infantry divisions since our landing on Omaha Easy Red beach.

We were in Third Army stalled to the north of Metz by a swollen Moselle River. Support elements, we included, had to support infantry units across the river from positions on the near bank. The swollen river prevented the engineers from bridging the river for several days. When the bridge was finally completed we were one of the first units to cross. The elements north of Metz were encircling Metz in conjunction with the divisions to the south of Metz. We crossed the river at night and moved to initial firing positions in the area of Valmestroff. We supported the attack on Distroff with a large smoke screen to help the infantry attack across quite open terrain.

The infantry attack was to continue the following day across a broad open valley with the far hills beyond the range of our mortars. I did not want to risk the company in a daylight exposed move forward to new firing positions as the infantry attack moved out of our effective range. I therefore planned to infiltrate the company one squad at a time down into Distroff. This would put

us with the forward infantry elements at the start of the attack but would enable us to support the attack without having to displace forward during the attack. I went down into Distroff with the first squad of one of the platoons. Two or three squads had arrived in Distroff when the Germans launched a counterattack down the main, and only, street of the town. Having gone down into Distroff with one of the platoon elements, I did not have my radio. The platoon leader was also without his radio. I had to stop the rest of the company from coming down into Distroff in the middle of the German attack. The reserve company CP of the infantry battalion was across the street. My platoon leader and I flipped a coin to see which of us would cross the street to use the infantry radio to stop the forward infiltration of our company into the middle of this counterattack. While the coin was still in the air we both took off across the street. (Comparing notes in prison camp, we determined that each of us thought that we should have had our radio there and should not involve the other).

As we left the barn that we were in, a tank and a squad of German infantry were coming up the street toward us. Our appearance did attract attention and increased our speed across the street. We reached the building of the infantry CP OK. I used the infantry radio to contact my company, ordered them to get in firing positions to help repel the German attack and to stay there until they heard further. The German attack now concentrated on this building. The tank fired armor piercing through the wall of the stable we were in. Pieces of stone hit me in the back and leg and I was partially paralyzed for a few minutes. The Germans continued an attack that drove us first from the stable and then room by room until eventually we were driven out the rear of the house. Initially, I was partially paralyzed and could not move on my own. The personnel in the infantry CP dragged me from the stable into the house and then room by room to the rear of the house. With time I regained use of my legs and could move on my own. We exited out a rear window of the house. The back yard had anchor fencing on both sides of the garden that prevented lateral movement. At the rear of the garden there was a short wall across the back of the garden, the wall maybe about two feet in height.

We had barricaded the door to the room from which we exited the house, this to give us a little time to get away before the Germans reached that back room. From that window they could pick us off one by one at a distance of some thirty yards. To the right and maybe 75 yards away was a German

tank. To the left and somewhat closer were two German half tracks mounting 20 mm guns. We took shelter behind the low wall (no other place to go). The half tracks fired at us from a distance of about thirty yards. The angle of the wall against which we were hugging as close as possible kept us from direct hits but the 20 mm impacting directly behind us caused us some minor wounds, particularly to the infantry company commander. Why the Germans did not toss grenades at our group is a mystery. We were dead ducks if they did.

Also it was just a matter of time until the Germans got to the rear windows of the house behind us to pick us off one by one. The situation was truly hopeless and I expected to be killed within a minute or two. The infantry commander surrendered the group (some seven of us), really the only reasonable thing to do considering the situation facing us.

There were two people of my company with me behind that wall, Lt. Stone and Sgt. Lamb. I was laying next to Sgt. Lamb. He was scraping a shallow hole in the ground. I asked him what the devil he was doing at such a time. He told me he was trying to cover up our company radio code so it would not be found on his body. As the commander, I should have thought of this. (This occurred just before the infantry commander surrendered the whole group).

We were told to stand with our arms up, were collected and marched out of the town. *When you are first captured, and particularly when you are surprised to find yourself still alive, you are in a state of shock. We were marched out of the town across an open field. Our artillery was firing a steady barrage around the perimeter of the town to prevent, or slow down, German reinforcements. The seven of us were walked through that barrage. As the shells impacted anywhere near us the German guard would hit the ground. We remained standing and did little more than bow or droop our shoulders and would look down at the guard with a feeling approaching contempt. After all these years, is hard to make the family realize that you just didn't care what happened to you at that time so soon after your capture. With the passage of time you again became normally interested in your safety.* At the next little village the infantry commander and I were put on the back of a motorcycle half track. He had been wounded in the leg and I was the other senior officer. This was in the Alsace Lorraine, an area of mixed sympathies. As we would reach a village on the motorcycle half track

the locals would come out and ask the German guard if they could give us coffee and something to eat. The guard agreed provided he was given something also. I'm sure the guard was given straight coffee but we were given coffee liberally laced with brandy. I had not eaten since around noon of the day before. The food I was given (sandwiches and/or fruit) I saved for Lt. Stone and Sgt. Lamb in the marching column of POW's behind us. As a result of no food and coffee laced brandy I was half drunk by mid morning, a rather unusual situation for a just captured prisoner of war.

From Distroff we were initially marched out to Metzervisse where we searched, then on to Kedange. We were taken by a car to Merzig and then to Saarlautern. We were put in a room, no blankets but at least it had straw on the floor. The original party here was Ramsberg (the infantry company commander), Lts. Garrett and Davis from the infantry company, and Stone and I from my company. One interesting event occurred that evening. A German warrant officer came into the room to look us over. He told us he had fought against the French, the British and had just returned from the Russian front.. He wanted to test the mettle of the Americans (As rather beat up and depressed POW's I doubt that we impressed him very much)

THIS CONCLUDES MY DIARY ENTRIES FOR THE DAY
I WAS CAPTURED, 15 NOVEMBER 1944.

NOVEMBER 16, 1944 - We were joined today by Captains Kovacs and Ward, LTs Burns, Miller and Anderson.

NOVEMBER 18 - We walk out to Forbach (18 kms). Arrive at night, no chow, no blankets.

NOVEMBER 19 - Interrogated again and lose my knife. Won't talk and the interrogator is very threatening. Chow is very poor and irregular.

NOVEMBER 21 - March to Saarbrucken for train trip to Limburg, 15 officers and 45 men to a boxcar. Issued two days rations. Load at 1430. Saarbrucken is battered, nothing left.

NOVEMBER 22 - Leave station 1000-make good time until dark and then sit in rail yards all night.

COMMENT - The European freight car is much smaller than the US cars. It is the same type of car as the 40 and 8 of World War I, 40 men or 8 horses. The way the Germans used these freight cars to transport POW's was to put the prisoners in one end of the car, place barbed wire across the car at the door. The guards then had one end of the car plus the space of the car door. We were then really crowded at our end of the car. We could sit with our knees pulled up and all jammed together. When we wanted to lay down, everyone would have to lay on one side with their knees pulled up. Each person would then have to snuggle into the person to his side and the person behind him would have to do the same to him. Eventually, someone would get a cramp and have to move. We would try to delay the procedure as long as possible because we would then have to reverse the procedure so everyone could again lie down. We had a near mutiny when we had both officers and EM in the same car. One corporal, a medic I believe, was sitting across the boxcar from the group of officers that were sitting together. He kept trying to incite trouble saying that now that we were all prisoners the EM could do what they wanted and need not listen to the officers. In fact, they should take over the car right then. This could not be allowed to happen. So by a concerted effort of a few of us we grabbed him and brought him into the center of the officer group where we could control him. He never had received much support from the other EM. Once we had him under control there was no further problem.

NOVEMBER 23, THANKSGIVING - Our food has given out - no water. We ride a few hours and then sit in some freight yard twice as long. The rail system is really battered.

NOVEMBER -We arrive, route Kaiserlautern, Bingen, Koblenz, Limburg. Everybody in the same barracks. We get bread and butter. No heat and no blankets-not even straw.

NOVEMBER 25 - Spend the day with the men-deloused and searched. Lose AGO card and form 81. About this time they found my diary I had started and confiscated it. (Fortunately, I was able to trade for a small notebook and could reconstruct the first few days of the POW experience).

NOVEMBER 26 - Move to officer barracks. Food is somewhat better. Have blankets but barracks very cold. Am getting the flu.

NOVEMBER 27-28 - In bed all day both days. Still feel bad. We have been short of adequate food long enough that we now discuss American food and dishes incessantly.

NOVEMBER 29 - moved again, this time to Diez (the castle and interrogation). Arrive after dark but chow actually waiting. Thrown in solitary confinement awaiting interrogation. Have bed, stool to sit on, night pan, and HEAT. Food is best yet. MENU - breakfast is bread, jam and ersatz coffee. Dinner is soup. Supper is soup and coffee.

NOVEMBER 30-DECEMBER 1 - Time passes very slowly with no one to talk with, chow at 0830, 1230 and 1800. Nothing else to pass the time, probably a deliberate technique to soften one up. The good thing about this solitary confinement was that with nothing to do I stayed in bed huddled under my blankets and essentially got over the flu. The door to my cell had a little peephole that the guards could use to keep tabs on the occupant.

DECEMBER 2 - I am interrogated. Get by with nothing.. Actually there were several interrogations. They would bring me from my cell to make sure that I saw Stone as he came out of the room they used. Then they would tell me what Stone had told them and I might as well talk too. From what they told me that Stone had said it was obvious that they had gotten no useful information from him. Later he told me that they had tried the same technique on him. (Since Stone and I were wearing the crossed retorts of Chemical officers and were captured at the same place, we were an obvious pairing to be used for the above interrogation technique)

COMMENT - In 1976, my wife, daughter Judy and I went to Giessen, Germany to visit his family (he was a captain in an artillery unit).

He took me to Diez to the old castle, now a school for orphans. They were going to deny me entrance. My son forcefully reminded them of my legitimate interest and they let us in. I found the old cell, it still had the peephole in the door. All the family were very quiet and stood away while I was immersed in some old, not very pleasant memories.

Later was released from solitary. Davis, Willis and I spend the evening

talking and eating. (We had received our first Red Cross parcels). I feel RICH with five packs of cigarettes. Great to be out of solitary and have someone to talk to.

DECEMBER 3 - Walked back to Limburg and new barracks. Spent day cooking new dishes from Red Cross parcel. English sergeant from Bournemouth is our barracks orderly. Lt Etzel conducts church services...

one

DECEMBER 4 - Hunter, Dooley, Etzel and I were called out to go to a Luftwaffe camp at Wetzler. A Lt picks us up for the trip. We ride a passenger train, have numerous stops.

COMMENT- The American officer field coat bore some resemblance to the German outer coat. As a result a red triangle was painted on the prisoners coat over the left breast. I was wearing this coat during the train trip. Usually, when we would stop in one of the frequent train stations, we would be permitted to leave the train and walk around on the station platform. At this one stop, a group of German ladies had set up a soup line for the German soldiers. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. I got in the line with the German soldiers and actually got served a cup of soup. This was so good that I got back in the line to get a second helping. This time it didn't work and I got "booted" out of line to the care of a German Provost.

DECEMBER 5 -Have arrived at Luftwaffe station. We four are in the same room. Uneventful-slept-washed clothing and ate. Food is very good for German Food.

DECEMBER 6 - Called out individually in the morning for a talk with a German officer, no military questions. The German was Baron von Cramm, a well known pre war tennis star. Although we were naturally on guard, the talks were quite pleasant. Was offered a glass of beer which I took. Was invited back for afternoon tea and given some Italian cognac. So far no catch and no military questions. We felt that there were two possible explanations. One-they wanted to sound us out as to possible political solutions to the war. (Of course we were too low down to have much of a useful opinion) and Two-The room that we four were in was probably wired to get our attitudes to the German's talk with us and thus get a truer picture of American attitudes and resolve toward the war. We were aware that the room might be "bugged" and handled ourselves accordingly. Large air raid in town at night. Initial flare pattern was directly overhead. We are rather worried.

DECEMBER 7 - Back to Limburg to catch our transport. Luftwaffe stay very pleasant, no catch.

DECEMBER 8 - 45 officers leave Limburg for Altenburg. We have a shower. Board train at 1700.

DECEMBER 9 - Still in Limburg yards. 23 men in half a 40 and 8.

DECEMBER 10 - We start to move at 1945 after 52 hours. Make good time all night.

DECEMBER 11 - We stop in yards at Frankfurt am Main. About noon our bombers hit factory about 400 yards away. Phew-too close.

COMMENT - Whenever there was an air raid the German guards would lock the boxcar and take off until the air raid was over. During this raid I was seated with my back against the wall of the boxcar. The initial stick of bombs started at my left rear and moved across to my right front. One feels quite vulnerable when you can do nothing. My shoulders felt twice as wide as normal.

DECEMBER 12 - Leave Frankfurt after about 40 hours in the yards. Move to Vorbeil Nord and sit.

DECEMBER 13 - Started to move fairly regularly in late evening.

DECEMBER 14 - Moving fairly well-Hunfeld, Neukirchen, Hersfeld, Lommerburg, Bebra. Sgt Soriken developed blood poisoning. Doc tried to get him to a hospital but no soap. Seems it was not covered in orders. He must complete journey with no treatment. We sit in Bebra for several hours.

DECEMBER 15 - Start to move in early morning -Bad Kosen (have run out of food). Leipzig, Falkenberg. We get chow at night.

DECEMBER 16 - Stop in yards at Frankfurt am Oder at 0600. We lose NCO car during the night. Sang Christmas carols to pass the time. Everyone is lousy (and that's bugs, not the way we feel).

DECEMBER 17 - Giessen and flat plains. We must be getting close. It is getting very cold.

DECEMBER 18 - Stayed in station all night. Got to camp at 0800. This is the Polish town of Schubin in the Polish corridor. Very flat country and very cold. We are put in recreation building. Get coffee, potatoes and gravy for breakfast and one third of a Red Cross parcel. Soup for dinner and spuds for supper. Deloused in the evening, given a Red Cross parcel and taken to our assigned barracks.

DECEMBER 19 - My stomach starts acting up. My address is Oflag 64, Barracks 2B, Cubicle 9. Cubicle mates are Lts. James Wheeler, Wenatchee, Washington; Charles A. Robertson, Amarillo, Texas; John Kozey, Wilkes Barre, Pennsylvania; Albert Bryant, Midland, Texas; John Stone, Waldorf, Maryland; and Joe Dooley, Chicago, Illinois. Start the camp routine. Up at 0740, appell (roll call) at 0800, hot water at 0815, chow at 1215 (in a mess hall), hot water again at 1500 (the hot water

DECEMBER 24 - Write to Janet and the folks. Bake my first cake. Camp has a Christmas program but am too sick to go. Eat some of my turkey.

DECEMBER 25 -No appell until 1100. Noon chow at 1415. Have meat stew, broth, cabbage salad, mashed potatoes and gravy and GI coffee. GOT FULL! Christmas decorations and two piece orchestra. Won D bar at drawing. Went to Christmas musicale at theater. Very good. Bashed my plum pudding for supper. Played bridge and then to bed.

COMMENT - The above few days makes the camp sound a little like a country club. FAR FROM IT! Our cubicles had triple deck bunks forming three sides of an open area, the outer wall was the fourth side. Your tick for sleeping was filled with straw. You were given seven boards to place across the bed frame to support your straw tick. The human frame does not adapt to the spaces between these seven boards. What may be reasonably comfortable on your back won't do at all if you try to lay on your side. Oflag 64 was the main officer camp for US Army POW's. It had been in existence for a long time, hence the musical instruments provided by the Salvation Army. They had also shipped in the lumber for the theater and the stage. Basically, the officer prisoner had nothing to do. Enlisted men go out on working parties. The Germans generally adhered to the Geneva

convention, thus the officers were left with little to do. The camp was at the edge of the Polish town of Schubin (German name Alzburgund). The camp

was a former girls school. The compound was surrounded by barbed wire fences, two vertical fences about ten feet high with rolls of barbed wire between the two fences. There were guard towers with machine guns at the four corners of the camp as well as a smaller tower covering the entrance gate to the camp. The prisoners were grouped in a series of one story barracks. Overall, the camp contained a little over one thousand officer POW's. It was a well established camp with permanent facilities not available at Luckenwalde where I eventually wound up. The camp had an administration building that included our mess hall. There was a recreation building where plays were held. We also had space for classes which were given in a variety of subjects. I do not remember if these classes were held in the recreation building. There was general freedom to walk around inside the camp during the day. After lights out, stay inside your barracks. They had roving guards and police dogs within the compound at night. There were no successful escapes during the time I was in that camp.

DECEMBER 26 - Finished my turkey.

DECEMBER 27 - Next Red Cross parcel will be 2 January. Starting to hurt for food. Worried about German offensive in the Ardennes.

DECEMBER 28 - Made prune jam (prunes, sugar, milk and oleo). Shower day. Stone and I lost out in the bridge tournament. Washed clothes. Am getting the itch (scabies or lice?).

DECEMBER 29 - Play bridge. Dooley and I are to play in another tournament. Go to Lt Carnes service.

DECEMBER 30 - Out of Red Cross food - strictly hurting.

DECEMBER 31 - Lights out at 0100. Play bridge and bash all my bread. Hope for the end of the war.

JANUARY 1 - May this year see the end! Red Cross parcels tomorrow. Worried about lice so get deloused in afternoon and find the entire barracks

must be deloused. Set up half the night waiting for my blankets. New men arrive from Limburg with news of bombing. Direct hit on the barracks where we first lived. Met Lodge, Miller and Wood again. Hear that we were the only ones caught 15 November. OH MY BACK! Rest of German attack beaten off. One man saw us being marched out but was afraid to shoot our guards for fear the half track down the street would open up on us.

JANUARY 2 - Red Cross parcels arrived. Held big bash session. Go to see play "Room Service" which was very good. Trade one half Klem for four rations of bread.

JANUARY 3-5 - Normal days, nothing interesting.

JANUARY 9 - Red Cross parcels. I am short jam, damn it. Dooley and I are still going strong in bridge tournament. We make a chocolate cake (1 D bar, 1 ration bread, 4 lumps of sugar and 6 spoons of milk). Tastes swell but didn't set hard enough.

JANUARY 10 - Weigh 147, have lost 8 pounds since arriving and 13 pounds off normal weight.

JANUARY 12 - Make a pudding (1/4 box of raisins, 2 tablespoons of milk, two potatoes, one square of D bar) and also a milk sauce topping.

JANUARY 13 - Dooley and I make a cake, (no baking powder), 1 D bar, 1 ration bread, 6 spoons of Klem, 4 sugar, also a milk icing. Very good.

JANUARY 14 - Bridge tournament over-not so good. We won half of our matches but are getting much better. Took shower yesterday. A platoon has 40 minutes to shower. We all must be undressed and ready to step under at 1410. There are 12 shower heads. Twelve men step under for one minute to 1411. get wet, then the water is shut off while we soap up, then one minute to rinse the soap off and must clear the shower immediately for twelve more men. (Mass production in a Turkish bath).

JANUARY 15 - A POW for two months. Went to a securities class. Had a long and cold appeal. The OD calls "Appell" and the barracks empty. We line up in platoons of 50 men for easier counting, are called to attention and

given "Parade Rest" while the German passes to count us, then "Rest" until the total count is verified. Then we are called to attention and dismissed. As we get weaker, a long appell inevitably will result in somebody fainting in the formation. I have fainted just leaning over to tie my boot strings, this happening more than once.

JANUARY 16 - Happy Red Cross parcel day.

JANUARY 17 - Started Spanish classes today. Very cold and blustery day. Out of bread so made a prune pudding for three o'clock bash. Hot water or ersatz is served in the barracks every morning at 0830. Everybody lines up and gets a cup. Second sitting of noon chow is at 1145, always soup. First man sorts (serves?) the soup for the eight men at his table. Immediately after chow I always read the bulletin board and the German news. Evening mess at 1745, either salmon or corn beef with potatoes (as long as we are getting Red Cross parcels, otherwise no meat). On Tuesday and Thursday potatoes are served in the barracks. We cut high cards-high man gets first choice etc., low man cuts the bread and sorts potatoes. Usually try to save a couple of spuds for filling for pudding or pie or to fry with my meat (if any).

JANUARY 19 - Variety show at the theater, very good.

JANUARY 20 - The Russians must be getting close. We learn we are to move out - will probably walk. Red Cross parcels are issued. We are to take two blankets, Red Cross parcels and whatever other food we choose. We are to move at 0700 tomorrow. COME ON RUSSKIES!

JANUARY 21 - Move was canceled late last night and ordered for 0930 today. We marched by platoons starting at 1030. Marched to Exin, then on road to Schmiedeberg (sp?). We stop for the night about 1700 and are allotted barns. Stone, Bryant, Ray Olsen and I share a stall with two calves. Day's food - block of cheese and can of sardines. Place and I are full of bugs. March was rough, very cold and everybody out of shape. My feet are bothering - tomorrow will be rough. Total distance 21 kms.

COMMENT - When we moved out Stone and I were toward the front of the column. The terrain was flat (the Polish plain) and it was snowing, a semi blizzard so that as you walked you were leaning into the wind and the snow.

The column made a turn and I could look back and see the mass of the column, leaning into the wind and only partially visible because of the heavy snow. I thought then, and I can see it in my mind's eye today, that this scene

reminded me of a Cecil B. DeMille epic. That night we were put in barns for the night. Stone and I shared our blankets and huddled together under them for warmth. A thing I will never forget is the measures we took with our shoes to avoid frost bite (or trench foot). Stone and I would take off our shoes, put one in an armpit and the other in the crotch, so that body heat would tend to dry them out during the night. At least your feet would get dry and fairly warm during the night.

JANUARY 22 - Many are unable to go on. We head out for Wersitz at 0830. Achilles tendon on my left foot is really bothering. Very cold and occasional flusters of snow. The roads are full of horse and wagon refugees. We march until 1600 - are given margarine rations and bed down in a small town, (Eichfelde), for the night. Stone and I are together next to a pony. It is bitter cold. We get hot water from the farmhouse. The Russians are supposed to be very close. We crossed the Bromberg canal during the day. Guards are very nervous. Damn pony neighed all night. Covered 23 kms today. Issued 1/3 lb of margarine.

JANUARY 23 - German guard left at 0400 this morning. COME ON RUSSIANS! Get hot water and soup at 0730. Efficiency is here again now that the Americans are in charge. We are in Polorno, the Polish name for Eichfelde. It is a short distance off the main road we had been on. We hear direct fire weapons toward the west and in the area of the main road. They must be very close and in fact must be beyond the turnoff we took to Polorno. Our American senior officer has stopped us from trading or scavenging for food in the thought that we might be here for some time. We had butchered a hog in the morning and planned on that for supper. The Germans come back about noon from the side road (an SS company) and had surrounded the area before we knew what was happening. We were in a saucer type bowl with woods at the rim of the saucer. Some of the men tried to flee to the trees and were shot in the open. Maybe five or six were lost this way before the inevitable was accepted. We swipe a sled and the column hits the road at 1530. We kept marching for 7kms and passed through the German front lines well after dark and in a snowstorm. The SS

unit that marched us back to the German lines also had several police dogs. Although we were frequently marching through dense woods right up to the edge of the road and it was snowing heavily, the presence of the dogs kept us in line. Once again we stay at a farm and had to move the horses out of their stall. This town is Charlottenberg. We get a soup issue.

JANUARY 24 - Left Charlottenberg at 0930 and marched 9 km to Lessens. In Charlottenberg people gave us bread and butter, cheese and ersatz coffee. The combine of Ramsberg, Davis, Stone, Edsell and myself doing great guns in food procurement. We obtained a large sled in Eichfelde and now pull everything. As we leave a barn the guards methodically shoot at the straw and the haystacks to discourage staying behind. Same old barn, same bitter cold, same frozen shoes in the morning. We cut some side meat off a hog and fix some meat for future marches. Had pea soup in the morning and half of a loaf of bread.

JANUARY 25 - Oatmeal in the morning, cheese, quarter pound margarine and one quarter of bread. Leave Lebsens for Flatow at 0945. Russian artillery to our left all day long. Even hear small arms. Our guard from Eichfelde has now been augmented by SS troops from Latvia. Arrive at Flatow at 1600. We are promised hot soup and a rest tomorrow. Bed down in the loft of a barn. Downstairs are several Russian prisoners. They have electric lights and a cook fire. We flock around and I manage to dry my shoes and have several cups of hot coffee (ersatz). We move our bed and sleep by the fire. The Russian prisoner (an escapee) who was picked up on the road died during the night. Barley soup issue at night.

JANUARY 26 - rumor has it that we are to rest today. Flatow is a railhead and we may wait there for rail transportation. We get a bucket of hot milk from the Russians and cook up a good bash of pork and fried potatoes. These Russians were apparently captured early in the war and had been on work parties on the local farms, thus their better treatment. The Germans serve ersatz and hot water in the morning. We divide up our bread and cheese in case we move by train. My feet are so stiff and swollen that I can hardly get my shoes on. Noon and we have been cooking all morning. Food store now is one can meat and stew, 1 lb oleo, ½ box sugar, 1 can instant coffee, 1 loaf bread and 1 ration of German cheese. At noon the lame are to go on by train. The rest are to march in the early afternoon. Hot water served all morning and soup at 1300. Feet still very bad in spite of keeping

them warm all morning.

JANUARY 27 - We leave this morning at 0900. Heavy snow during the night will make walking difficult. The sick and lame left last night by train. The Oberst says that the Russian ambassadors to London and Washington have been recalled. It may mean anything or nothing, if true. Rumors of Russians to the southwest but it looks like we are beyond their reach. Must resign myself to the life of a POW. Flatow was our first stop inside Germany. Walked 18 km to Jastrow-very deep snow and very wet feet. Slept upstairs in a barn. Feet are like blocks of ice. We build a fire, cook some pork and tried to dry my shoes. Soup issue at night. We were give $\frac{1}{4}$ loaf of bread for two days as we left Flatow. Have developed the GIs, makes me pretty weak. Cook some potatoes until they are like charcoal in the hope that they will help the GIs. Sick are to leave by train. Am very tempted to try and go. Reach sign at Jastrow that says Berlin 271 km. At this present rate looks like we will walk every foot of it.

JANUARY 28 - Started serving breakfast (soup) at 0600. Very fine snow driven by a heavy wind. We leave at 0900 for Zippnow (17 kms). Draw $\frac{1}{4}$ lb margarine before we leave. The day is the coldest yet. My shoes are frozen almost solid and will hardly bend. About noon it became so bad that we could only move single file and then only with difficulty. Hands, feet and nose are very cold and can hardly keep them from freezing. Still weak from the GIs and my cough is getting worse. Arrive Zippnow about 1500. 300 men assigned to Catholic Church but 50 men cannot find room so we are moved to a schoolhouse. We have a stove and lights, dry my clothes and particularly my shoes. There will be no soup tonight so finished the rest of my cheese from Lebsens. Slept very warm and got my shoes and socks dry to start. Greased my shoes with hog fat in the hope that they will now stay dry. Have really had the coffee, heats quickly on the stove. German guards sleeping in the next room give us hot water. Seem to be recovering from the GIs.

JANUARY 29 - Breakfast soup at 0800. No bread will be issued so we are going to be hurting for food. We are to leave at 1000. Rumor has it that it will be a short march. It snows all during the march and the snow is blown by a bitter wind. The roads are drifted badly and walking is very difficult. Put fat on my shoes in an attempt to keep my feet dry. Tendons are worse and my ankles start to go bad. Have to fight to keep up. March is 8 km to an

Oflag 2D. Place is deserted but at least we have barracks. Polish officers moved out the day before. We have a roaring fire in our cubicle of 24 men. Sauerkraut for supper. Lights are on until 2130 so Stone and I challenge in bridge. Went to sick call. Doc said I should walk no further but doubt if transportation is available. Slept soundly in my first bunk since Schubin. Washed my socks and shaved.

JANUARY 30 - Ersatz for breakfast and grass soup for dinner. Stone and I find several potatoes or we would be hurting for sure. Doc says I must not march. We finally leave at 1330. The roads are very drifted and my feet are very bad. My walk is more like a shuffle. The Oflag is about two km short of Redenitz. Picked up an extra blanket and now have three. Roads progressively worse toward night. Finally reached Mochlin (12 km) about 1900. Again in a barn but it is dark and hard to get settled. The people in the house have continuous hot water. Wooden barn, full of cracks and very cold.

JANUARY 31 - We leave at 0900 for Templeburg (12 km). The weather is not so cold so the snow melts into your shoes. Every halt is agony as your feet are sopping wet. Much more military traffic on the roads. Bread issue of one loaf before leaving. Makes a total of two loaves and $\frac{1}{4}$ lb issues of margarine. Templeburg is crowded so we end up at a farm on the Falkenburg road. Have boiled potatoes and hot water and dry my socks. Still have the GIs, two close shaves today. A wooden barn but not so cold as last night. Farmers give us most of our food and treat us quite well.

FEBRUARY 1 - Very thick barley potato soup for breakfast, actually all we can eat. The snow is melting, feet will really get wet today. Y extra blanket is coming in very handy. Clothes for the march are always the same, long underwear over summer underwear, two OD shirts, OD pants, two sweaters, scarf, combat jacket, field coat and a towel over my head under the hood of my field coat. Usually wear a pair of socks over my gloves. Finally move at 1030 to Heinrichshof (5km) to several big barns. For the last few days the snow on the roads has been fairly well packed so normal walking was possible, not the snow shoe shuffle we had to use in the new or deep snow. My feet have gotten so bad that on January 29 the Doc said that I should walk no more. I could keep up fairly well as long as everybody had to shuffle through the deep snow. Now that the roads are packed down, I have real trouble. The march routine is a 5 minute break every two hours. I start out at the head of the column and gradually lose ground during the two hours before

the break. By the time of the break I am trailing behind the rear of the column and in trouble with the guards for not keeping up. While the column takes a break I keep shuffling along and use that five minutes to get back toward the head of the column. My ankles are swollen so badly that I cannot bend them in the normal walking movement. I can only lace my boots in every second or third hole. It rains a slow drizzle all the way today so clothes and blankets get really wet. Build a fire on arrival and bake potatoes, heat coffee and go to bed. Feet seem to be getting a little better. Soup for supper but stay in bed because of chills and don't go for the soup. Roads are sloppy but hard surface for walking. Issued $\frac{1}{4}$ lb margarine and one loaf of bread.

FEBRUARY 2 - Soup for breakfast - runs out before I get there. Leave at 1230 - March 18 km to large farm (Nulshagen), arrive about 1700, roads nearly clear of snow. Feet really take a beating but manage to keep up. No soup, no hot water. Pack is really getting heavy-toward the end of the march I was so tired that I was actually staggering over the road. Much more military traffic on the roads. Marched through Falkenberg and about 8 km beyond to this place. Every day during the march we see empty Red Cross boxes along the road. Have seen them in refugee wagons and also with some of the troops. Rained during most of the march.

FEBRUARY 3 - Hot water this morning, no soup. Baked potatoes and bread for breakfast. Announcement at 0930 that our ultimate destination is Stargard (about 75 km) which will be made at the rate of 18-20 km per day. Our barn will make a short distance today. The rest will move at 0900 tomorrow. Worried that my feet taking a march at the planned rate. Shaved this morning, look and feel a lot better. The rest of me has not been washed since before we left Altburgund. Our group must be down to about 700-800 men out of the 1400 that left originally. About noon we brew (Stone and I) a stew pot full of potatoes, $\frac{1}{3}$ cup whole wheat flour, $\frac{1}{4}$ lb of meat and a cup of milk-really good. Immediately afterward, regular soup was issued,, noodle soup and seconds so I really got full for a change.

FEBRUARY 4 - Ersatz for breakfast. Left at 0830. Marched 17 km to Gienow. Arrived 1400. Much better this way, getting there in time to bed down before dark. Marched through Gramburg-fairly large-and met two GIs (workers) on the street. We sure looked messy alongside of them. Again a barn. This time no fires are permitted, possibly in punishment for someone stealing a chicken yesterday. Day was cold and clear and so were the roads.

Stargard still about 50 km, maybe the feet will make it. Broke my pipe last night. I'll really be hurting for smokes now. Good soup in the evening and actually got enough to get full.

FEBRUARY 5 - Left 0830, marched 20 km to Zeetlitz. As we come through Wangerin, we turned off the road to Stargard. Don't know where we are headed now but are evidently headed for Regenwalde. Foggy day, roads slightly icy. Feet fairly good until the last 5 km when they go to pieces in a hurry. Said 180 men are to leave by train. All the bad feet are to leave. Grass soup and potatoes for evening chow. About midnight we are loaded into trucks and taken to the Ruhnow station and loaded into boxcars. We are 48 and 3 guards in our car and there are four cars. We sit in the yards all night.

FEBRUARY 6 - Still in yards at Ruhnow. We are allowed a certain freedom around the station and everybody is trading for bread etc. Stone gets some wurtz and I a loaf of bread. We get ersatz shortly before noon and are promised soup. We are supposed to move to Luckenwalde southeast of Berlin, and will move by way of Stettin. It may be rough around Stettin if rumors of Russian advances around Stettin are true. Still had boiled potatoes from last night which I used for breakfast and dinner. The guards say we are to draw bread tomorrow. We have about a dozen guards under a Feldwebel. Later in the evening Stone gets a cup of marmalade and another loaf of bread. Guys are running all over the station area so we are finally order back into the cars. We start to move at 2115, move just outside the yards and sit. One can of meat per ten men for the trip.

FEBRUARY 7 - Start to roll at 0615 and move fairly steadily until 0830. One of our cars develops a hot box so we get 20 extra men in our car. That makes 71 in a 40 and 8. Everyone must now stand. We are promised two cars in Stargard and bypass Stettin and still no cars. Really miserable in this crowded situation. Everyone cannot sit down so we take turns

FEBRUARY 8 - Move a large part of the night-reach Pasewalk and go to the siding. Soup is issued in the morning and that is the first German issue of the trip. Stay in the yards most of the day and start moving about 1600 and move intermittently during the night. The Germans now owe us two days bread ration. If it weren't for American cigarettes for trade we would be 100% hungry. Most of it is our fault for not insisting on treatment like officers, not

cattle. We get a German officer on the train to check on extra boxcars and get two, one heated for the sick. We have pneumonia, infected and frozen feet and up until now and the new cars the sick were part of the 71 in part of one boxcar where the entire boxcar is not intended to hold over 40. Lose my GI blanket. Reach Punzlou at 1645.

FEBRUARY 9 - Moved intermittently during the night. Only 40 men in the car so we get some rest during the night. Reached Melchow at 0850, only 26 km from Berlin. Bucenthal-Rudnitz at 0945-Bernau at 1015. We are getting very close to Berlin. Buch at 1545, Berlin Karow at 1715, and Blankenburg. We go through Berlin at night but are not going on to Luckenwalde which is only 15 km away. Stone and I each trade for a loaf of bread so we are not hurting too bad.

FEBRUARY 10 - We are now (0700) only 15 km from Luckenwalde but are to go back to Tempelhof where we are once again promised that we will get food. Have my doubts on food and as to whether we will get to Luckenwalde today. Berlin-Spandau at 0820, Furstenbrunner at 0830. First signs of bomb damage. Hohenzollerndamm-Westkreuz-Papentrasse. Get to Tempelhof-no food. Get an engine to Luckenwalde, promised to be there in time for noon chow. Ludwigsfelde at 1300, arrive Luckenwalde station at 1620. Detrain at 1720. The Feldwebel marches us to the wrong camp and we lose two hours. Arrive at 2000, start delousing at 2400. Still no food.

FEBRUARY 11 - After delousing we are put in bare rooms and left until 1030. Then searched and sent to our barracks. Stone walls-high ceiling and stone floor. The bunks are triple decker. This is a League of Nations camp (some 15,000). Air Corps in the next room. Several barracks in our compound, all filthy dirty. Understand this is the place we are to stay along with the British. Wheeler and Robertson are here. This is Stalag IIIA. Get 1/5 loaf of bread (daily issue) and ersatz tea. This is the normal breakfast. Soup (pea and potatoes for dinner and ersatz tea in the middle of the afternoon. Rumors that we may have to walk out of here eventually. Bunks are arranged in cubicle form, 14 people in our cubicle. I have the middle bunk of three. Found out that some of the men dropped out between Schubin and Exin were picked up and are here (these are people who ducked into Polish houses as we passed through small towns). Looks like I did the right thing by sticking it out on the march. A lot of American noncoms are here.

They are living in tents-sleep on a straw covered floor and have no heat. And we think we are hurting.

FEBRUARY 12 - Ersatz tea about 0830, appell at 0900 and 1530. Chow about noon of soup and spuds. Had oatmeal today-very good. Lights out at 2200. Bread and marge usually come in about the middle of the afternoon and THAT IS ALL. British give us a gift of a sugar ration. Rumors of Red Cross parcels nearby but no transportation to get them here. Play bridge to pass the time.

FEBRUARY 13 - Swiss are reported to say that the war will end this month. Scotch barber wants to bet his back pay (600 pounds) that it will end this month. Sure hope so but have my doubts. Also rumors again that we will walk out of here.-hope not. Play bridge again to pass the time. There is NOTHING to do here. Wrote a card to Jan. Oatmeal soup today.

FEBRUARY 14 - Latest rumor is that bread ration will be cut from 1/5 to 1/7 and eventually to 1/10 of a loaf. Unless we get Red Cross parcels we will not be able to exist. Appell is now at 0900 and 1530. Germans are late for morning appell and we stand for 45 minutes. That is nearly a record. Church services at 1900. We now have our own barber shop running. Today is Valentines Day. Fat chance of sending anything to Janet. Stone and I play bridge all afternoon.

FEBRUARY 15 - Cottage cheese issue instead of margarine. Six new officers-Air Corps who were caught in an escape attempt near Breslau. Rumors of parcels again squashed. Played chess. Spent most of the day in the sack.

FEBRUARY 16 - Bread issue starting today to be 7 1/2 men per loaf. Swiss commission here today. Hope they can improve conditions. With this bread ration cut stone and I will take a double ration every other day so as to be OK at least part of the time. It is our day to be the carrying detain for water and chow. Scrounged 14 spuds. Seconds on oatmeal soup. So far this same soup every day except for the first day here. Looks like I've got that fortune teller of Janet fooled that said she would be a widow before her 23rd birthday. I've got only one more day to go. Red Cross parcels went to the Norwegian compound today. It is going to be a struggle for existence unless we start

getting parcels. Made good evening bash with 1/3 of our raw potatoes. The British officers are alerted to move, possibly tomorrow.

FEBRUARY 17 - Great day-soup for dinner, oatmeal after appell, sugar issue and 1/5 loaf of bread. In the evening, announcement is made that the Norwegians are loaning us 500 Danish parcels, issue to be made as soon as possible.

FEBRUARY 18 - Church at 1000. Pea soup and potatoes for noon. Afternoon-1/10 loaf of bread, 1/17 can of wurtz. Am catching cold. Eyes glue shut at night.

FEBRUARY 19 - Pea soup and potatoes for noon. Haircut-cost 1 cigarette. Turned colder, spent most of the day in the sack. HAPPY RED CROSS PARCEL DAY! Danish parcels containing box of oatmeal, two excellent cheeses, a pound of butter, foot long liverwurst, malt candy, 1/2pint very thick molasses, 50 crackers and over a pound of sugar. German issue of 1/5 loaf of bread and two spoons of honey in the afternoon. The Danish parcel is split among 5 men.

FEBRUARY 20 - Sugar and salt, issue-cabbage soup at noon-make dish of oatmeal at night. 99 more officers arrive-left the marching group at the Oder estuary, 3 days by train. 450 left in the marching column. They had 8 days to a loaf of bread and one meal a day. After we left, they marched 18-20 km per day and did 28 km one day. They look even thinner than we do. Found how weak I was-leaned over to lace my shoes and nearly fainted. Hunger is a constant companion.

FEBRUARY 21 - HONOR OF HONORS!-became barracks stove officer today. Still have cold in my eyes. Very thin pea soup and sausage with the bread. I'm also barracks OD. Church serve in the cubicle at 1900. Most of us are now discovering colonies of fleas on our persons. Wrote card to Janet. Made up the last of my Red Cross oatmeal. Price of bread has gone from 20 to 80 cigarettes. We are going to try to force the price down.

FEBRUARY 22 - Thick pea soup and our turn for seconds. Full for the first time but it will wear off before night. Bread and marge in the afternoon. Order either soup powder or oatmeal from the trading mart with my last 5 cigarettes.

FEBRUARY 23 - Thin pea soup and potatoes, bread and 1/3 more margarine than usual.

FEBRUARY 24 - pea soup with horse meat (a short ration). Saved the potatoes for night-bread and marge.

February 25 - 1/4 bread and marge at 1030 so it didn't last long. Pea soup and potatoes. Church services at 1030. I spend most of the day listing all of my favorite foods. This lack of food has all of us praying for the end of the war more than ever.

COMMENT - The issue of food comes to us at different times of the day. Bread and related items, if any, would normally be issued in the morning. The soup usually came in mid-afternoon. Some of the men would ration themselves with what little they got so as to have something to eat at normal mealtimes. As a result they were always hungry. I did not have that will power. I would save any food issues I had received until the afternoon hot soup and then sit down and eat the whole day's rations. As a result I would feel fairly full for two or three hours after the meal but would then have nothing at all until the soup issue the following afternoon. This was probably the worst food management I could have done and probably contributed greatly to the ulcer problems I had most of my adult life. Our soup was far from what we were accustomed to at home. We've had beet soup after they had processed the sugar beets. We have let the soup freeze in the cold winters. Never did we see a film of fat on any soup. I cannot believe that there was much nutritional value in our soups. The marge that I keep referring to was just a pat of vegetable margarine.

FEBRUARY 26 - Stone and I are out of cigarettes. Rumors are rife - we are going to move out - parcels are here - diet will be cut - diet will be increased - we are going to get our back bread ration. I don't believe any of them. Wrote a letter form to the folks. 1/4 bread and marge. Pea soup and potatoes came at 1430. Temper is hard to control being hungry and without tobacco at the same time. Sugar issue.

FEBRUARY 27 - Pea soup with pork and potatoes - 1/7 loaf of bread and marge. Start to learn cribbage. Still planning menus. The camp commandant inspects and said if we had Red Cross parcels we would just burn up our bed

boards heating the food. Hot rumors of Red Cross parcels at the station.

FEBRUARY 28 - Cabbage soup with pork - potato ration has been cut 20%. 5 1/3 men to a loaf of bread. Also margarine.

MARCH 1 - This constant hunger is hard on the nerves as well as the constitution. Hunger seems to be like a progressive disease. I hurt more each day. We play cards and lay in bed - nothing that takes any energy. 1/4 bread and marge. Seconds on spuds so save some for the evening. Enlisted men receive Red Cross parcels, one parcel for four men. Maybe we will soon.

March 2 - Personal parcels are here for some of the men. For those who are missing we may each select one man and draw for his parcel. I have Castle. Pork - barley pea soup and potatoes at noon. Start a list of famous eating places. Very cold - very blustery day. Still rumors of Red Cross parcels. 1/4 bread and marge.

COMMENT - By this time we are suffering from hunger and have experienced significant weight loss. When this happens everyone is focused on food to the exclusion of almost anything else. Ote the list of famous eating places, the comparing of mother's or wife's best recipes. I had a list of recipes for a variety of foods that I am not including here. Usually the son or the husband did not remember all the ingredients. This did not stop us from hanging on every word as the dish was described.

MARCH 3 - At morning appell the French are walking by with two No. 10 parcels each. Maybe we'll get parcels next week. Max Schmeling (former heavyweight boxing champion) was in the barracks photographing etc. I didn't even get out of bed to look at him. Same soup as yesterday. Spent the morning in the sack copying recipes. 1/5 bread and marge. Rumor that Swiss and Swedes are to send food trucks to the POW camps - sure needed here.

MARCH 4 - Heavy wet snow, the first since the march. Church at 1030. My recipe book is getting popular. Same soup but seconds on spuds. Make deal with Silva for food exchange this is for after the war). I'll send him sorghum and chocolates in exchange for pineapple and coconuts. Announcement last night that we are to borrow Red Cross parcels from the French. 1/4 bread - marge - sugar and salt. Snow melted by appell.

MARCH 5 - Same soup, poor potatoes, seconds on soup. $\frac{1}{4}$ bread and marge EMs are drawing one parcel per 4 men today and will repeat Thursday. Germans report that the Allies have crossed the Rhine near Dusseldorf. If true, this is the beginning of the end. Latest parcel rumor is the 40,000 reached camp today. Place is alive with rumors and 90% revolve around food. Danish Red Cross parcels reached camp today. Possible that Norwegians may give us some. Would rather rely on them than the French. The SBO and the SAO met with French "confidence" man today of parcel situation. French have 9 carloads of American parcels. We are trying to get some released to us.

MARCH 6 - Best soup yet, pea with meat and thick. Excellent spud ration. Wet snow last night, melted by noon. Announcement that we will get $\frac{1}{2}$ parcel per man tomorrow. Today 1.5 loaf of bread and marge, had potatoes left from noon so made potato sandwiches.

TYPICAL AMERICAN #10 PARCEL

1 lb can oleo	12 oz can corned beef
12 oz can spam	6 oz can pate (liver or chicken)
2 oz can coffee	6 oz can jam
$\frac{1}{2}$ lb cheese	1 lb can powdered milk
7 $\frac{3}{4}$ oz can salmon	2-4 oz D bars
1 box cube sugar	1 box raisins or prunes
5 packs cigarettes	1 doz C ration biscuits
2 bars soap	

VARIATIONS

1 D bar and 1 box M and Ms
 cocoa in place of D bar
 occasional 4 oz can of coffee
 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb oleo and can of peanut butter in place of oleo
 2 cans sardines in place of salmon
 meat and beans in place of Spam
 dried cereal in place of crackers (very rare)

MARCH 7 - HALLELUJAH HUZZAH! We had breakfast this morning, thick oatmeal with barley. At morning appell the German appell officer

announced that 25 carloads of American parcels were in the station. This is indeed the day of days. I'll celebrate it as Sunday from now on. Same soup and potatoes, 1/5 bread and marge. Red Cross parcels issued about 1430, tuna fish instead of salmon, 8 oz peanut butter instead of pate, Barrington Hall coffee, a lb of Miami marge and even got a salt and pepper mixture. Immediately mixed a Kriegy Delight and a prune whip with Keenan. Went to bed really full and didn't sleep all night. 53,000 parcels are here!

MARCH 8 - Got a Danish cheese for a package of cigarettes. The kitchen is out of coal so chow is doubtful. Made another prune whip, this time cold. Took cold shower before breakfast. Feels good to eat in the morning. Horse meat soup at noon, 1/5 bread - no marge and potatoes at night. Bashed my Red Cross parcel all day long. So full at night I could hardly sleep. Bashed my Kriegy prune whip. Meat and stew for night. Box of crackers, finished my tuna. Kitchen has trouble preparing soup for us as the goons have no coal. Traded American cheese for Danish cheese, D bar and oleo. Rumors of 50,000 more parcels arriving consigned to the British. If true, we've got it made. No longer the terrific interest in food recipes. Traded 1/2 sugar for 1/2 doz crackers, 2 squares D bar and 4 additional crackers. Everybody is out of be now and shedding clothes. We have enough food to give a little internal heat. British loaned us a phonograph. With music the barracks atmosphere is sure cheerful.

COMMENT - When we have been some time without Red Cross parcels the body is starved for fats. I have happily sat with an open can of oleomargarine and my powdered milk, take a spoonful of marge, dip it in my milk, eat it that way and think that it was delicious. Or one could change the flavor by coating the marge with coffee or almost anything else in the parcel.

MARCH 9 - Stewed prunes and bread for breakfast. German marmalade issue, made a kriegy. Barley and horse meat soup, 1/5 bread and marge. Bashed all day long. Kitchen still has no coal for cooking. The manage with green pine so chow is usually late. The Eyeties move back and are issued Red Cross parcels over our protests. Rumors of issue of 22 lb Swedish parcels tomorrow. Washed my clothes. Harry Schultz told his escape experiences- WHEW!

MARCH 10 - Stewed prunes - sandwiches for breakfast. The old Saturday morning inspection started this morning - some crap! Watery pea soup for

noon. Polish choir at 1400. Potatoes - 1/5 bread and German bully (1/18 of a can). Swedish parcels issued after appell (one to seven men). American parcel is now completely gone.

CONTENTS SWEDISH PARCEL

2 lb sugar	2 cans aladab (pork)
1 lb gooseberry jam	2 cans sardines
2 boxes matches	2 packages bread
1 lb powdered milk	cup, spoon, can opener

*bread from the package makes excellent cold cereal

MARCH 11 - Up early, had bread cereal for breakfast plus thick barley soup. No church service. 1/4 bread and marge. Got the GIs during the night.

MARCH 12 - Meat broth for dinner - got seconds. Potatoes, 1/5 bread and marge. All the people affected are deloused in the afternoon (lice). The hot shower felt really good. Red Cross parcels - got cereal in place of crackers and pate. Traded cereal for 1/2 can milk. Rumors are starting that we may move out of here - YIPE! Also traded D bar for oleo. Made delicious tuna chowder for dinner.

MARGE 13 - Morning appell moved up one hour and therein hangs a story. Lt Col Oates announced the official time in his best 1st Sgt manner without saying that the time had changed one hour. Somebody immediately questioned the time. Oates in his best manner immediately bellowed "I said 14 minutes to 10, damn it, and if I say it is 14 minutes to 10, it's 14 minutes to 10. Every day he comes up with a new gem. (We had a great SAO in Schubin, a Colonel Goode. This Lt Col Oates is nowhere near the man nor the officer that Col Goode was. Oates' civilian occupation was a brakeman on a railroad in Iowa). Robertson was late for appell yesterday afternoon because he was in the latrine. Today Oates has ordered him to go to the latrine at 1620 whether he needs to or not (appell is at 1630). Thick pea soup at noon, almost like a gravy. No potato issue today. 1/5 bread but no marge. The marge will be used in the fish soup the Norwegians are donating tomorrow. Each man is contributing one heaping tablespoon of milk for the fish soup. We are building a stove in the cubicle. Traded a can of coffee for two Danish cheeses. Made a tuna fish chowder for supper. Announcement

made that there are now 157,341 parcels here and more are expected. We've got it made for at least two months with so many parcels. We're a cinch to move off and leave them.

MARCH 14 - Very poor grass soup - seconds on potatoes, 1/5 bread and 1/21 can German bully. Rumors of a move are persistent. Report of preliminary exams tomorrow (*after all these years I have no recollection of these exams or what purpose they were to serve*). Rumor also has it that spud issue will be rare from now on.

MARCH 15 - Thick pea soup-1/6 bread. A mart has been established to facilitate trading and has established points.

milk	150 (100)	cocoa	80 (90)
peanut butter	75 (50)	coffee	75 (70)
meat and beans	75 (55)	Prem	100 (70)
bully	100 (70)	cheese	75 (50)
stew	75 (55)	sugar	55 (25)
biscuits	50 (45)	oleo	50 (50)
cereal	50 (45)	raisins	50 (60)
prunes	45 (40)	D bar	40 (50)
jam	40 (20)	salmon	40 (30)
tuna	40 (30)	pate	35 (25)
sardines	20 (15)		

*The values shown in parentheses are the mart prices established later and referred to on March 19.

Today's marge was held for the fish, no spuds. It is rumored parcels every 5 days, Saturday will tell if true. Arrangements have been made to trade our complete parcel for a Norwegian parcel if their individuals want to.

MARCH 16 -Finished my Prem for breakfast. Now have only oleo left until parcels arrive. Potato issue has been cut 50%. Had the Norwegian cod for noon, very thick and excellent milk sauce. This is the first food I have really had to chew since I've been a POW. 1/6 bread, 1/21 German bully and cottage cheese. It is a beautiful day. Our stove is completed and works very well. Announcement that we will get German news service. A joint

American-British net is being formed for the exchange of Norwegian for American parcels. Other trading will cease.

MARCH 17 - Announcement that the rest of the column is at Hammelburg, 200 km WSW of here. They arrived 8 days ago after marching 900 km. They had Red Cross parcels and are at a German NCO camp. Our parcels arrived this morning. Got the standard parcel. Traded 2 D bars and a cheese for a can of milk. Looks like parcels every five days. Traded prunes for oleo. Pea soup, 1/6 bread, sugar. Traded my combat jacket and OD pants for British battle dress.

MARCH 18 - Good pea soup with seconds-potatoes-1/6 bread and sugar. Stone made a chocolate pie. New mart prices published as shown in parentheses on March 15.

NORWEGIAN PRICES

cond milk	60	butter, lb	100
jam (kg)	100	sugar	100
Swed powdered milk	80	Dan cheese	30
Nor powdered milk	40	sausage	70
Swed brown cheese	60	Knackbrod	80, 70 & 35
blood pudding	90	sardines	20
caviar	20	margarine	50

MARCH 19 - Stone and I make fudge. Barley soup, 1/7 bread and sugar. Trade 60 cigarettes for can of sweetened condensed milk, my first experience with it and it is very good. Found a flea on my back yesterday. Made a plate to eat on out of oleo tin. Half the British look like us and our appellation is full of blue uniforms as a result of the trading. Announcement at evening appellation that parcels will not be issued until next Monday. Sure to regret that fudge-the darn stuff took 3/4 can of oleo

MARCH 20 - held after morning appellation to find our air raid shelters. They are nothing but Z trenches in which we are so packed that one bomb could kill half the camp. Carrot soup, 1/6 bread, sugar and margarine. Rumor of rumors - a goon is reported to have said that the top Nazis have fled to Sweden. We are too crowded for our own good and rumors, some of them dangerous, are always flooding the place. I am developing a kriegy temper and get overly irritated about unimportant things.

MARCH 21 - Keenan, Norwood, Thompson, Brown, Stone and I form a six man mess group for parcel issues and cooking. Stone and I bet Norwood \$100 that the war will be over by September 1. Barley and pea soup, 1/6 bread, sugar and a German movie, a musicale with no sound. Typically, it makes sense to them. No parcels tomorrow so another German contract is violated.

MARCH 22 - The cooking combine has folded already due to a kriegy display of temper. Air raid at noon so noon chow is very late. Latest parcel rumor is Saturday. Have 1/2 can bully between me and starvation rations. Am getting very hard to live with, mostly due to the German habit of continual harassment. Am thoroughly fed up with life as a POW. We live too close to have any respect for others or for ourselves. Grass soup, 1/7 bread, sugar and potatoes. Very pretty day.

MARCH 23 - We build a new brick stove. Thick porridge, 1/6 bread, sugar, marge and potatoes.

MARCH 24 - HAPPY RED CROSS PARCEL DAY! Cereal, 1/6 bread, and potatoes. Our new stove is finished and works swell. (We make the chimney out of tin cans carefully fitted together). Aircraft overhead all day. Something must be going on. Got the standard parcel except for cocoa and raisins.

MARCH 25 - Church services-Lt Carnes and Flight Lieutenant Cribb-who was very good. Pea soup 1/7 loaf bread, potatoes and sugar. Got very sick from something during the night and had the dry heaves.

MARCH 26 - Stone and I buy a can of milk and a goat cheese off the mart. Porridge 1/8 bread and potatoes. Am sick in bed. Ersatz tea issue which we give to Meadow.

COMMENT - When you are on short rations everything possible is done to make the distribution of food within the cubicle as equitable as possible. We used a system of assignment for division of the food. If you were the person to cut the bread etc. you got last choice on the bread, for example. This insured that you would try to divide the items as evenly s possible. The next

day you would have first choice and on succeeding days would move down the list until you were the person to divide things again.

MARCH 27 - Spud ration down to 200 gms today. Got sugar. Air Corps officer has bet two Canadians that he can bash complete parcel in 24 hours. Took complete sponge bath. Turnip soup, 1/8 bread. Everybody happy and looking to an early end of the war.

MARCH 28 - Tomato pea soup, marge, 1/8 bread. Still beautiful weather. Rumors of Danish parcels and typhoid shots tomorrow. I'll be sick for sure. The lineup of the fighting fronts looks good, the Russians on the Oder and the Americans across the Rhine.

MARCH 29 - Sold my shirt to the Poles for can of milk and a box of sugar. German issue of individual Camembert cheese. We feel the war must be nearly over. Sugar issue, cabbage soup, 1/8 bread. Get typhoid shot. Drizzly weather.

MARCH 30 - Can sell my watch for a parcel. Will take it next week. Poles are stocking up on clothes and Norwegians are buying coffee, cigarettes and clothes. Barley soup with seconds, potatoes, 1/8 bread, stinky cheese and sugar. Sold the Red Cross sweater for a can of Barrington Hall coffee. Can sell the one Jan knitted for me for another can of coffee but will hold on to it for awhile. Everybody is hoping that the Rhine crossings will mean an early end to the war. Rainy blustery day. Sick from the shots.

MARCH 31 - Late falling out for appell so we have a dry run. Wrote letter form to Janet. HAPPY RED CROSS PARCEL DAY! Traded biscuits for oleo and D bar and M and Ms for cocoa. Deal has been closed for next week on my watch for a Red Cross parcel. Grass soup, potatoes, margarine, 1/8 bread and sugar. The Air Corps boy is going strong on his 24 hour consumption of the parcel. German guard says Paderborn has fallen. The war MUST be nearly over!

APRIL 1 - Easter and a chilly rainy day. The Air Corps boy lost the bet. He still had a little oleo, Prem and pudding to go but had to throw in the sponge. Easter services helped by a violin and accordion. 1/8 bread, cabbage soup, shaving soap, hand soap and margarine. No electricity all day. From the German map the Ruhr district looks to be in imminent danger of being cut off.

APRIL 2 - Time moved up another hour. Deal for my watch is closed, have to wait until they get an American parcel. One of the Norwegians was caught in our compound (they come over almost as though there was no wire between us). Our guards are all old men, one 69 years old. The Germans must be strictly hurting for men. 1/8 bread, thick pea soup with plenty of bugs. Now that we have parcels we pick the bugs out of the peas rather than eat them. Without parcels we ate the soup as it came and ignored the fact that there were bugs within the peas. Closed the deal for the watch at 5 cans of milk, kilo sugar, margarine and cheese.

APRIL 3 - 1/8 bread, dehydrated vegetable soup, 1/20 German bully. The Norwegian wants me to keep the can of milk, can of oleo and Danish cheese that I got last night, him to keep the tobacco out of his parcel and give me the rest of the parcel for the watch. Cold and rainy all day. Am trying to trade my fountain pen now for 250 points. Norwegian parcel came in about 2300. We had to dodge the guards for 2 hours (sneak up to a corner and peak around). A few months ago the lead would have been flying. Contents of parcel: 2 Knakbrod, 1 lb blueberry jam, 1 lb butter, 1 tomato ketchup, sugar, 2 kippered herring, 2 sardines and 300gm powdered milk. Stone and I trade a herring and 15 cigarettes for coffee.

APRIL 4 - Dehydrated vegetable soup, 1/10 bread, margarine and potatoes. A rainy day. The Allies are at Muhlhausen and Osnabruck. Looks good! Blueberry jam is superb as a milk bash.

APRIL 5 - Traded sweater for coffee and 10 cigarettes. Pea soup with bugs, 1/8 bread, potatoes and sugar. Still cold with hint of rain. Got stinky cheese. Holland looks in danger of being cut off.

COMMENT - It is pertinent to explain how Stone and I managed our cigarettes to make them last and save as many as possible for trading purposes. Stone would take a puff, pass it to me for my puff and then back to Stone. We would pass the cigarette back and forth until it was half gone. We'd then put it out and save the unsmoked tobacco. After all our parcel cigarettes were gone we'd roll our own with the tobacco we had saved. Again we'd use the same technique of alternate puffs and saving the last half of the cigarette. When you have smoked a cigarette from tobacco that has been saved 3 or 4 times, you have got a STRONG smoke.

APRIL 6 - Norwegians will give but 200 points for my pen so will keep it. British are having an identification check so we get their morning hot water. The old Schubin guards are starting to show up here-old man Holland. Nearly every day we see another one. They seem very glad to be here and act as though we should be glad to greet them with open arms. Thin pea soup, 1/10 bread and potatoes. Deloused today, very hot shower-feel very clean for a change. Everybody feels that we will really be hurting for food when this war is in its final stages so Stone and I are building a common squirrel box. Wurtz issue.

APRIL 7 - Pea soup, 1/8 bread, marge and sugar. Bought 1/5 can (Klim size) of salt for 20 cigarettes. HAPPY PARCEL DAY! Stone and I traded prunes and sardines for raisins and a D bar. Bought chance in Red Cross parcel raffle for a box of prunes. Lost 10 cigarettes in raffle for a can of Klim. Get same parcel as the first one here.

APRIL 8 - Lost parcel raffle. Very chilly night and a peach of an air raid. Pea soup, 1/8 bread and sugar. The sugar ration is so small now that they have to save it for several days to get enough to issue to us. Got margarine. Thompson traded my chess set for a Knackbrod and Norwegian jam.

APRIL 9 - Grass soup, 1/8 bread, potatoes (seconds) and sugar. Allied advances have not been so fast of late. Looks like the war will depend on the Ruhr pocket and the Russian break out. Don't think the Vienna offensive will be too important to us. Tasted LaChance's D bar pie. It is as good as most civilian pies. Used 2 D bars, 1/4 milk, oleo and crackers for the crust only. The place is alive with raffles now, from parcels to jackets. Stinky cheese issue. Unclaimed private parcel issue. I got a dish towel and a box of brown sugar.

APRIL 10 - pea soup, potatoes, 1/8 bread, Swiss gruyere cheese (from Swiss Red Cross parcel - 125 gm). A beautiful day. Air raids to the west, north and northwest. The British are supposed to leave tomorrow for the Munich area and we are supposed to follow. Will be rough on the roads with all the present air raids. Rumor is that we will follow on the 13th or 14th.

APRIL 11 - British are on a five minute alert for moving. We get dehydrated vegetable soup and potatoes. Latest rumor is that the American Air Corps

will move here to take the place of the British and that we will not move. 1/8 bread. Two SBOs were taken out about about 1600, not told where they were going, but told they would not be back. Germans are holding a tin search of the British. Still no definite word on us but we are really sweating out a Russian breakout to keep us here. A beautiful day. The Germans have lost so much territory it is hard to see how they stay in the war. The next push ought to do it. Three people have gone crazy since we reached Luckenwalde. Stinky cheese. Traded my insignia for saccharin tablets (100).

COMMENT - The camp was rife with rumors. Your spirits were to the sky one moment at some supposed war break through and dashed to the depths within a short time when the rumor was found to be false. The POW is in enough stress without this problem also. My solution was to form a rumor service with a Lt Ellis from the 82nd Airborne. People would bring us a rumor and we would run it down. Usually we would find that wishful thinking had created the rumor. One I remember is the rumor that we could not be moved to Munich because General Patton's Third Army had cut the rail lines to the south. We found that this started with two people talking to each other about wouldn't it be great if Patton would break through to Leipzig. Somebody a few yards away would hear Patton-break through and Leipzig and put this together as fact that would cut us off from being moved to the Bavarian redoubt south of Munich. From this rumor service experience I have never paid much attention to rumors since.

APRIL 12 - British started moving this morning. Americans immediately started stripping the British barracks of bedboards and cardboard. 300 British are left behind. They put on a beautiful example of messing up the goons. They were way behind schedule. Seconds on pea soup, potatoes. Appell Major told Beattie that the Americans would not move. At least we have a delay of a few days. If the Russians ever jump off, it will only be a matter of days until Germany is cut in two. Next two weeks will see us free or moved.

APRIL 13 - Goons report FDR is dead. Oflag commandant told Oates that he knew that he wanted to see the camp commandant but just to rest on it for a couple of days until the matter becomes urgent. Hope that means that our recapture is expected. British are still in Luckenwalde and have ordered soup and hot water for today. Knowing the British, they have probably taken over half the town. The death of President Roosevelt was confirmed and all officers and men observed one minute of respectful silence. The Norwegian

general sent his condolences as did the SBO. We collected bed boards as the British are supposed to come back.

APRIL 14 - The British come back to the camp today. Luckenwalde people very happy to see them return. Issued $\frac{1}{2}$ parcel at the train with a carload of parcels. Goons very considerate and the British did a lot of trading. One guard offered three British to a girl and then bring them back at 0500 the next morning. They got six eggs for one tin of coffee and painted the train with RAF POW. Things are different from the old days. Rumor that we go on half parcel ration next week. The goons sent wagons to the station to carry back British kits. One Britisher even came in driving a horse and wagon. Three British NCOs tried to escape last night and were caught at the wire. Two killed and the other recaptured. Terrific air raid to the north of us during the night. Saw three go down. Concussions shook the building and had us sweating for awhile. HAPPY RED CROSS PARCEL DAY! Cocoa and only one tin of sardines.

APRIL 15 - Church services dedicated to President Roosevelt. Pea soup, $\frac{1}{8}$ bread and wurst. 76 private parcels plus two per cubicle. I won a pound of sugar. Traded my fountain pen for a kilo of oatmeal and a Danish sorghum. Traded half the oatmeal for $\frac{1}{2}$ can of milk and a D bar. German news shows a small crossing of the Elbe below Magdeburg. They are closing on Leipzig.

APRIL 16 - New prisoners are Air Corps shot down Tuesday. Pea soup, potatoes, 1.8 bread and wurst. British have a new moving rumor which was promptly kiboshed. No trace of tactical aircraft and no news of a Russian move except German guard reports. Looks entirely possible that we might be here for two or three weeks or even longer. Air raids during the night from the north to the northeast.

APRIL 17 - Barley porridge, no potatoes, $\frac{1}{8}$ bread. Tactical air strafing (1500) about 10 miles to the SW. Last night there was a glow to the north and northeast. Guess the Russians are coming. Sounds like heavy artillery in the same direction. 5 American GIs captured as a patrol and brought in here. They walked all the way in 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ hours.

APRIL 18 - Germans show the Elbe beachhead further extended. Pea soup, no potatoes and $\frac{1}{8}$ bread. Another private parcel won by the cubicle. I won the salt. Played softball. Still sweating our boys out. Marauders and

Mitchells going north about 1630. The artillery range seems extremely active. The goons must be registering in. Hear small arms around the whole camp. Only 9,000 parcels left. No more until May 1.

APRIL 19 - Won another private parcel in the cubicle today. This is the second day in a row. Today I won a Snickers bar. Studying a biochemistry book. Sky black with planes heading east at noon 1/8 bread, pea soup. Dive bombers to south and west followed by what looks like a WP screen to the SW at 1630 lasting about an hour. Distance about 8 to 10 miles.

At my battalion reunion in September 1991 I mentioned this item from my diary. I was told that my old company was in fact east of the Elbe about that time, was later withdrawn and moved to the south for the advances in that area and ended the war in Linz, Austria. Note that the Germans reported an initial crossing of the Elbe on April 15 and its expansion on April 18.

Traded my captains bars for saccharin. Poles have rumor that the German guards are going to take off.

APRIL 20 - Today is Hitler's birthday.. The sky is really full with our planes in celebration, N and W particularly. 1/8 bread, pea soup and margarine, no potatoes. Artillery and dive bombing to the SW and N. Our marching move out of here that was rumored yesterday has not materialized. Russians are reported 16 miles northeast, 15 miles east and 15 miles to the south. If they keep going to the north, we can't move. Stone and I bought kilo of oatmeal for 200 cigarettes. The human mind can't stand this eternal strain. If we don't get liberated soon I'll go nuts. Rumor of parcels, one parcel to four men.

APRIL 21 - Heavy artillery to south and southwest. One barrage appeared to land in Luckenwalde. Woke up to the sound of artillery. Lots of goon air activity working to the south today. (THIS MAY BE THE DAY!) We are having inspection at 1100. To make everything worse Kummer is frying pancakes. Russian prisoners come in about 1100, either tankers or flyers, grimy and burnt and a couple wounded. Rumor that two tanks knocked out near Luckenwalde this morning, 5 km from the town. The Russians were taken this morning.. The British have torn down the trip wires and are standing against the fence. POWs are running all over the place. Spearhead supposed to be wiped out in the firefight we heard but they say more are coming. Parcel issue 1 to 4 men. The Germans have moved back into the kitchen. Artillery is still fairly far to the SW with occasional incoming stuff

into Luckenwalde (1200 hours). The goon guard company takes off at 1300. We take over the camp. Alerted for my job.

(I'm to be a battalion commander with several hundred GIs and 70 or so offices. The idea is to control the movement of our people back into US hands in an orderly planned manner).

The place is a madhouse right now, hospital guards etc. are all leaving. Stone is appointed a hospital guard. Don't know whether the front line troops have cleared out yet. My have to sweat them out as they come through. If not, we've got it made. Things may settle down soon. Early afternoon - the senior officers of all nationalities go to the gate. GIs start bringing in potatoes. High velocity fire from the E to NE at 1420, still unexplained. The French rifled our private parcel hatch. Pea soup, beets for dinner. All eventualities seem to be taken care of. We now have several German prisoners in the guardhouse, men who stayed behind for that purpose and ones who gave in to our patrols. General Ruga (Norwegian) is now in command. Things are getting pretty orderly. Artillery fire to the W at 1630 French report Russians are in Juterbog and about 1630 there is fighting in Luckenwalde. However we can hear no signs of fighting in Luckenwalde. Later,(1700), they say paratroops linked up with the Russians at Juterbog. Rumors are really flying and we are all sweating out the arrival of friendly to take over the area. THIS IS A GREAT WAY TO CELEBRATE MOTHER'S BIRTHDAY! Today's German communiqué reported Russians in Jitterbug. Drizzly and rainy most of the day. Our guards report German patrols in the hospital area. Gun emplacements to the north and an 88 toward Luckenwalde. Water went off about 1800. German general is supposed to have turned over the camp to General Ruga with a warning not to cause trouble. 1730-artillery now to the NE and NW. German plane strafing just outside the camp early in the night. BBC tells us to stay here for the present. Water still off.

APRIL 22 - Russian armored car comes into camp at 0600, two man car. Our senior officer goes to Luckenwalde to Russian CP. Goons evidently took off during the night. Still scattered small arms fire. Another armored car loaded with Russians in camp at 0915. Saw first Russian planes (P39) at 0920. Planes have been over most of the morning. Mayor of Luckenwalde tried to surrender the town to General Ruga yesterday but of course was refused. We are to stay in the barracks unless on business so as to keep the

camp under control as much as possible. Russian convoy, monster tanks, GI trucks loaded with soldiers, even women fighters, came through at 0945. The place went wild. Those tanks are tremendous. BBC 0900 news lists the Russians in Berlin eastern suburbs, in Dresden and a link up with Ninth Army west of Juterbog is imminent. Bremen is surrounded We are 1/3 of the way from Nuremburg to Munich. THIS IS THE DAY OF DAYS! Goon prisoners on the back of one tank. Russian officer in the Norwegian compound (1045) says that they linked up with the Americans last night and the Yanks will be here soon (rumor from the British). Goon planes strafing NE at 1245. Quite a battle to the north about 1500, planes and artillery. We are alerted to move, presumably to houses in Luckenwalde. 1720 - Russians will take over command of the camp tomorrow, feed us the day after. They offered evacuation through Odessa but said it would be better to await the Americans and therefore we would be here for 4 or 5 days. Heavy artillery to the north (1800). The German interpreter that counted the sick bay was seen on one of the Russian tanks - glad to see that hateful SOB is getting what he has coming. My battalion still has no men so I have little to do. 14 officers sent into Luckenwalde to get all the French and the GIs back into camp and out of the Russians way. We were split into two patrols with me the commander of one of the patrols. Only an idiot like Lt Col Oates would send unarmed people into a town not totally liberated. Went in at 1930 and got back a little after dark. Town is not shot up badly. Russians are moping up. One time they didn't recognize us and we nearly had trouble. Several dead male civilians laying on the streets. We encountered one Russian patrol, big fine looking soldiers in black, we think from one of their Guard Divisions. One of them came up to me with his tommy gun in my stomach and demanded in Russian who I was (at least I think that is what he said). All I could do was "Amerikanski" and that apparently satisfied him. With that tommy gun in my stomach, at that moment Lt Col Oates was not one of my favorite military commanders. Small arms and artillery just north of the town. Quite a few civilians coming to the camp for protection. We turn them back at the gate.

APRIL 23 - Reveille at 0730. Announcement at 1015 that the Russians are way beyond us with their spearheads and are at Potsdam. Only isolated pockets of goons are left around here and they are being liquidated. Our positions are now secure. Stone and I have plenty of food for 3 or 4 days even at the rate that we have been bashing. The Norwegian general has been flown to Moscow. The SBO is now in charge. The Russians have now taken

over the camp.. They sent in two beef for the soup. No more outside passes will be given. The linkup with the Americans is still not made. Old fashioned Russian biplane over the camp at 1330. The area must be clear. Russian newsreel cameramen here at 1400. Heard the cheering and went out. The Americans were cheering two pigs being taken to the kitchen. Right across the street the British were hip-hip-hooraying the cameramen. Russians send in several beef and pigs. Send us confiscated butter. Had beef noodle soup. Berlin is nearly surrounded. Still no news of the linkup. Russian GI trucks hauling in tomorrow's rations. At 2000 Russian motorized division goes through town. Rumor that trucks will come for us in 3 days. Also that we will be moved to Juterbog and picked up from there. Trucks carrying in food all evening. Bed check Charley around strafing again.

COMENT - About this time and while we still had freedom out of camp, people went into Luckenwalde and liberated a few civilian radios. Soon thereafter people started to cheer and laugh in our barracks. I went to see what was the big deal and found them listening to a song on the Armed Forces Network. No wonder they cheered. The very first music that we heard was "Don't Fence me In". I can remember that moment to this day.

APRIL 24 - Reveille at 0730. We are supposed to get EM today or tomorrow. Vicious rumor that POWs with less than 6 months may rejoin their units. Hope that's not true since I'm 6 days short of six months as a POW. Went to look at the Russian compound. Their chapel is beautiful, all hand painted and spotless, pictures of the Last Supper and the Resurrection etc. Their hospital had no beds and was approximately 80' x and at one time held 800 men. Their barracks were individual cells 6'x10' which held six men. Latrines stopped up and pitifully inadequate. Filth and stench are awful. Very few cells had beds and one barred window about 1'x 1'. Cleanliness would be impossible. Anything the Russians do to the Germans can e perfectly understood. Brown got letter from home date February 6 addressed to Stalag 3A. There's hope for me yet. The French and Italians have been very hard to put up with - in short disgusting. The noon news have the Russians nearly to the Elbe. Looks lie the master plan calls for the linkup to there. Another nasty rumor running around that if you haven't been a POW for six months you may be given duty over here. Got 1/4 Canadian parcel today.

APRIL 25 - Norwegian general came back last night. Rumor of move to Sagan, from there don't know. Everybody is disgusted with our commander for his discrimination, special considerations and silly orders. Planes strafing again last night. General Ruga was a Marshal Koniev's headquarters. Went to Russian funeral (in memory of the reputed 5,000 Russian prisoners who died in this camp. Quite an international affair, all nations represented. Cigarette issue and one private parcel for the cubicle. We are really eating compared to goon rations. Announcement that the Poles go to Sagan, the French to Luckenwalde and we stay here.

APRIL 26 - Washed clothes. Ration is better every day - two soups today. Rumor that contact has been made with the Americans and they expressed surprise that we are still here. One can only wonder and sweat. Jack Stone and I made pancakes for breakfast with very poor results. Conference with Russian general in charge of evacuation. We move to the west as soon as possible.

APRIL 27 - We have asked Russian general for a group to fly to the American lines to arrange our evacuation - another group to go to American liaison officer with the Russian troops. Late afternoon - the linkup took place at Torgau. American correspondent going through to Berlin. The Russian town mayor told the German burgomeister that it would be unfortunate if the camp water supply was not fixed soon.

APRIL 28 - Drizzly weather-still no news of a move-everybody impatient. Took a shower in the delouser. Our former appell captain was seen as a Russian POW shoveling coal in Luckenwalde. Russians very fond of the Americans. Nothing too good for the Russian GI to give to the American GI. Russian repatriation group arrives, 13 officers, 20 women and 200 men. They bring food but know nothing of our repatriation. A British major and a group on a walk ran into 13 armed goons. Both sides eyed the other, about faced and took off. One of the Russian women interpreters admired the Norwegian chaplain and said she would like to spend the night with him. The chaplain said he was married but the girl said she wouldn't tell his wife. Rather embarrassing. Kummer and Brown came back from foraging with champagne, raisins, sugar, prunes and meat. SBO is reported to have turned down a Russian offer to quarter us in town.

APRIL 29 - Russian general inspected the quarters and was horrified. He offered to move us to a camp six miles from here. SAO said no. The general finally decided to order us there. Went to a French play.

COMMENT - Maybe for intelligence purposes or maybe just to get ready for the move, the Russian repatriation group brought us in one by one to get our names for their camp roster. I was suspicious and did not wish to give them my real name. I registered as Spangler Arlington Brugh, the real name of the film star Robert Taylor. I'm sure they had the German camp records and thus knew the names of the inmates but I did not care to be specifically identified. Even then the distrust of the Russians had started.

APRIL 30 - Munich has been entered. 4th Bn left this afternoon to prepare the new camp-looks like we are going to be here quite a while. 3 British NCOs picked up by 14 goons as hostages to get to American lines. Managed to talk their way out of it. Russians warn our guards that remnants of 3 German divisions are working this way hunting for food and may try to rush the camp. Artillery fairly close to the N at 2000.

MAY 1 - Artillery and mortar fire all night, even small arms fire early in the morning. Light artillery round lit in the sportplatz about 1400.any more people taking off. Excessive air activity most of the day. Russians say large scale mopping activity in this area. Adolf Hitler is dead according to German announcement.

MAY 2 - Small arms and artillery all around. Germans penetrated into Luckenwalde. Could be rough. Nothing to do but read all day so of course we have reveille so the day will be longer. The Germans in Italy have surrendered unconditionally. We all expect the final collapse in a few days. Then we could get back home. Berlin falls.

MAY 3 - The 4th Bn is back. Stars and Stripes jeep is here. Took Beattie back with them. Wrote letter to Janet. Bought Klim, tin of coffee and kilo of oatmeal with Stone.

MAY 4 - General Simpson, CG Ninth Army, came through the lines to see what we need. He came through the Russian lines with a cavalry squadron escort. Our big problems are food and trucks for evacuation to the American lines. He apparently agreed with the Russians for food convoys to us.

(Actually the trucks came very lightly loaded and far more of them than were necessary for the amount of food they carried. This gave us extra trucks for the move to the US lines). We organized by battalions to coordinate the movement of our people out by these trucks we expected to come. I was one of the battalion commanders. Stone took off in early afternoon. (With my job as battalion commander, I was stuck and could not go with him). Announcement at 1515 that American trucks would be here tonight or tomorrow for the evacuation. The place went wild! Norwegian evacuation with us not OK with the Russians but Hurtz and Oates are going to try to take them anyhow. Sold my British pants for two D bars. NW Germany, Holland and Denmark surrender.

MAY 5 - Harvey back this morning to take out Carter and 4 others. (Carter had been captured in North Africa. His father was Amos Carter, a big newspaper man from Texas. Toward the end of the war he was in Germany going from one Army Headquarters to another looking for news of his son). Trucks are evacuating XIA today and trucks will be here for us tomorrow. The Russian idea of moving us to the Hitler Lager seems to be cleared up. Refugees are cluttering up the roads which may slow our evacuation. Ellis and I will take off tomorrow if the trucks do not arrive. NOON - trucks are at the hospital for the sick. Russians are turning back who left at Juterbog because of a skirmish with the goons there. 1300 ambulances going to the hospital. Driver says 175 trucks are following them. 3 trucks arrive with Captain from SHAEF in late afternoon. Beaucoup the trucks tomorrow. Bread, K and 10 in 1 rations arrive. American sick evacuated by ambulances. I became a battalion commander without much of a battalion. Most have taken off.

MAY 6 - We sweat all day. 25 trucks arrive and 90 more expected. All but the 4th battalion and the tent camp get out by 2100. Russians stop all movement with armed guards and send the trucks back empty. Within two hours they had manned the guard towers and were shooting just in front of people trying to flee the camp for the nearby woods. You could cut the gloom with a knife.

MAY 7 - 12 trucks arrive and are sent back empty. Registration is stopped. We can only wait and hope. Radio announcement that POWs get 60 days leave from Camp Kilmer. More trucks arrive. The convoy commander goes to General Fammins (sp) Headquarters and Lt Col Oates to Marshal

Koniev's in an attempt to get our release papers. Some men got out and met the returning convoy and were taken back in these trucks. Tomorrow is VE Day. My battalion has shrunk to about 12 EM and a few officers and these few will only wait here regardless of what happens. I announce to them that I am leaving in the morning. We had been sending groups of people in truckload amounts to meet the empty trucks at a nearby woods. Late afternoon a Russian marched back a truckload of men to the camp with an American right behind him with his carbine covering the Russian. THAT DID IT as far as I was concerned. The Russians pulled the 8 trucks up alongside the camp to be sent back the next day. I saw no reason to walk to the Elbe if I could ride. I went down to the trucks looking for one that did not have an assistant driver. I found one, the driver a very black soldier from Georgia, and arranged to go with him in the morning.

MAY 8 - Ellis, Orton and I get up at 0530 and move to the trucks. We leave about 0700. We go through Truenbritzen, Wittenberg, Zerbst. We are stopped 4km short of the American lines at Schonebeck, then to Buten - no dice, Magdeburg - no dice. Ellis gets an order signed by a drunken Russian Field Marshal who was visiting a forward division CP. Our pass clears us through the MPs who were keeping the main road clear for the repatriation of thousands of Russian POWs coming back from the American zone. Our few trucks stretched into a long convoy as Russian vehicles would attach themselves to us using our clearance to get onto the main highway. We reach the Elbe at Magdeburg about 1000, get the attention of the Americans on the other bank and await them sending boats across to us. The bridge was crammed with the Russian POWs being repatriated to the Russian zone. We cross the river at 2130 to the 1st Bn, 117th Infantry of the 30th Division. It was quite a fight to get here - brother it is sure worth it! Fed and bedded down in Magdeburg, Had a shot of cognac.

MAY 9 - Went to victory church services in Magdeburg with the battalion commander. Catch trucks at noon for Schonebeck where we are collected awaiting movement to Hildesheim. It is a real pleasure to see American efficiency after the goons and the Russians. One of the truck officers reported seeing General Simpson crossing the bridge with an entire cavalry squadron headed for Luckenwalde. They were unloaded after we left and the trucks sent back empty. Bathed - a movie at 2100 but didn't go.

MAY 10 - Slept, read, ate good army chow and went to a movie at night. One of the biggest thrills of this place is having German kitchen, latrine and room orderlies.

MAY 11 - Left Schonebeck at 0900, arrived Hildesheim 1215. Immediately showered and deloused. Fed, went to the Red Cross Club and fed again. Got ready to catch a plane by 1830. Radio went out so flight is postponed until tomorrow at 0800. Went to Special Services show and a movie at night.

MAY 12 - Early breakfast and go to airfield at 0730, airborne at 0755. Fly over Bonn and Bastogne on our way to Reims where we must catch another plane to LeHavre. Landed at Reims at 1004. Move into tent camp. Meet Stone, Robbie, LaChance and Kummer. Stone left just before noon. Get clean clothes and chow. Fly to LeHavre (1430-1600) and trucked to Camp Lucky Strike, 80 km from LeHavre. Catch up with Stone again. Ellis gets in.

MAY 13 - We sit awaiting processing. We are in tents with a heavy dust storm.. See Plants.

MAY 14 - Get so called physical exam after noon chow. They only ask if you are OK.

MAY 15 - Ellis and I go to Veules de Roses. Stone meets Sgt Huntley (Huntley was a communication sgt in A Company).

MAY 16 - Stone and I go to Etretat to meet Huntley. Levy (CO of B Company) is in the States. Gates and Campbell are dead. Gates was CO of C Company and Campbell was a Lt in my company. Koresdoski and Sinofeld were wounded. Both were Lts in my company. Get partial pay at LeHavre, \$80.70.

MAY 17 & 18 - Nothing much to do. We're in the camp and just waiting for transport to the States.

MAY 19 - Get issue of clothes.

MAY 20-21 - Little activity. The big problem is shipping availability for us.

MAY 22 - General Eisenhower and Congressional committee here. Move to D area.

MAY 25 - Leave D area 1000 for Camp Wings near LeHavre. Pretty good set up at Camp Wings except they try to give us a training schedule including close order drill. I am now a packet commander of ex-POWs headed for the Midwest. I have Army and Air Corps officers and men. My packet 1st Sgt is an Air Corps master sergeant. I will not accept the training schedule for my men. I tell the Lt training officer that it is completely inappropriate to attempt this for these men just freed from imprisonment. They are a mixture of Air Corps and Army with the Army people mostly from the different combat arms. They keep trying to make us train but no way will I have any part of it.

MAY 27 - Spend the day in LeHavre.

MAY 28 - Alerted to move to LeHavre. Our priority has dropped from 2 to 4 so we may have a long wait. The move is to Camp Twenty Grand at LeHavre.

MAY 29 - Meet Stone, Anderson and Byrnes. Find out Ramsberg killed at Hammelburg.

MAY 30 - Alec Templeton at USO show.

JUNE 1 - We board NY 1152 tomorrow.

JUNE 2 - Boarded SS Sea Porpoise 1430. (As packet commander and following normal leadership principles, I got the men and the officers on board before I attempted to board myself). We had 2880 men on board and it was crowded. My packet executive officer got the last bunk in officer country. When I boarded there was no place for me to sleep. The Navy solved the problem by putting me in their mental cell, an outside small room with padded walls and a porthole. It turned out far better than being crammed in a big compartment with ten or so other officers. There was one major handicap. My "cell" was at the end of a short passageway with a loud speaker mounted at the end of the passageway pointed straight at my "cell". The Navy was playing requested music all the way across the Atlantic. "Rum

and Coca Cola" was a new piece to the men and it was played hour after hour. (I hate the song to this day). We leave the harbor at 2030.

JUNE 3 - We reach Southhampton in early morning to take on water - stay all day. I stay below at night. I want the first lights of a city that I see to be the lights of home.

*****June 4 is the last entry in my Diary*****

CHRONOLOGY - I do not remember the exact dates from here on until my arrival in Lincoln. I do want to mention a few highlights. While still a sea we were told that our first meal, regardless of time of day, would be steak and eggs. When we got to Camp Kilmer and duly reported to the mess hall for our steak and eggs, the mess officer told us we were too late, the mess crew was cleaning up and that he was sorry. We're standing there looking at this overfed German mess crew. I told the Lt that we had been promised steak and eggs and steak and eggs we were going to get and get right now. The Lt protested so I told him to get his senior officer in there because we would take No" from nobody less. One of the Germans got a smirk on his face. My Air Corps first Sgt was standing next to me. He reached over and grabbed this German by the front of his jacket and pulled him through the mashed potatoes until they were face to face. The Sgt then gave him choice words in German and pushed him back across the chow line. The Lt left in a hurry and we sat down to await our meal. The Lt soon returned with another officer who soon realized my determination and ordered us to be fed.

Another highlight was our arrival in New York harbor early in the morning. A large harbor excursion vessel pulled alongside. It had a band and the rails were crammed with girls waving across at us. These girls had to get up at a very early hour to get to this vessel and out to greet us. What a warm welcome home! We felt the gratitude of the nation. How different this was from the shabby treatment afforded the returning Vietnam veteran.

We were given free telephone calls home. Jan had refused to leave her parents' house for several days, afraid that she wouldn't be there when I called. Her mother finally insisted that she go with her sister Did for a short visit over to the Edisons, Did's in-laws. Of course that is when I called. I talked to Jan's dad and found out from him that my dad had died in March.

At least Dad knew that I was alive before he died. We were about to catch a train to Fort Leavenworth, KS so I could not call Jan again until Fort Leavenworth. This time we got to talk. I had been gone so long and so much had happened to each of us that it was almost like talking to a semi stranger that I used to know. Jan says she felt the same way.

While on my POW recuperation leave, Jan and I were often invited to dinner at friends of ours. From the laden table they would put in front of us, you could see the thought process of the hostess. She was going to make that meal one that this poor young man would remember. I tried to make every one of these occasions a memorable one. I gained so much weight in those few weeks, pure baby type fat, that Jan wouldn't sit next to me at a swimming pool.

Jan and I were in Breckenridge, Missouri, a town of some 400 people and where my mother lived. We were at dinner at the house of a friend of my mother when the announcement was made of the Japanese surrender. The two women had been discussing the recipe for the dish of peas when the announcement was made. Their comment was "Isn't that nice and went right back to discussing the recipe. It was certainly rather rude but Jan, my cousin Alma Rae and I had to celebrate in a noisier and more boisterous fashion than was possible at that dinner. As soon as possible after dinner we excused ourselves and went to Chillicothe, a nearby larger town, found a hotel bellhop who got us some booze and took off for the town park. Many other young people were also there. They, like we, had to celebrate the end.

THE END

JAMES H. WATTS
Colonel, USA, (Ret)