



FOR THE MEN WHO FLY 'EM • FOR THE MEN WHO KEEP 'EM FLYING

Issue 40

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Summer 2005

A RETROSPECTIVE: STALAG LUFT IV

Among all the stories, journals and memoirs I receive, I have done little to enlighten our readers on the ordeal that the POWs from Stalag Luft IV went through while incarcerated. It seemed the more I researched the subject, the more I became aware of the plight these men endured while at this particular POW camp. Beyond camp conditions, that were barely acceptable by most standards, many of these POWs had to endure an evacuation march that lasted for 86 days and covered close to 600 miles. Unlike the "Bataan Death March" that covered 60 miles and 10 days of tropical heat, these POW's marched 10 times further and in the dead of winter. Every POW who experienced this evacuation has his own unique tale of misery. I am includ-

ing two such journals. One by Paul F. Vanderpool (724th T/Sgt ROG POWed 7 July 1944) and John C. Schumacher (727th S/Sgt Gunner POWed 13 October 1944). I've also included some related articles that augment the story of these POWs.

But first let me give you some numbers from our files. Of the 115 Missing Air Crew Reports I have, there were 518 men that were classified as POWs. We have some 185 of these listed in our current roster. Not all of these 185 were in Stalag Luft IV, as the Officers were generally sent to Stalag Luft II, while others were sent elsewhere. Of the 185 total, there were about 60 Enlisted Men that I have in the roster that were in Stalag Luft IV. Twenty three have died since joining us.

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**Back Side of
Memorial**



**Front Side of
Memorial**



"AD-LIB"

**451st BOMB GROUP (H), LTD.
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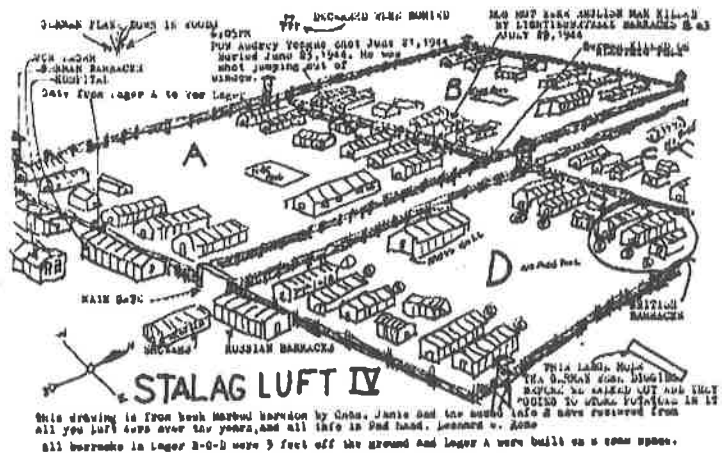
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Stalag Luft IV
1944  **1945**

MAP OF STALAG LUFT IV



STALAG LUFT IV
(Enlisted Airmen)

Location; Pin Point 54% N, by 16 % E on the globe. The camp is between Grosstychow, Pomerania and the railroad station of Kiefheide, 20 kilometers southeast of Bergard.

Sgt. Paul F. Vanderpool
Held Prisoner in Germany

T/Sgt. Paul F. Vanderpool, 21, radio-gunner on a B-24 Liberator bomber reported missing in action July 7 is a prisoner of war of Germany, the war department notified his mother, Mrs. J. M. Frazer, 3138 Parthenon Avenue.



Sergeant Vanderpool, who has the Air Medal award, entered the service in January, 1943, and had been stationed in Italy since last March. He received his army radio training in Chicago, Ill., and the Tyndall Field, Fla. He attended Cohn High School and Vanderbilt University.

I REMEMBER

I REMEMBER: 26 June 1944

Took off for a mission to Vienna. The landing gear failed to stay retracted. After returning to the ground and picking up the Engineering Officer, Lt. Stanley Pulcer, we took off again. The landing gear worked okay this time. We had to land again to let the Engineering Officer off.

On the approach our Pilot, Lt. Eugene Steinberg, leveled out a little too high and due to the heavy load of gas (2,600 gallons) and bombs (10 - 500#), the left tire blew out when we hit the runway. We would normally land with NO bombs and very LITTLE gasoline. The left landing gear soon ripped off and we were skidding along on one landing gear, the belly and left wing-tip at slightly less than 100 miles per hour. It seemed like ages before we stopped in the middle of a field that was adjacent to the runway. Because of the difficulty in determining whether the landing gear was locked, I had prepared myself for such a jolt by lying down prone on the deck of the waist section. Fortunately no one was hurt. The Engineering Officer did get a small cut while exiting the plane.

(Editor .. On the accompanying "REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT," it will be noted that Lt. Pulcer's name had been omitted, but from all other information, including recent documentation from Stan Pulcer's, he was involved in the evaluation flight. See following page for Accident Report)

We got immediate response from the ambulance, crash truck and the fire truck. Feeling the urge to clear the plane as soon as possible, I managed to go through the camera hatch. It was only a few inches off the ground. Then I ran to what I considered a safe distance from the plane. S/Sgt Harry Thompson, the other waist gunner, came out soon after. Seeing the red hydraulic fluid on my face, he tried to convince me that it was blood. A hydraulic line had burst during the rough landing and sprayed my face. The plane was a total loss. After hearing the returning crews tell what a rough mission they had, we considered ourselves quite lucky. Tonight we learned that



T/Sgt Paul F. Vanderpool

By Paul F. Vanderpool, T/Sgt 724th BS

we would leave for Rest Camp on the Isle of Capri on the 28th.

(Editor .. To add a bit of clarity to this first remembrance, it should be noted that the aircraft [41-29253] was named "EASY DOES IT," an original aircraft flown from the U.S. to Italy by Lt. John Kearney.)



"EASY DOES IT" Lt John Kearney W/Crew

I REMEMBER: 27 June 1944

Today Lt. Steinberg got burned on his left side (arm and face) while he was burning the grass around his tent with gasoline. He was taken to the hospital. This will keep him from our trip to Capri. Lt. Davis, our Bombardier, thinks he isn't burned too seriously. I hope he's right.

I REMEMBER: 7 July 1944

Today was our first mission since June 14th, besides the one we didn't make on the 26th.

Just before take-off we found out that our assigned aircraft had a gas leak, so we were assigned another plane. We were told it was our own original plane that we had

WAR DEPARTMENT
A. A. Form No. 16
(Revised May 14, 1942)

Accident No. **429**

WAR DEPARTMENT
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES
REPORT OF AIRCRAFT ACCIDENT

44-6-26-504

19-001

(1) Place Castelluccio Air Field, Italy (2) Date 26 June 1944 (3) Time 0645
AIRCRAFT: (4) Type and model B-24H (5) A. F. No. 41-29253 (6) Station Castelluccio Air Field
Organisation: (7) 15th (8) 451st Bomb (9) 724th Bomb
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron)

PERSONNEL **BH**

4169

DUITY (10)	NAME (Last name first) (11)	RATING (12)	SERIAL NO. (13)	RANK (14)	PERSONNEL CLASS (15)	BRANCH (16)	AIR FORCE OR COMMAND (17)	RESULT TO PERSONNEL (18)	USE OF PARACHUTE (19)
CP	Steinberg, Eugene (NMI)	P	0-689396	2nd Lt	01-18	AC	15th	None	Na
CP	Thielike, Walter L.	P	0-691007	2nd Lt	01-18	AC	15th	None	Na
CN	Cox, William O., Jr.	N	0-700703	2nd Lt	01-18	AC	15th	None	Na
CO	Burness, Edward A., Jr.	E	39326643	T/Sgt	20-38	AAF	15th	None	Na
RO	Vanderpool, Paul F.	RO	34526621	T/Sgt	20-38	AAF	15th	None	Na
AE	Vance, Glenwood (NMI)	E	18137384	S/Sgt	20-38	AAF	15th	None	Na
G	Thompson, Harry R., Jr.	G	32762623	S/Sgt	20-38	AAF	15th	None	Na
G	Leistner, Emil C.	G	35726470	S/Sgt	20-38	AAF	15th	None	Na
G	Kolakowski, Edward W.	G	13089258	S/Sgt	20-38	AAF	15th	None	Na

RECEIVED
HEADQUARTERS
U. S. ARMY AIR FORCES
JUL 12 1944
OFFICE OF THE
CHIEF OF STAFF

PROCHARSCHKA WRECKAGE

(20) Steinberg, Eugene (NMI) (21) 0-689396 (22) 2nd Lt (23) L. 18
(Last name) (First name) (Middle initial) (Serial number) (Rank) (Personnel class) (Branch)
Assigned (25) Fifteenth Air Force (26) 451st Bomb (27) 724th Bomb (28) Castelluccio A/F
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Attached for flying (29) 15th (30) 451st Bomb (31) 724th Bomb (32) Castelluccio A/F
(Command and Air Force) (Group) (Squadron) (Station)
Original rating (33) Pilot (34) 8-30-43 Present rating (35) Pilot (36) 8-30-43 Instrument rating (37) 3-21-44
(Rating) (Date) (Rating) (Date) (Date)

First Pilot Hours:
(at the time of this accident)
(38) This type B-24 317.15 (42) Instrument time last 6 months
(39) This model B-24H 195.06 (43) Instrument time last 30 days
(40) Last 90 days 195.00 (44) Night time last 6 months
(41) Total 655.25 (45) Night time last 30 days

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE NF crew 7-24

DAMAGE				(40) LIST OF DAMAGED PARTS
(46) Aircraft	W.S.			Left landing gear - Main bulkhead - Sheet metal damage to tail and trailing edge of wing - Right landing gear wrenched - Two tires blown.
(47) Engine(s)	W.S.	W.S.		
(48) Propeller(s)	W.S.	W.S.		

(50) Weather at the time of accident CAVU
(51) Was the pilot flying on instruments at the time of accident No
(52) Cleared from Castelluccio (53) To Castelluccio (54) Kind of clearance Local
(55) Pilot's mission Local Test Hop
(56) Nature of accident Both main tires blew and left landing gear collapsed when aircraft landed causing aircraft to swerve off runway.
(57) Cause of accident Failure of landing gear and tires on landing.
(58) None

flown over from the States. When we came overseas they had given us an older plane. But in this case, due to this mix-up, this plane had no oxygen and we had to wait almost an hour while it was being filled.

(Editorial clarification .. Upon research the aircraft mentioned in Vanderpool's journal was #42-94808, called the JESSE JAMES, named by Lt. Robert James.)



The "JESSE JAMES"

Since the target was a tough one (Blechhammer, Germany) I was hoping we wouldn't make it in time to join the rest of the formation. We caught them just as they were leaving the area. Beside the fact that it was the first time we had flown #808 on a mission, it was the first time we had another Pilot. His name was Lt. Francis Russell. It was the first time he had flown as a First Pilot. He had been a Copilot on Lt. John O'Connor's Crew.

As had happened to me before on a few occasions, I began to feel sick to my stomach. It finally came to the stage where something had to come up.. Luckily I found a nearby can with a handle. There I stood with one hand holding the can and my other hand holding my machine gun. A not-so-pleasant moment, but one remembered.

When we arrived at the target I forgot about being sick. There was more flak than I had ever seen before. Surprisingly, we were not hit at all over the target. As the terror of the target wore off, I began to feel sick again.

We had a large escort of P-38s, but had not, up to then, encountered any fighter opposition. Therefore I stretched out on the floor. The Engineer, who was manning the other Waist gun, said he could watch both windows. The Bombardier, on hearing this on the intercom, came back to take my place. In the meantime the Pilot asked the Engineer to come forward to check on the gas supply. The Bombardier took his place and I managed to resume mine. We had been told that we would have barely enough gas to get back. We figured we were

better off than most of the rest of the Group, since we had taken-off last. Nevertheless, the Pilot decided to throttle back to save gas. This left us slightly behind the other planes in the formation.

This may have been our undoing, because south of Weiner Neustadt we ran into enemy fighters. One ME-109 came in on the tail from a pursuit curve off the right side. The Upper Gunner spotted him first and alerted the Tail Gunner. From my position I could see the tracers really streaming out there. Both the Upper and Tail Gunners were pouring the lead at him. A split second later I saw the fighter flash past with its belly up and then suddenly head straight down with quite a bit of light colored smoke pouring from its engine. As our plane had closed waist windows, I was unable to stick my head out and follow it down. I felt sure it never recovered.

Another fighter then came in on the tail. As far as I know, he missed us completely. Just before the attacks started our escort seem to have vanish into thin air. After the first attack the Engineer returned. The Bombardier said he fired at one plane. Which one I was unable to figure out. It was about then that we really got the works. By this time only one of the two Tail Guns were working. Now the attacks were coming from the tail area again. One was from 7 o'clock high and one from 6 o'clock low. Suddenly a shell ripped through the left side of the plane, about head high. It was along the length of the plane, leaving a gash about 2 to 3 feet long.

NOTE:

The events of July 7th, so far, I have taken from notes I made while in prison camp. Additional information about the rest of the day, I will try to present from memory.

At some point an anti-aircraft 88mm shell tore a hole in the right wing. This started a fire in that wing. Gas tanks were located in the wings. The pilot attempted to get us back into friendly territory, but we didn't make it. The pilot was unable to see that part of the wing that was on fire, so he asked us, in the waist section to keep him informed, since we were in a location where we could evaluate it. As the fire progressed and the hole grew bigger, of course the wing became weaker. I told the pilot that conditions were to a point that it may be about time we considered bailing out. He gave the order. I positioned myself on the forward edge of the camera hatch and tumbled out.

Earlier that day, before the mission, I was unable to locate my regular parachute harness and accepted one 'off the shelf.' What happened, when I pulled the rip cord, could best be described as the 'wishbone' bit on Thanksgiving. When the parachute opened it felt like it was pulling me apart. The type of parachute that I had was one that hooked on rings that were positioned on your chest attached to the harness; commonly called a 'chest

chute.' On the way down I became sick to my stomach again. The swinging back and forth did not help.

Contrary to what I had believed, the distance between me and the ground should seem to decrease. It didn't happen that way. What happened was that I seemed to hang almost still in the air and all of a sudden the ground came up and hit me. I landed in a corn field. On the way down I heard some small arms fire. I don't know if they were shooting at me, or not. As per instruction, I got out of my chute as quickly as possible, rolled it into a ball and covered it with dirt. This was to keep the 'enemy' from finding you by not making it visible to the eye.

As stated before, I had landed in a corn field that was about head high. As I ran down between the rows of corn, I soon became uncomfortably hot. I stopped and sat down to remove my outer flying suit. Unnoticed by me, a farmer and his son had arrived on the scene and found me. Upon seeing what I was doing, they helped me remove my outer garments. Since I did not speak their language, I was unable to communicate with them. They did convey to me that they were interested in my parachute. It was made of nylon and would have been of great use to them. We went back to look for it, but was not able to find it at that time.

Reaching the edge of the field, I was confronted by two bicycled 'soldiers,' of unknown command. They were apparently part of one of the military factions holding forth in Yugoslavia. There were several different groups vying for control. These soldiers had on military hats and belts, but the rest of their attire was not a formal military uniform - just ordinary clothes. They had rifles slung on their backs. They never attempted to use them in any threatening manner. They just motioned for me to come with them.

As mentioned before, there were several political factions in Yugoslavia. Some were extremely friendly to Americans, and some were not. The American government was paying for the return of it's personnel, and the Germans were also paying for captured airmen. So, sometimes they dealt with whoever was the most convenient.

The soldiers were very friendly and since it was noontime, we stopped on the way into the village at a place to eat. It looked like a regular residential home, but they served food. After eating some peas, potatoes and pie (which had a filling that tasted like paste), we continued our trip into the village. There I met up with five of my crew. They were Sergeant Gunners, Harry Thompson, Edward Kolakowski and Glenwood Vance. Two of the Officers; Lt. William Cox (Navigator) and Lt. Joseph Davis (Bombardier) were also present. That meant that four of the crew had not been 'captured.' Overall, we were treated well.

We were taken to some kind of village office. As we were seated in an outer office, I looked through a door that lead to an inner office and saw a picture of Hitler on the wall. I told my fellow crew members that I thought our luck had run out and we had gotten to the wrong place. This turned out to be true. Later we were placed in a vacant storeroom where there were some mattresses on the floor that we could sleep on. We stayed there until the following afternoon. During the time we were there, we were fed well. Also, we were taken up the street to a barber shop where we received a shave and haircut. I was a little uncomfortable while being shaved. I wasn't quite sure what the barber might decide to do with the straight razor he was using. But, not even a nick!

On the second day, late in the afternoon, we were taken to a field on the edge of town. Under some trees, obscured by branches, were two small planes. They, the pilots and our guards, brought them out on the field and made them ready to fly. We were put aboard and soon took off. We flew just above the tree tops so as not to be detected by Allied radar or aircraft. We, those of us on our aircraft, discussed the possibility of overpowering the pilot and flying the plane to safety (We had seen too many war movies.) But since we were very close to the ground, we decided it wouldn't work.

We soon reached our destination, which turned out to be Zegreb. While we were waiting to be picked up from the airfield, the two pilots took out some bottles that looked very much like our beer bottles. They took a healthy swig and offered us a drink. I decided to take a small sip, just to see what it was like. It must have been at least five minutes before I could breath again .. It seemed like it anyway. We were then escorted to a nice restaurant and had our evening meal. Shortly after that we were taken to a make-shift jail, whereupon the Yugoslavian pilots said their 'good-byes,' and left.

The man in charge of the jail, I can't recall what his rank may have been, but he was some kind of military person, took all our belongings and made an inventory. He gave each of us a copy. I kept mine to the end of the war. My main two items of interest were a note book and the money I had been paid when I returned from Capri.

My usual procedure, when being paid, was to send most of my monthly pay home, as there wasn't much for us to spend it on back at the Base. Since I didn't get my pay until I had returned from Capri, I had not been able to make the arrangements to send it home. That is why I still had it, some \$183, in my pocket. Part of my pay was already allotted to my mother and that had been sent home.

Now as to my notebook. I had used it to make some sketches of points of interest on the Isle of Capri. Evidently our jailer thought I had some kind

of military secrets sketched into it. He also asked me for my "dag togs." Apparently he was a little mixed up. What he was referring to was my "dog tags." I did not have my "dog tags" with me as I had inadvertently left them hanging on the wall when I took a shower prior to coming on the mission.

A point of interest that I should mention. We had the option of wearing regular GI shoes, or the soft electrically heated shoes with fleece lined boots, on the missions. If you chose to wear the heated shoes, you would normally clip your GI shoes to your parachute harness, or have them nearby in the event of bail-out. In my case I wore my GI shoes, as I had no problem keeping my feet warm, even in the minus 30 degree temperature. But in the case of our Nose Gunner, Glenwood Vance, who bailed out with only his heated shoes and sprained his ankle when he hit the ground, we had to tote him around for several days.

We boarded a train which took us to Budapest, Hungary. I remember we were given a round loaf of bread for the journey, which turned out to double as a pillow very nicely. I remember seeing, as we passed through the city on the way to their prison, what at one time was the world's largest ferris wheel. Another thing was the "BLUE" Danube, which wasn't blue.

We were taken to, what I called, a regular prison. We were technically charged with being in their country without a proper passport. The United States was not officially at war with Hungary, but it was occupied by the Germans.

Our cell's outer wall was about two feet thick. It had a very small window that was located higher than our head. We could only see the tops of trees and the sky. The door to our cell had about a three inch opening that was covered by a flap. The guard could pull it back and look in and spy on us. By stretching I could see the top of some kind of fruit tree outside. I can't recall what kind it was. I know it had fruit on it and I sure wished I had access to it. We were now getting very little food and were constantly hungry.

Tommy (Harry Thompson) our Tail Gunner had a habit of whistling. For whatever reason the guard did not like him to do it. The guard would come in when he heard him and threaten him with his rifle, but he never did anything to him. Also, Tommy never stopped.

We were furnished with two identical buckets. One had drinking water in it and the other served as a 'potty.' They emptied them at various times and returned them. We often wonder if they ever got switched.

I REMEMBER: 14 July 1944

Today was our 5th day in cell #4, sharing the hospitality of the Hungarian government. We were in pretty good physical and mental state. We were

getting plenty of sleep and devoting much discussion to such intellectual subjects as Chocolate Creme Pie, Virginia Ham and Southern Fried Chicken.

By this time we had exhausted the store of literary gems which our fellow comrades has scratched on the metal soup dishes. According to a fellow named 'Hedrick, he had been here about 40 days. He stated that he was starving. On one dish he states that he got "beaten and eggs." We did get very little food. Now I know why they call this place - Hungary.

There are at least two ways of looking at things, and today we learned how it felt to be on the receiving end of a bombing raid -- by our own planes, too. Although we had no watches (they had been taken away) it must have been about 10:30 am when the alarm sounded. This was the first time I'd heard one that really meant business. After sweating them out for 15 minutes or so, the anti-aircraft guns began their firing at our planes. Although it was forbidden to look out the window, we took a chance and for some reason the guards didn't bother us. This gave us the opportunity to see our planes in action. Much to our relief, their target was on the other side of town and their angle of attack didn't carry them over us. I knew we wouldn't be hit on purpose, but accidents do happen. There was one jarring when some of the bombs fell much closer than the others. Since there was no columns of black smoke, we decided they must be bombing the Marshalling Yards or an Airfield. In about 20 minutes it was all over, leaving all of us a bit shaky. We are still hoping to be interrogated soon so we can get out of this place.

I REMEMBER: 22 July 1944

This morning they started calling some of us in for interrogation. Lt. Davis had been called in on the 19th and we don't know what happened to him. We were called in the following order: Harry Thompson, Edward Kolakowski, Lt. William Cox and me. I cannot determine, from my notes or memory, when Glenwood Vance was called. I assume it was after me.

There was an interval of about 15 minutes between each of us being called. No one returned to the cell. I was all set with the determination not to tell anything. A Captain was doing the interrogation and another German Officer is standing by. He starts out by pulling the old 'fake Red Cross' card. We had been told that this would be one of the tricks the Germans would pull on us. Between the interrogator and myself, we got as far as name, rank, serial number and date of birth, okay. Then he asked about my military unit. I gave him the routine about, "I'm sorry Sir," which makes him very unhappy. Then he shows me a book with all the Squadron Insignias, Commanding Officers, locations, et cetera, to prove that nothing was a secret.

This still left me undaunted. Then comes: "the person to be notified." I told him "The War Department." He didn't like that either. I was sitting across the room from him. He had told me that I was #23 on transport for tonight and the rest of my crew had gone upstairs and would be leaving tonight. Just to prove that the other crew members had filled out their cards, he gave me a quick glance at today's filled out cards. It was just long enough for me to see that he was lying to me. Finally he told me that I would have to go back to my cell. As I started out the door he called me back and asked me if I was familiar with the Geneva Convention. Then he showed me, what must have been his especially prepared copy, that it stated you must give your military unit. I disregarded his promise and still would not answer that question.

At this point in time, my memory and written notes fail me, so I will continue with when we arrived at Stamlager der Luffwaffe #4 (Stalag Luft IV). We HAD arrived at a German POW camp! We had come by train from Budapest.

After a practically sleepless night on the floor, we ate some breakfast, leftover from what the Germans had given us the night before. Then, just like rookies at an induction center, we were processed. To show how nice they could be, we were each given a piece of chocolate. They interrogated us for the same old stuff: name, rank, serial number and home address. All the time this was going on, a German Officer kept coming through the room, and each time we had to 'snap to attention.' We were given a POW number. Mine was 6461. We were then fingerprinted and photographed. For the photo we had to hold a slate with our name and Army serial number on it. I noted the excellent camera that was used and I sure would like to have had one. I promised myself if and when, I was liberated, I'd get me one. We were then stripped and given a thorough search from top to bottom, including all openings.

When all the processing was done, we were taken to another part of the camp; Lager "A." I later learned that the camp had 4 divisions with about 2,500 in each part, making a total of 10,000 POWs.

Some new barracks were almost finished and we were told we would go there soon. In this Lager it was rather overcrowded as the had just brought in some men that had been evacuated from another camp. They said that the Russians were only about 30 km away when they left that camp. They were being held at Heydekrug, Poland. Their escape by rail had been cut off, so they had to be loaded into boats and taken across a body of water. On the way from the station (Kiefheide), which was about a mile from our camp, the road was lined with guards. The prisoners were being "double-timed." They were chained, two and three together. They

were weak and tired from the trip, so some of them fell behind. Bayonets were used by the German guards to urge them on. Some of the fellows received wounds that necessitated medical attention.

There are two doctors here. One is English and the other is American. They had also been captured. There is also an English Chaplain and a Minister here.

Coming into the Lager we were taken to a building where "Red Cross" rations were being handed out. It also housed the kitchen where the German rations were cooked and dished out. More about food later. Two Americans took charge of us and assigned us to rooms in the various barracks. Each barrack had 13 rooms, a toilet (for night use only) and a wash room. There were 10 barracks. Each room is supposed to hold sixteen men, but we ended up with eighteen to our room. My room was next to my crew mate, Harry Thompson.

We were given our bread ration for the day, which is one quarter of a loaf. It consisted of what would be about four slices of our American bread. The loaves were small and heavy. They were also dark in color.

I REMEMBER

The Russians were getting close, so the Germans decided to move us out of the camp. While walking on the road, after leaving camp, we were given a short breaks, after walking for about an hour. A lot of our later breaks were long enough to rest at the edge of a farmer's field. Farmers in Germany had a method of storing such vegetables as carrots and potatoes. They dug shallow holes at the edges of fields and lined them with straw. They would put a layer of vegetables and then another layer of straw. This was then covered with another layer of dirt. When we rested and leaned against the mounds, we could dig behind our backs and come up with a carrot, or potato, that we could slip into our pocket.

I REMEMBER

We were supposed to get an eleven pound "Red Cross" food parcel every week. We were lucky to get one once a month. The parcels contained mostly canned food. The canned margarine was the worst. It tasted like colored lard. The cans were issued to us opened. The reason given was that we would not be able to save it up for possible escape.

(Editor .. The journal does not explain how, or when, this 'forced march' ended, nor if they returned to their same barracks in Stalag Luft IV).

I REMEMBER: 13 September 1944

On this day some new men moved in. There were two from my 724th Squadron. They had joined the Squadron after I was shot down. They knew nothing about my pilot, nor anyone else from my old crew. All they knew was that most all the old crews had either gone down or gone home. They had been in a Camp near Frankfurt and were

moved out because of the advancing allies. They reported that Bulgaria, Rumania and Hungry had all given up. The Americans were inside Germany. And B-26s are hitting Frankfurt. At tonight's roll call we were told to go immediately back into our barracks to be locked in. Then the German guards started running around with their helmets on, and then quickly disappeared. Shortly after they came back and let us out. I don't know what happened.

I REMEMBER: 18 September 1944

Today, just after they started serving the noon meal, the Germans locked us inside our barracks. There was an air raid. Our room was lucky enough to get our chow before all this started. It was cloudy, so we could not see the planes, but we could tell by the sound that there was quite a few of them. They seemed to be going in the direction of Stettin. The guards came around and ran us back from the windows. There was a German Officer going back and forth between the compounds. He yelled at some fellows in another compound and fired some shots in their direction. Fortunately, no one was hit. The guards let us out and the rest of the guys got their chow.

The arrangements for cooking our food was in a separate building where they had equipment for boiling things. That meant we had lots of soup, boiled potatoes and barley cooked oatmeal. Sometimes the soup had meat in it. We were issued a soup bowl and a spoon.

I REMEMBER: 29 September 1944

Tonight, as I sat in the barracks peacefully reading, "Green Is The Golden Tree," I heard the roar of a German plane. I rushed out, just in time to see an ME-109 barreling towards the ground. It went down behind the trees that surrounded our camp. In a split second there was an explosion. First came a flash, then some flying pieces could be seen, some smoke and finally the noise. It must have been near the railroad station. It was one of four planes that has been flying around here almost every day. Today there had only been two planes. The other plane circled a couple times, then flew off.

(Editor .. From September to early February, Vanderpool's Journal carries very few entries. He relates a short tale about one of the POWs caught stealing food from one of his buddies and was dunked in a "pit toilet.")

From that point on there is little about 'camp life.' Instead, he picks up his narrative at about 6 February 1945 when the camp was evacuated and the infamous three month (death) march westward by some 6,000 POWs out of Stalag Luft IV.)

I REMEMBER

After we left Stalag #4 in February, we were on the road until May -- at which time we were privileged to sleep on the ground as night. Sometimes we were lucky enough to sleep in a barn. Most barns had a good supply of straw and manure. If

you put a good layer of straw over some fresh manure, it gave off a fair amount of heat. We each had a blanket. Two of my buddies and I pooled our blankets and slept together. Also, we had no change of clothing. By the end of the three months that we were on the road, they, and we, were pretty dirty.

Farmers in Germany cooked the "slop" they fed the pigs. They had a big pot for that purpose. Because of this we ate a lot of boiled potatoes. I guess I shouldn't say "a lot," because we never got enough food. We got bread once in a while.

One night we were sleeping in a barn that was near where the Germans had some big guns. When the guns were fired the barn doors would flap.

A few days before the end of the war, we were in a barn yard by the side of the road. A British tank and some soldiers came down the road and "liberated" us. Our German guards gave up and we were told to go back down the road where they had a temporary camp set up.

They took some of us out each morning so we could be flown out to Frankfurt, Germany. As I recall, it took about three days before my turn came up. The plane was a B-17. It was my fires time in a B-17. After we landed, we were loaded in trucks and taken to a place in Brussels, Belgium that had been set up to take care of returned POWs. It was called 'RAMP' (Returned Allied Military Personnel).

We were given orders that we were not to leave camp and go 'out on the town.' There was a big high fence around the place, and seemingly no way out. But there was. In back of the compound was a small shed next to the fence. This was easily mounted. On top of the shed was a ladder reaching to the top of the fence. On the other side of the fence was a ladder going down to a back yard. Oddly, after descending the ladder there was a basin of water and a towel to clean your hands. Straight ahead was a house with an open hallway that ran all the way from the back to the front of the house and out onto the street. You could return by the front gate of the camp and the guards didn't ask any questions.

I REMEMBER

Being taken to the coast of France to wait for a ship to take us home to the good old US of A. POWs were supposed to have priority after the sick and wounded were taken care of. As with so many other things in the Army, it didn't work that way. As ex-POWs we had no papers so other groups that came with proper paperwork got to ship-out.

After a couple of weeks, some of us were asked if we would like to get to England and possibly ship out from there. I was ready to go anywhere after freezing at night where we were. Where we were was LeHavre, France. At that camp we were allowed to have two blankets, or a sleeping bag. I managed to have both and was still cold while trying to sleep. We had cots, so I put my raincoat on

the cot under me, then I crawled into the sleeping bag with all my clothes on and put the two blankets over me ... And I was still cold.

The camps in this area were named after cigarettes: Lucky Strike, Old Gold, etc.

I did end up in England and stayed in London for about two weeks. I stayed in a place much like the YMCA. It cost me 35 cents a night. Where did I get the money? Somewhere along the way they issued me twenty dollars. They owed me some ten months back pay. All I could get then was twenty dollars. I found an Army Mess Hall where I could get all my meals free. So the twenty dollars went a long way. We also got free passes to the theaters.

(Editor .. Thus ended the journal of Paul Vanderpool. His westward [three month - 500 mile] march across northern Europe is one that historians sometimes overlook in favor of the more noted 'Bataan Death March.' But to those of you 451st members that were on it, Vanderpool's Journal only touches the surface of what most of you endured. My records show that there were some 60 of you members that were held in Stalag Luft IV. Fittingly, a memorial to your honor now stands on the Polish ground where Stalag Luft IV once stood.)

See cover page of Ad Lib

TESTIMONY OF DR. LESLIE CAPLAN REGARDING MISTREATMENT OF AMERICAN POW AT STALAG LUFT IV

The Interview Findings

Questions by: Lt. Col. William C. Hoffman, AGD

Q -- State your name, permanent home address, and occupation.

A -- Leslie Caplan, Dr., 1728 Second Ave. S., Minneapolis, MN; Resident Fellow in Psychiatry, University of MN & Veterans Hospital, Minneapolis, MN.

Q -- State the date and place of your birth and of what country you are a citizen.

A -- 8 March 1908, Steubenville, Ohio; citizen of the United States of America.

Q -- State briefly your medical education and experience.

A -- Ohio State University, B.A., 1933; MD 1936; University of Michigan Post Graduate work in Public Health; University of Minnesota Graduate School; one year general internship, Providence Hospital, Detroit, Michigan; 4 years general practice of medicine in Detroit, Michigan 1937 - 1942; 4 years Flight Surgeon, U.S. Army 1941 - 1945.

Q -- What is your marital status?

A -- I am married.

Q -- On what date did you return from overseas?

A -- 29 June 1945.

Q -- Were you a prisoner of war?

A -- Yes

Q -- At what places were you held and state the approximate dates?

A -- Demisch, Jugo-Slavia 13 October 1944 to 20 October 1944; Zagreb, Jugo-Slavia 27 October 1944 to 1 November 1944; Dulag Luft, Frankfurt, Germany, 15 November 1944 to 22 November 1944; Stalag Luft #4 February 1945 to 30 March 1945; Fallingbostal Stalag IIB March 10 1945; on forced march from 6 April 1945 to 2 May 1945.

Q -- What unit were you with when captured?

A -- 15th Air Force, 449 Bomb Group, 719 Squadron. I was Flight Surgeon for the 719 Squadron.

Q -- State what you know concerning the mistreatment of American prisoners of war at Stalag Luft #4.

A -- The camp was opened about April 1944 and was an Air Force Camp. It was located at Gross Tyshow about two miles from the Kief Geide railroad station. In the summer of 1944 the Russian offensive threatened Stalag Luft #6, so approximately 1000 Americans were placed on a ship for evacuation to Stalag Luft #4. Upon arrival at the railroad station, certain groups were forced to run the two miles to Stalag Luft #4 at the points of bayonets. Those who dropped behind were either bayoneted or were bitten on the legs by police dogs.

Q -- Were these wounds serious enough to cause any deaths?

A -- All were flesh wounds and no deaths were caused by the bayoneting.

Q -- Did you see these men at the time of the bayoneting?

A -- No. This happened prior to my arrival at Luft #4.

Q -- Did you see any of the men who were bitten by dogs?

A -- Yes, I personally saw the healed wounds on the legs of a fellow named Smith or Jones (I am not certain as to the name) who had been severely bitten. There were approximately fifty bites on each leg. It looked as though his legs had been hit with small buckshot. This man remained an invalid confined to his bed all the time I was at Luft #4.

Q -- Did you know how many men were injured as a result of the bayonet runs?

A -- I was told that about twenty men had been hospitalized as a result. Many other bayoneted men were not hospitalized due to limited medical facilities.

Q -- Who told you of these incidents?

A -- Captain Wilbur E. McKee, 1462 SW Seventh St., Louisville, KY, who was Chief Camp Doctor -- He should have some authentic records. Captain Henry J. Wynseth, 346 E. Havenwood Ave., Youngstown, Ohio, also knew of the incidents. There were also two enlisted men who were elected by the soldiers as camp leaders and known officially as "American Man of Confidence" who could give an account of the camp and of the bayoneting. The chief "American Man of Confidence" was camp leader and should have complete records of the incident. His name is Frank Paules, 101 Regent St., WilkesBarre, PA Francis A. Troy, Box 233, Edgerton, Wyoming, the other enlisted man, and "American Man of Confidence" should also verify the incidents. Both of these enlisted men were also on the forced march when Stalag Luft #4 was evacuated.

Q -- Do you know if the Commandant was responsible for the bayoneting and dog bites?

A -- I did not know the Commandant and I do not know who was responsible. Captain Pickhardt, the officer in charge of the guards, is said to have incited the guards by telling them that American Airmen were gangsters who received a bonus for bombing German children and women. Most of the guards were older men and fairly reasonable, but other guards were pretty rough. "Big Stoop" was the most hated of the guards.

Q -- For what reason was "Big Stoop" disliked?

A -- He beat up on many of our men. He would cuff the men on the ears with an open hand sideways movement. This would cause pressure on the ear drums which sometimes punctured them.

Q -- Could you give any specific incidents of such mistreatment by "Big Stoop?"

A -- He was about six feet, six inches tall, weight about 180 to 190 pounds, and was approximately fifty years old. His most outstanding characteristic was his large hands, which seemed out of proportion to those of a normal person.

Q -- When you arrived at Stalag #4, were you subjected to the bayonet runs?

A -- No. We were marched from the station to Luft #4, but not on the run. Some of the men were tired and we complained to "Big Stoop." He snarled at us, but personally went forward and slowed the column down.

Q -- Did you have any duties assigned to you while a prisoner?

A -- I was known as an Allied Medical Officer at Stalag Luft #4 Camp Hospital and in charge of Section C while on the march.

Q -- State what you know concerning the forced march from Stalag Luft #4?

A -- In February 1945 the Russian offensive threatened to engulf Stalag Luft #4. On 6 February 1945 about 6,000 prisoners were ordered to leave the camp on foot after only a few hours notice. We left in three separate sections, A, C and D. I marched with Section C which had approximately 2,500 men. It was a march of great hardship. For 53 days we marched long distances with bitter weather and on starvation rations. We lived in filth and slept in open fields or barns. Clothing, medical facilities and sanitary facilities were utterly inadequate. Hundreds of men suffered from malnutrition, exposure, trench foot, exhaustion, dysentery, tuberculosis and other diseases. No doubt many men are still suffering today as a result of that ordeal.

Q -- Who was in charge of this march?

A -- The Commandant of Stalag Luft #4 was in charge of the three sections. Hauptman (Captain) Weinert was in charge of Section C that I marched with. All the elements of Stalag Luft #4 occupied a good bit of territory and there was frequent overlapping of the various sections.

Q -- How much distance was covered in this march?

A -- While under the jurisdiction of Stalag Luft

#4, we covered an estimated 555 kilometers (330 mile). I kept a record which I still have of distance covered, rations issued, sick men abandoned and other pertinent data. This record is far from complete, especially about records of the sick, but the record of rations and distance covered is complete.

Q -- How much food was issued to the men on this march?

A -- According to my records, during the 53 days of the march, the Germans issued us rations which I have since figured out contained a total of 770 calories per day. The German ration was mostly in potatoes and contained very little protein, far from enough to maintain strength and health. However, in addition we were issued Red Cross food which for the same 53 day period averaged 566 calories per day. This means that our caloric intake per day on the march amounted to 1336 calories. This is far less than the minimum required to maintain body weight, even without physical strenuous activity we were compelled to undergo on the long marches.

The area we marched through was rural and there were no food shortages there. We slept in barns and often saw large supplies of potatoes which we could not get at. We all felt that the German officers in our column could have obtained more supplies for us. They contended that the food we saw was needed elsewhere. They further contended that the reason we received so little Red Cross supplies was that the Allied Air Force (of which we were "Gangster" members) had disrupted the German transportation that carried Red Cross supplies. This argument was disproved later when we continued our march under the jurisdiction of another prison camp; namely Stalag #11B. This was during the last month of the war when German transportation was at its worst. Even so, we received a good ration of potatoes almost daily and received frequent issues of Red Cross food, far more than we were given under the jurisdiction of Stalag Luft #4.

Q -- What sort of shelter was provided during the 53 day march?

A -- Mostly we slept in barns. We were usually herded into these barns so closely that it was impossible for all men to find room to lie down. It was not unusual for many men to stand all night or be compelled to sleep outside because there was no room inside. Usually there was some straw for some of us to lie on but many had lie in barn filth or in dampness. Very frequently there were large parts of the barn (usually dryer and with more straw) that were denied to us. There seemed to be no reason for this but, at other times, it was made clear to us that if we slept in clean straw its value to the animals would be less because we would

make it dirty. At other times barns were denied us because the Germans stated having POWs in the barn might cause a fire that would endanger livestock. It was obvious that the welfare of the German cattle was placed above our welfare. On 14 February 1945 Section C of Stalag Luft #4 had marched approximately 35 kilometers. There were many stragglers and sick men who could barely keep up. That night the entire column slept in a cleared area in the woods near Schweinemunde. It had rained a good bit of the day and the ground was soggy, but it froze before morning. We had no shelter whatever and were not allowed to forage for firewood. The ground we slept on was littered by the feces of dysenteric prisoners who had stayed there previously. There were many barns in the vicinity, but no effort was made to accommodate us there. There were hundreds of sick men in the column that night. I slept with one that was suffering from pneumonia.

Q -- What were the conditions on this march as regards to drinking water?

A -- Very poor. Our sources of water were unsanitary surface water and well water, often of questionable sanitary quality. At times so little water was issued to us that men drank whatever they could. While there was snow on the ground, it was common for the men to eat snow whether it was dirty or not. At other times, some men drank from ditches that others had used as latrines. I personally protested this condition many times. The German doctor from Stalag Luft #4 (Capt. Sommers of Sonners) agreed that the lack of sanitary water was the principal factor responsible for the dysentery that plagued our men. It would have been a simple matter to issue large amounts of boiled water which would have been safe regardless of its source. At times we were issued adequate amounts of boiled water but at other times not enough safe water was available. We often appealed to be allowed to collect firewood and boil water ourselves in the many boilers that were standard equipment on almost every German farm. This appeal was granted irregularly. When it was granted, the men lined up in the cold for hours to await the tedious distribution. Another factor that forced an unnecessary hardship on us was the fact that when we left Stalag Luft #4, the men were not permitted to take a drinking utensil. The first issues of boiled water were therefore not widely distributed for there were no containers for the men to collect the water in. As time went on, each man collected a tin can from the Red Cross food supplies and this filthy container was the sole means of collecting water of the soup that sometimes was issued to us.

Q -- What medical facilities were available on the march from Stalag Luft #4?

A -- They were pitiful. From the very start large numbers of men began to fall behind. Blisters became infected and many men collapsed from hunger, fear, malnutrition, exhaustion, or disease. We organized groups of men to aid the hundreds of stragglers. It was common for men to drag themselves along in spite of intense suffering. Many men marched along with large abscesses on their feet or frostbite of extremities. Many others marched with temperatures as high as 105 degrees Fahrenheit. I personally slept with men suffering from Erysipelas, Diphtheria, Pneumonia, Malaria, Dysentery and other diseases. The most common was Dysentery for this was an inevitable consequence of the filth we lived in and the unsanitary water we drank. This was so common and so severe that all ordinary rules of decency were meaningless. Hundreds of men on this march suffered so severely from dysentery that they lost control of their bowel movements, because of severe cramps, and soiled themselves. Wherever our column went there was a trail of bloody movements and discarded underwear (which was sorely needed for warmth). At times the Germans gave us a few small farm wagons to carry our sick. The most these wagons ever accommodated was 35 men, but we had hundreds of men on the verge of collapse. It was our practice to load the wagon, and as a man would collapse he was put on the wagon and some sick man on the wagon would be taken off the wagon to make way for his exhausted comrade. When our column would near a permanent POW camp we were allowed to send our sickest men there while the rest of the column marched on. We were never allowed to leave all of our sick. I do not know what happened to most of the sick men that we left at various places along the march.

Q -- What medical supplies were issued to you by the Germans on the march from Stalag Luft #4?

A -- Very few. When we left the camp we carried with us a small amount of medical supplies furnished to us by the Red Cross. At times the Germans gave us pittance of drugs. They claimed they had none to spare. At various times, I asked for rations of salt. Salt is essential for the maintenance of body strength and of body fluids and minerals. This was particularly needed by our men because hundreds of them had lost tremendous amounts of body fluids and minerals as a result of dysentery. The only ration of salt that I have a record of, or can recall, was one small bag of salt weighing less than a pound. This was for about 2,500 men. I feel there is no excuse for this inadequate ration of salt.

Q -- To your knowledge, did any sick man die as a result of neglect by the Germans on the march from Stalag Luft #4?

A -- Yes. The following named men died as a result of neglect. All of these men have been

declared dead by the Casualty Branch of the Adjutant General's Office:

George W. Briggs - 39193615 - S/Sgt; John C. Clark - 12083472 - S/Sgt; Edward B. Coleman - 12083472 - S/Sgt; George F. Grover - 16066436 - S/Sgt; William Lloyd - 18217669 - S/Sgt; Harold H. Mack - 17128736 - S/Sgt; Robert M. Trapnell - 13068648 - S/Sgt.

It is likely that there were other deaths that I do not know about.

Q -- Did all these deaths occur while the men were directly under the control of Stalag Luft #4?

A -- No. As I mentioned before, our sick men were left at various places and I never saw them again. Some of these men died after we were out of the jurisdiction of Stalag Luft #4.

Q -- What were the circumstances which led to the deaths of these men?

A -- At 0200 on 9 April 1945 at a barn in Wohlen, Germany, Sgt. George W. Briggs was suddenly overcome by violent shaking of the entire body and soon after went into a coma. This patient was sent to a German hospital. This is in marked contrast to the treatment received when we were under the jurisdiction of Stalag Luft #4 when every hospitalization was either refused or granted after a long series of waiting for guards, waiting for permission to see Capt. Weinert, and waiting his decision. In spite of prompt hospitalization, this patient died on 11 April 1945. No doubt the death was largely caused by being weakened on the first part of the march while under the jurisdiction of Stalag Luft #4.

On 9 March 1945 while on the march in Germany, Capt. Sonners who was the German doctor for Stalag Luft #4, personally notified me that John C. Clark had died the previous night of pneumonia. He had not been hospitalized and had received very little medical care. I never saw this patient, but he was seen in a barn in the terminal stages of his illness by Capt. Pollack of the Royal Medical Corps who told me about it later on. On 13 April 1945, while on the march in Germany, Edward B. Coleman collapsed from severe abdominal pain and weakness. I made a diagnosis of an acute abdominal emergency superimposed on a previously weakened condition which was the result of malnutrition and dysentery. He was hospitalized, but according to the records of the Adjutant General, he died 15 April 1945.

On 13 April 1945, while on the road in Germany, William Lloyd collapsed and died within a half hour. My diagnosis was exhaustion, dysentery and malnutrition incurred while under the jurisdiction of Stalag Luft #4.

On 14 April 1945, George F. Grover was seriously ill and an officer from Stalag 11B authorized him to be sent to a German hospital. He was suffer-

ing from intestinal obstruction, exhaustion, malnutrition and dysentery, mostly the result of mistreatment while under the jurisdiction of Stalag Luft #4. The records of the Adjutant General show that this patient died on 18 April 1945.

About 8 March 1945, while on the march in Germany under the jurisdiction of Stalag Luft #4, I set up a resting place for the sick at a barn in Beckendorf. Harold W. Mack was carried into this barn suffering from dysentery, malnutrition, exhaustion, frostbite and impending gangrene of both feet. Permission to send him to a hospital was denied by Capt. Weinert. On March 9th, our column was ordered to march about 6 kilometers. Sgt. Mack and many others were too weak to march so he was placed on a wagon and taken along. He was so weak at the time that he had to be spoon fed and had to be carried to the latrine. On March 10th, after another appeal to Capt. Weinert, Sgt. Mack was sent back to Beckendorf to await shipment to a German hospital. Sgt. Mack had both feet amputated. According to the records of the Adjutant General, Sgt. Mack died in Germany on 1 April 1945. Sgt. King had all of his toes amputated at the same German hospital, but Sgt. King recovered.

On February 24, 1945, I was operating a barn hospital at Bradenfield, Germany under the jurisdiction of Stalag Luft #4 on the march. Sgt. Trapnell was a patient at this hospital suffering from dysentery and exhaustion. In addition he developed symptoms of acute appendicitis, which required surgery. Capt. Weinert authorized me to transport this patient by wagon to what he called a hospital at a nearby village of Bryge (or Brige). He must have known that a village of only a few people could not have a hospital. When I arrived at Bryge, I found the so-called hospital was a barn with no medical facilities. Capt. Hay of the Royal Medical Corps was in charge of the sick there. He agreed with me that Sgt. Trapnell was seriously ill and that his acute appendicitis warranted immediate surgery. We had no anesthetics or other supplies, not even a knife. We were both covered with filth. Capt. Hay hoped that he would be allowed to send Sgt. Trapnell to a German hospital the next day. I do not know how long it took to send Sgt. Trapnell to a hospital, for I had to rejoin my column at once. The records of the Adjutant General states that Sgt. Trapnell died on 5 March 1945.

Q -- Do you know of any other men who were seriously harmed by this march from Stalag Luft #4?

A -- Yes. There must be hundreds of men still suffering as a result of the rigors of that march. I personally tended to hundreds of such men on the march. I still hear from many of them and there are numerous complaints about their health. I will cite a few instances. I know of three men who suffered

from pulmonary tuberculosis after the march. No doubt there were many others that I never knew about. I was evacuated from the ETO on the hospital ship "ACADIA," and on the one boat there were over 20 men from Stalag Luft #4. One of these was S/Sgt Norman C. Edwards, ASN 33558570 from Baltimore, Maryland. He was one of the men left behind during the march from Stalag Luft #4. Sometime in March or April 1945 he had had both legs amputated because of gangrene secondary to frostbite. He told me that S/Sgt Vincent Soddaro ASN 32804649 of Brooklyn, New York had also had both legs amputated because of gangrene and frostbite. Sgt. Edwards and Sgt. Soddaro had been in the same German hospital.

Q -- What other mistreatment did you suffer on the march from Stalag Luft #4?

A -- There were beatings by the guards at times, but it was a minor problem. At 1500 hours on 28 March 1945 a large number of our men were loaded on Freight cars at Ebbsdorf, Germany. We were forced in at the rate of 60 men or more to a car. This was so crowded that there was not enough room for all men to sit at the same time. We remained in these jammed boxcars until 0300 hours March 30, 1945 when our train left Ebbsdorf. During this 33 hour period few men were allowed out of the car, for the cars were sealed shut most of the time. The suffering this caused was unnecessary for there was a pump with a good supply of water in the railroad yards a short distance from the train. At one time I was allowed to fetch some water for a few of our men who were suffering from dysentery. Many men had dysentery at the time and the hardship of being confined to the freight cars was aggravated by the filth and stench resulting from men who had to urinate and defecate inside the cars. We did not get off these freight cars until we reached Fallingbostal around noon on 30 March 1945 and then we marched to Stalag 11B. The freight cars we were transported in had no marking on them to indicate that they were occupied by helpless prisoners of war. There was considerable aerial activity in the area at the time and there was a good chance of being strafed.

Q -- Was the suffering that resulted from the evacuation march from Stalag Luft #4 avoidable?

A -- Certainly a large part of the suffering was avoidable. As I mentioned before, we marched through rural Germany and there was no lack of food there. There were always many large barns available that could have been used by us. There was always firewood available that could have been used to boil water and thus give us a safe supply of drinking water. There were many horses and wagons available that could have been used to transport our sick men. There were many men in our column who were exhausted and who could

have been left for a rest at prison camps that we passed on the march.

On 30 March 1945 we left the jurisdiction of Stalag Luft #4 when we arrived at Stalag Luft 11B. On 9 March (?) 1945 we again went on a forced march under the jurisdiction of Stalag 11B. Our first march had been in a generally westerly direction for the Germans were then running from the Russians. The second march was in a general easterly direction for the Germans were then running from the American and British forces. Because of this, during the march under the Jurisdiction of Stalag 11B, we doubled back and covered a good bit of the same territory we had just come over a month before. We doubled back for over 200 kilometers and it took 26 days before British forces liberated us. During those 26 days we were accorded much better treatment. We received a ration of potatoes daily besides other food, including horse meat. We always had barns to sleep in although the weather was much milder than when we had previously covered the same territory. During those 26 days we received 1235 calories daily from the Germans and an additional 1500 calories daily from the Red Cross, for a total caloric intake of about 2735 calories a day. This is far more than we had in the same area from Stalag Luft #4. I believe that if the officers of Stalag Luft #4 had made an effort, they too could have secured us as much rations and shelter.

Q -- To what officers from Stalag Luft #4 did you complain?

A -- I only saw the Commandant of Stalag Luft #4 once on the entire march and I was not allowed to talk to him then. Mostly I complained to Capt. Weinert who was in charge of IC column that I was with most of the time.

Q -- Can you describe Capt. Weinert?

A -- He was a little taller than average and well built. He was in his forties, but looked much younger until he took his cap off and exposed his bald head. He was an Air Corps officer and was said to have been a prisoner of the Allies in North Africa and later repatriated for a physical disability. I never saw any certain evidence of such a disability. He rarely marched but rode in his own wagon. Some of the men said he had an arm injury, but I never saw any definite evidence of this. Maybe this was because I only saw him on rather formal military occasions when he would stand or sit in a rigid manner, almost as if he were at attention. I never saw him for long periods of time. He spoke excellent English but it was a favorite trick of his to act as if he did not understand English. Usually he spoke to me through an interpreter, but several times we spoke in English.

Q -- Are there any other incidents that should be reported?

A -- There is one other incident I would like to report. On 16 February 1945 we were on the road west of the Oder River in the general area of Schwbinemunde. I was then marching with a party of several hundred of our stragglers who were tagging along behind our main column. We met a small group of other prisoners on the road. I was allowed to talk to these men briefly and obtained the following information: -- These men were from POW Camp Stalag 2B which had originally been at Hammerstein. They were all sick and had left their column to be taken to a hospital. On arrival at the hospital they were denied admission and continued the march with little or no rations. These men appeared to be on the verge of exhaustion. Two had obvious fevers with severe cough which was probably pneumonia or tuberculosis. About 20 of these men were Americans. One had on a foreign uniform and I thought he was an Italian. There was a tall British Sergeant with them. One of the men carried a small wooden chest with the name of "Joe McDaniels" or "Joe McWilliams" on it. He told me he had been acting Chaplain at Stalag 2B. Another man was a tall, slender fellow from Schenectady, New York. (After I was liberated I met an ex-prisoner from Stalag 2B who thought this fellow as J. Luckhurst of 864 Stanley, Schenectady, New York). This fellow said he was suffering from recurrent malaria.

These men were so weak they could scarcely stand. The German Sergeant in charge of our small section at the time, recognized their plight and got a Wehrmacht truck to take them to our next stop. We received no rations that night, but did get a small issue of hot water. The next day these men were placed on wagons and stayed with us. They again received no rations and again were sheltered in crowded barns. On 18 February 1945 I personally protested to Capt. Weinert about these men, although he had known about the previously. I pointed out that these men were exhausted and might soon die. I requested rations, rest and hospitalization for them. Capt. Weinert replied that no hospital was available. He further stated that these men were not his responsibility, inasmuch as they were not originally from Stalag Luft #4. I objected to this and stated that these men were now in our column and that he was responsible for their lives and health. He then agreed to leave these men behind. The next day, Capt. Weinert told me these men had been transferred to another command. I never saw the men again, but I heard a rumor that one of them had died.

Q --Do you have anything further to add?

A -- No.

POW MEMOIRS OF STALAG LUFT IV

By S/Sgt John C. Schumacher

Mission 13 would have been a double sortie, if we would have returned. It was Friday the 13th of October 1944, a day I will never forget. The target for the day was Vienna, Austria with a maximum effort by our four Squadrons of seven aircraft each. We had the number two position in our Squadron, which put us in Deputy Lead slot. But on take-off the fuel tank in the left wing was funneling the fuel out, since the cap had not been secured properly, so we aborted and landed. A standby aircraft was readied, so we unloaded, taking our flak vests with us to the waiting aircraft. After we boarded we noted the plane already had a set of vests aboard, but we kept all these, plus the ones we wore. We laid the other set on the floor for extra safety from flak.

When we returned to the Squadron, already in rendezvous formation, we took the seventh place in the flight, also known as "Tail-end-Charlie," then we were off to our target. The aircraft was named "Our Gal," Serial number 44-41152; Model J.

(Editor ... The crew consisted of: 1Lt James M. Moye, Pilot; 1Lt Devon R. Hall, Copilot; 1Lt Robert E. Zimmer, Navigator; 1Lt Vernon V. Drower, Bombardier; S/Sgt John T. Scully, AEG; S/Sgt Mario E. Dimeo, ROG; S/Sgt Joseph E. Roman, N Gunner; S/Sgt Joseph Galenas, B Gunner; S/Sgt John C. Schumacher, W Gunner; S/Sgt Leonard J. Dumas, T Gunner. MACR on following page.)

We had cloud cover under us most of the way. This helped in some ways, but we still had to keep a sharp eye out for fighters coming out of the clouds. As we neared the IP, the turning point to the target, the sky became clear over the target, which also gave the 'Jerrys' a clear sighting on us. The flak was very heavy, coming from 88mm, 105mm and 155mm anti-aircraft guns. Although our flights flew at different altitudes, 20,000 feet and up, we were at 24,000 and there was so much flak that it rattled the aircraft continually.

Whatever happened to number three of our Squadron, we do not know as the aircraft slid back at the time of the bomb release. There was an explosion off our right wing that was terrific. As I picked myself off the floor I put on my parachute.

(Editor .. from my database I believe the two aircraft that Sgt

Schumacher describes, one may have been "Fickle Finger" [42-51564], being flown by 1Lt. William L. Goin. It was witnessed by Lt. Peter A. Massare who described it thusly: "In the same flight with me was A/C #42-51564, with Lt. Goin as pilot. Just before bombs were away, and when we were over the city of Vienna, his aircraft was hit by flak, and it seemed that the number two engine came off. The ship slid off, not out of control, until out of sight. No parachutes were reported. All were KIA."

Another loss from the 727th formation was a/c #44-41056, named "42-Kay." Pilot: 1Lt. Homer T. Brewer. It was witnessed thusly by 2Lt. Walter F. Oaks: "Leading the flight in which I flew was a/c #44-41056, with Lieutenant Brewer as pilot. Just as bombs were about to be dropped, and while we were over the city of Vienna, his aircraft received a direct hit in the bomb-bay and exploded. No chutes were reported." Contrary to Lt. Oakes' statement, all on board became POW's.)

As I put on my parachute I noted the damage to our a/c. There was a large hole in the right side, just forward of where I was standing manning the waist gun. Also, the number three engine propeller was windmilling out of control and the engine was sitting cocked in the cowlings, which caused a lot of drag. About this same time, a shell went through the bomb-bay without exploding, leaking the fuel and soaked the four of us in the waist with 100 octane fuel. By this time we were sure that we had bought the end. Eddie Galenas put on his goggles and watched for a signal from the Skipper, while sitting in the spray of fuel. Next was a fire in the number one engine, and then on to number two engine. When the rudder and elevators started to show the effects of the heat, we got Lenny Dumas out of his turret, and about the same time Eddie gave the signal to abandon the aircraft.

We had opened the camera hatch earlier, just in case of an urgent bailout. We were ready, with our parachutes on and checked with each other as to how we would go out. I was designated first to go out and dropped out. I free-fell about 5,000 feet and pulled my parachute ring. The parachute snapped open and a buckle on the strap hit me in the mouth, breaking a tooth



S/Sgt John C. Schumacher
Photo Taken At Time Of Interrogation At Oberursel, Germany

Classification changed to **RESTRICTED**

CONFIDENTIAL

MISSING AIR CREW REPORT

9092

by E. A. BRADSHAW, Lt. Col. by F. M. MUEHCH, Capt., AC

Date of report 15 Oct 1944 Location Castelluccio, Italy Command or Air Force 15th Air Force

Group 451st bombardment group (H) Squadron 727th bomb sq (H)

2. SPECIFY: Place of departure Castelluccio, Italy Course (See Reverse)
 Target Vienna, Austria Type of mission Combat

3. WEATHER CONDITIONS AND VISIBILITY AT TIME OF CRASH OR WHEN LAST REPORTED:
CAVU

4. GIVE: (a) Date 13 Oct 1944 Time 1240 Last known position Vienna, Austria
 (b) Specify whether: (X) Last sighted, () Forced down, () Seen to crash,
 () Last contacted by radio, () No information.

5. AIRCRAFT (POST) (BELIEVED LOST) AS A RESULT OF: (Check one only)
 () Enemy aircraft, (X) Enemy anti-aircraft, () Other

6. AIRCRAFT: Type, model & series B-24 J AAF Serial Number 44-41152

7. NICKNAME OF AIRCRAFT Our Gal

8. ENGINES: Type, model & series R-1830-65 A AAF Serial Number (a) RP-442262
 (b) BP-441871 (c) BP-442355 (d) BP-441181

9. INSTALLED WEAPONS: (Make, type and serial number.)
 (a) Brown Cal 50 1253764 (e) Brown Cal 50 1202445 (i) Brown Cal 50 1201872
 (b) Brown Cal 50 1202591 (f) " " " 1202098 (j) " " " 1312611
 (c) " " " 1310946 (g) " " " 1253603 (k) " " " " "
 (d) " " " 1202125 (h) " " " 1538871 (l) "

10. PERSONNEL LISTED BELOW REPORTED AS: (X) Battle Casualty, () Non-Battle Casualty.

11. NUMBER OF PERSONS ABOARD AIRCRAFT: Crew 10; Passengers 0; Total 10
 (If more than 12 persons aboard aircraft, use separate sheet.)

CREW POSITION	FULL NAME (Last, first, initial)	RANK, SERIAL NUMBER	CURRENT STATUS	NEXT OF KIN, RELATIONSHIP AND ADDRESS
(1) Pilot	<u>Moye, James M.</u>	<u>1st Lt., O-741052</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Mae E. Moye, wife, 524-7th Ave., Laurel, Miss.</u>
(2) Co-pilot	<u>Hall, Devon R.</u>	<u>1st Lt., O-825846</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Guy L. Hall, Father, 202 W. 2nd St., Nappanee, Ind.</u>
(3) Navigator	<u>Zimmer, Robert E.</u>	<u>1st Lt., O-722911</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Alfred Zimmer, Father, 370 Riverside Drive, New York, N.Y.</u>
(4) Bombardier	<u>Prower, Vernon V.</u>	<u>1st Lt., O-776886</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Beatrice A. Prower, Mother, 388 W. Ohio St., Chicago, Ill.</u>
(5) Upper Tur.	<u>Scully, John T.</u>	<u>S/Sgt., 11089569</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Ann Scully, wife, 8 Mill St., Dorchester, Mass.</u>
(6) Lower Tur.	<u>Galenas, Joseph</u>	<u>S/Sgt., 36850456</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Mary R. Galenas, Mother, 7343 Roland St., Detroit, Michigan</u>
(7) Right waist	<u>Dimeo, Mario E.</u>	<u>S/Sgt., 31271724</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Maria Dimeo, Mother, 9 Stanford St., Boston, Mass.</u>
(8) Left waist	<u>Schumacher, John C.</u>	<u>S/Sgt., 37572073</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Mable Schumacher, Mother, 804 2nd St. S.E., Little Falls, Minn.</u>
(9) Tail gun.	<u>Dumas, Leonard J.</u>	<u>S/Sgt., 32948789</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Martha S. Dumas, Mother, 50 Brown St., Malone, N.Y.</u>
(10) Nose gun.	<u>Roman, Joseph E.</u>	<u>S/Sgt., 13188212</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>Marie Roman, Mother, 3 Howard St., Brownsville, Pa.</u>
(11)				
(12)				

12. IDENTIFY BELOW THOSE PERSONS WHO ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE LAST KNOWLEDGE OF AIRCRAFT AND CHECK APPROPRIATE (one only) COLUMN TO INDICATE BASIS FOR SAME:

NAME IN FULL	RANK	SERIAL No.	BY RADIO	SAW CONTACTED LAST	SAW FORCED SIGHTED CRASH LANDING
(1) <u>Walter F. Oakes, Jr.</u>	<u>2nd Lt.</u>	<u>O-736711</u>			<u>X</u>
(2)					
(3)					

13. IF PERSONNEL ARE BELIEVED TO HAVE SURVIVED, CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:
 () Parachutes were used. () Persons were seen walking away from the scene of the crash.
 () Other reasons (specify) No parachutes were seen.

14. ATTACH PHOTOGRAPH, MAP OR SKETCH SHOWING LAST KNOWN LOCATION OF AIRCRAFT.
 15. ATTACH EYEWITNESS DESCRIPTIONS OF CRASH, FORCED LANDING, OR OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES.
 16. ATTACH A DESCRIPTION OF EXTENT OF SEARCH, IF ANY, AND GIVE NAME, RANK AND SERIAL NUMBER OF OFFICER IN CHARGE OF SEARCH HERE. None made

2. Inclosures.
 Incl 1 - statement. Date 16 October 1944
 Incl 2 - sketch.

CONFIDENTIAL

Jack Bernstein
 Signature of preparing officer
JACK BERNSTEIN,
 Captain, Air Corps,
 Executive.

MCA #1

off at gun line. For the few minutes that I was riding the parachute down I saw the rest of the crew down the line. As I neared the ground I saw farm workers running to the area where I would land. Upon landing in a cornfield, I gathered my parachute up and stuck it into a corn shock and sat down to put my shoes on. When flying I wore heated shoes with flight boots to keep my feet warm. But just in case of bail out, I had wired a pair of GI shoes to a snap-ring on the seat ring of my harness. As I unwired my shoes and was putting them on, the field workers came. Some ran by at first, but then a fellow with a double barrel shotgun came and laid it on my nose. The language barrier was unavoidable, as I knew it would be. I got up and was given my parachute and boots to carry and was marched off towards a small hamlet with that old double barrel jabbing me in the back. It appeared that he was quite provoked at us because we were "terror-fliers." Part way down the line I met the Bombardier assigned to our crew for this mission; Vernon Drower. The non-uniformed military came out and took us into the village, and I was glad to get rid of that shotgun.

We must have been quite a sight as we were marched into this hamlet and turned over to the city authorities in the center of the town. In the entry room, which was a large room with tables and chairs, were two German officials. The military had released us to them so they could search our clothing. As they would lay items on the table from one pocket and examine it, then check out another pocket, we would pick up the items and re-pocket it, unbeknownst to them. This went on until they found the same things on us the third and fourth time. So, they moved us further from the table where they had placed the items and after they were satisfied, they placed us in a cell. We picked up most of our things on the way out of the room, on the way to the cell. We carried our parachutes with us. The cell was outside, a room about 10 feet by 12 feet, with very thick walls and only a bench of wood without any type of pad. The door was about 2 or 3 inches thick with a barred window without glass or shutter. This was the beginning of what was, for us, to become a prisoner of war (POW - Kriegsgefanen) status. The cell was without lights, so about dusk we prepared for the night. About this time we heard someone outside, and that someone placed some grapes on the window sill. She must have been very short and with aged hands, as best we could see. We were very thankful, for this was our only food for that day.

The first night as a POW will always be remembered as we were so cold with no heat or blankets. We wrapped ourselves into our parachutes and slept close together for warmth. Morning came and the sun shown into our cell and warmed us a little. No food or contact with anyone. About noon

we watched some of our planes returning from another mission in this area. About mid-afternoon the German military came for us. A military truck picked us up which had the rest of our crew aboard. They had been kept in a small town just south of where Vern and I were held. We had a good reunion with the rest of the crew, but Devon Hall, our Copilot, was not there. We figured that he had left the aircraft, but no further word of him from that time.

After much discussion by the crew, we found the Pilot had sent him to check on the four of us in the waist section, as we had lost all intercom. But he never arrived. We then surmised that he did not have a parachute on and was blown out of the airplane about the time we were hit in the bomb bay. This was later confirmed by the Department of Grave Registrations, that contacted Devon's dad. His body is interred in the Lorraine American Cemetery at St. Avold, France.

We were then transported to an air base south of Vienna. We had our first food in two days and were kept in a celled room. That same night we were taken by truck to the railroad station in Vienna. There were six or eight guards assigned, and we were split in two rooms of a passenger car and with two guards in each room, which made it quite crowded. There were large luggage racks on each side of these rooms, so we younger members slept up there so as to give more room to those below. We also found the food in the guards' pack which we could easily reach. So we helped ourselves to part of it while the guards dosed off. When they found out what we were doing, they were really mad and made us get down. Arrived in Nuremberg late into the night, hungry and cold, and were placed in a jail adjacent to the railroad depot to await the train to Frankfurt.

We hounded a guard, whom we had talked to in broken English, for something to eat. He checked, and on his own, when it was his time to guard us, took some of us, I was one, to the kitchen along the tracks and got us two pails of potatoes, bowls and spoons which we took back to the jail. He also found some wood and boxes to build a fire with. That food sure tasted good and we all fell asleep with the fire keeping us warm and our appetites satisfied.

We changed trains again before dawn. As we were getting on the train, an elderly couple had several baskets of product to load aboard, so we all helped and had everything aboard in no time. They were grateful for our help and gave each of us an apple (we has sort of helped ourselves before). When daylight came and they saw who we were, a lot of sour words were spoken and they moved their goodies away from us.

As the train came into Frankfurt, we could really see the damage that had been done by the

bombing of the city. Huge buildings were only partly standing with furniture setting there. We were at the main railroad station of Frankfurt and they moved us to a different platform, which was also badly damaged. There we were joined by a P-51 pilot who had had engine failure, bailed out and was beaten by the populace. He was afraid to ask to go to the latrine and went in his pants. This gave us the opportunity to start asking the guards for trips to the latrine. This was a sorry sight, with all the refugees milling around, and after the second time around, the guards would not let us go again.

From Frankfurt we boarded a train to Oberursel, the interrogation center, arriving about October 15, 1944. Oberursel was a small town, nevertheless, after leaving the train we had about a 30 minute walk to our destination. We were put in a small room in the basement of this particular building and then taken for individual interrogation. The interrogator I had spoke excellent English and in small talk said he was from the State of Virginia, USA. After he thought he had gained my confidence he gave me a preprinted form to fill out. I filled in only the necessary name, rank and serial number and gave the paper back to him. When he found that I would not fill in more, he appeared angry and threatened that they would NOT notify my family that I was a POW, and I would get no food until this form was completed.

So I was placed into solitary; a cell that was about six by ten feet in size, with only a wall bench to sit or lay on. I was given instructions that when I was ready to fill out the form, I would be able to join the rest of the crew. Supper came and it was just a bowl of barley stew, and so night fell.

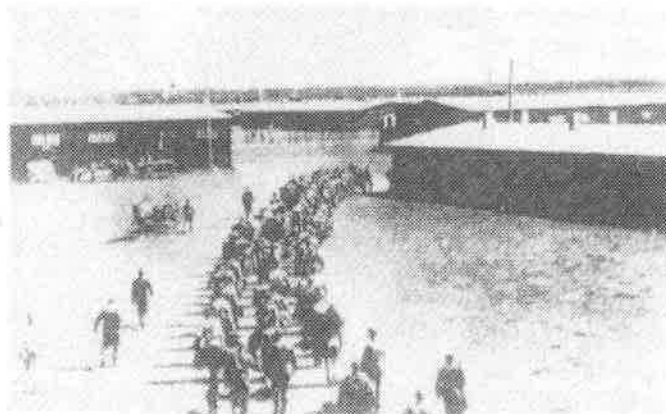
I asked to go to the latrine as often as possible to try to see any of the other crew members. I saw only one as he was being placed in his cell.

The next forenoon the interrogator sent for me and tried to, again, convince me to complete the form, referencing the organization and many other military questions. He also gave me a American cigarette and left the pack between us, to which I helped myself and put a few into my pocket when he turned his head. After this session I was returned to my cell. Then, a short time later, the guard came and released me to a holding area, a Dulag transit camp for POWs. This was about 17 October 1944. I was with the rest of the crew until it was time for us to depart for our assigned Stalag Luft.

On October 19, 1944, we, the Enlisted Men, left the Dulag by rail for the Enlisted Men's camp -- unknown destination. We were marched a short distance and were placed in this rail car, well barred to deter escape. There were about 20 to 30 men in this rail car, all with the same background as the six of us from our crew. Other than the guards at the ends of the car, and a walking guard going up and down the corridor, we were left pretty much alone. Our

car was attached to different trains as we moved northeast towards Berlin. We bypassed Berlin and went on to the town of Stetten, then continuing on to Gross Tychow, Stalag Luft IV, arriving about October 24, 1944. On this trip we saw a lot of destruction that had been created by the bombing we had been part of; the American planes by day and the British by night. Very few motor vehicles were seen, but horses were used everywhere. At a railroad crossing we noted a horse drawn wagon with a load of tinsel (chaff) that we would throw out of the aircraft to throw the German radar off and give false reading for their anti-aircraft guns. We also saw one of the first German jets in flight; a two engine make-over, which we all watched with amazement.

At the railroad station of Gross Tychow we left the rail car and were marched through the woods on a roadway leading somewhere. We were a bit apprehensive as to what, and where, we were heading. A bit apprehensive from all the stories we had heard about troop annihilation, and observing all the machine gunners in the bunkers in the woods along the roadway. But, as we had been told, after about three-quarters of a mile, we did arrive at the POW



Arrival Of New POWs At Stalag Luft IV

camp for Enlisted Men air crews at Stalag Luft IV.

Upon our arrival at Stalag Luft IV we were taken into a large building where we were strip-searched and each item was checked for hidden items - like a compass, wire or anything that could assist in an escape attempt, or be used for contact with the Allies. While I was being searched, without realizing it I found myself waking up on the floor. As I got up slowly I received a second blow on my left side, knocking me down for the second time. This assault was from a 'Big Stoop' and for no reason. The guard that was doing my search said he was sorry it happened but he had no control over him. 'Big Stoop' was over six feet tall and about 50 years old, with very large hands which he used to cuff men on the side of the head, sometimes causing severe ear drum damage. I was just another of

his victims to see stars from his aggressive action and consequently have lost the hearing in my left ear.

(Editor ... A bit of searching on the Internet brought this to light concerning 'Big Stoop' and another of the more brutal German guards, notably 'The Mad Captain.' "German POW camps are generally acknowledged to have observed the letter of the law, but were often a world unto themselves; isolated kingdoms, in far off places, where men of cruelty and ill will could do their worst .. away from prying eyes of civilization and the rule of law. Rank and military necessity were their cloak and disguise. 'The Mad Captain' [Walther Pickhardt] and 'Big Stoop' [Hans Schmidt] were two of the most notorious Germans from Luft IV. Feldwebel [rank equivalent to American Sergeant] Hans Schmidt was described as; 6'-7", oafish, heavysset, fair hair, large hands, mean face, aka Big Stoop, Slap Ears, Ham Hands. Notorious guard at Luft IV and trigger man for his superiors, physically abused hundreds of PW's and pilfered Red Cross supplies for his own purpose.)

After the search we were assigned to barracks and rooms. Joe Roman and I were assigned to the same British barrack, but in adjacent rooms. Joe's arm had received an open injury that became so infected that we could not help him any more without proper medical attention. On October 25th, Joe went into the camp hospital where he stayed until November 13th. I saw to the daily changing of his bandages and would wash and rinse them for reuse the next day.

I made the acquaintance with most of the fellows in the room I was assigned to. The room chief was Douglas L. Boyer, who helped me settle in. After two weeks without being able to shower, I had my first bath with a pail of water. The best system was to buddy together and use the one pail to soap-up and the second to rinse with, as each person only received one pail of warm water per POW.

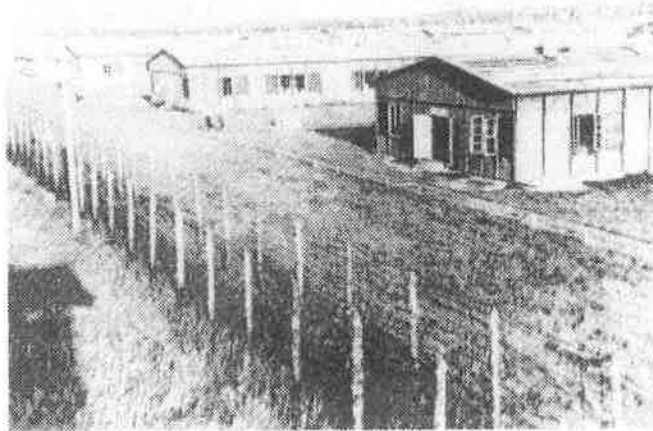
The room was about 20 by 24 feet with 16 built-in double bunks, and the British occupied all of these. Of the 19 POWs in the room, 16 were British and 3 were Americans, so we Americans

slept on the benches or tables, as it was too cold to sleep on the floor. As the nights got colder, it became too cold to sleep on the benches or the table. Some of the British doubled up and gave their bunk to an American. I was the only one still trying to sleep on the table. As the temperature continued dropping it was so cold I had everything on, including my overcoat and two issued blankets; one GI Red Cross issue and one German horse blanket - and I was still cold. We had a stove in the room to cook on and have heat from, but we got only so many charcoal blocks per day, so we conserved on their use as much as we could. Because I complained so strongly about the cold I was invited to share a bunk with a British roommate, but after about two hours I was out laying on the table again, with about everything I could find to cover me. The next morning Doug Boyer said we Americans could have his bunk and he would bunk in with Slim White from Ontario, Canada. I and another American, I don't remember his name, shared this bunk which made for a lot better sleeping on my part.

For covering, we sewed the GI blanket into a bag and covered ourselves with the German blanket and our GI coats, and we slept well for a change. The 25 Watt bulb that hung from the center of the room as the only light for the room and lights-out was either seven or eight o'clock. If the light came on later, either new prisoners were arriving, or it was a shake-down to check for bed count, or look for items of escape or contraband we should not have.

Food was always on our minds. After being

hungry for so long it just became another ache. The Germans supplied some food. One was a Chicory type coffee, very thick and syrupy, like you'd have for breakfast. If you had something from your Red Cross parcel to go with it, it helped quiet the hunger pangs. Hot water was supplied about 10, 12 and 3 o'clock. A stew of potatoes, sweets (a type of rutabaga), or barley was the evening meal. With that we got about a one inch cube of bread for each person. This bread was delivered by the loaf and two persons were detailed each day to cut an divide it evenly. This procedure was watched carefully by all participants. That one inch cube of bread was so



"A" Lager - Back Of Barracks #1, 2 & 3: Stalag Luft IV

AGAIN, REMEMBER: YOUR \$\$\$ DONATIONS HELPS OUR CAUSE

heavy that with a sharpened dinner knife, it could be cut very thin and used in conjunction with whatever we had available from the Red Cross parcels. The Red Cross parcel that we received were to sustain one person for one week. We only received one-fourth parcel per person, as it was hard to get transportation, especially since the Allies controlled the skies. The Red Cross food parcel contained the following:

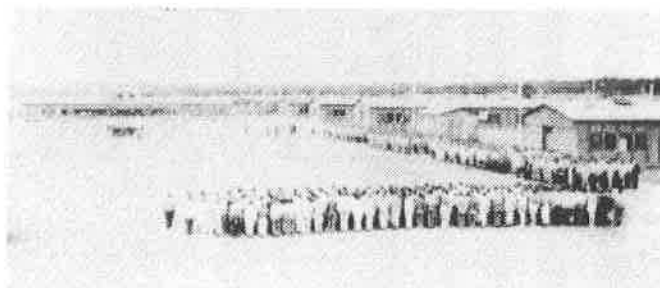
- 16 ounces - Powdered Milk
- 2 ounces - Powdered Coffee, or 4 ounces Tea
- 8 ounces - Sugar: cube
- 16 ounces - Margarine: can
- 8 ounces - Cheese: box or can
- 4 ounces - Pate: liver or chicken
- 6 ounces - Jam
- 8 ounces - Salmon, Tuna, or Sardines
- 8 ounces - Cocoa, M & M Candy, or Dark Chocolate

The single Red Cross parcel for Christmas was shared by two persons and contained the following:

- 16 ounces Turkey - Canned
- 16 ounces Pudding - Canned
- 6 ounces Frankfurters
- 6 ounces Deviled Ham
- 6 ounces Jam
- 6 ounces Honey
- 12 ounces Candy - Mixed
- 8 ounces Nuts - Mixed
- 2 Fig Bars
- 6 ounces Cherries
- 16 ounces Dates
- 1 Cribbage Set
- 1 Deck Playing Cards
- 1 Smoking Pipe
- 1 Package Pipe Tobacco
- 3 Packs Cigarettes
- 4 Package Gum
- 2 ounces Tea
- 4 ounces Cheese - Canned
- 4 ounces Butter - Canned
- 2 ounces Bouillon Cubes

With the above Red Cross parcels and the German rations we were still hungry, but by carefully planning our available food we could keep the hunger pangs down.

The daily schedule was, coffee from the mess hall -- roll call at 9 and 4 o'clock every day with each barrack lined up in front of their respective building in four lines. The guards, one in front and one in back, would count everyone. If the count did not come out right, we stood and were counted until it did. We had an elected Compound Chief and an



Typical Roll Call

elected Barracks Chief and a Room Chief. The German Commandant was an elderly gentleman, very neat in dress. I met him personally during a barracks individual check. My record was handed to him and he wanted to see me, an American, in with the British. He did not speak any English.

The British were very afraid of the Germans and many times would just shake when a guard was around. There were guards that just roamed through the barracks and rooms to see what everyone was doing, hopefully not something that was forbidden (verboteh). The one that came into our room, most of the time, was a little fellow that had clothes that hung on him like they were five sizes too large. And he always seemed to have a stupid grin on his face. As he would walk into the room, someone would shout, "Goons Up!" After a few times whenever the door opened and he was about to enter, he himself would shout, "Goons Up!"

We spent part of our day by walking around the compound. The amount of time spent 'walking the compound' all depended on our energy as related to the nourishment we received. Reading took up a lot of our time. There was a small library of paperbacks which gave some help in finding something to read. Another pastime was card playing and usually a game or two were going on all the time. Regardless, our freedom was lost and we were so far from anywhere, and were always struggling to keep our hopes up. We could see our strength slip away because of poor diet and the lack of proper nourishment. If you would cut, or scratch yourself, it would not heal, but just fester until it finally healed itself. When the holidays came, like Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years, it became the most loneliest time for us POWs.

Through good old ingenuity, we received the BBC news broadcast daily. Radio receivers were made from tin cans, and whatever, you name it. To receive the news we had to have a hiding place and our guards were posted wherever the radio was in use. This was so the Jerries could not walk in and find that radio. Then it was 'walking time' to all barracks rooms to relay the news. This had to be done in a way that was not a fixed pattern, so's not to alert the German guards. Our guards were posted in the hallways to keep us posted. This was how we

kept up with the way the war was going. Also, by the attitude of the German guards we could sense how they were taking the news. Such as the Battle of the Bulge. When the Germans had the upper hand, they were very jubilant. The news of the 'Bulge' came early in the morning and was a downfall to us. But when the Allies stopped the German advance, the guards were long-faced, and we Americans would 'needle' them as much as we dared.

The weather kept getting colder and with the little food (one-fourth parcel) that the Germans supplied was not enough to sustain us. We saw this in each other as our ribs were more predominate and we did not move around very much, except for roll call. We word everything we had and sometimes even wrapped a blanket around us.

We started to hear the rumble of artillery fire off to the East and knew the Russians were on the assault. The next bit of information to come to us, was that there were too many persons in this camp and the overflow would have to be moved out.

The assembly, for those picked to move, began the morning of January 30, 1945.

(Editor .. Clarification on evacuation of Stalag Luft IV: In late January, the Stalag Luft IV airmen could see the distant flash of artillery fire, which meant an advancing front - and probably their liberation - was not far away. Then came the evacuation order and the departure of sick and wounded prisoners by train. More men went by rail a few days later. Finally, on February 6, the remaining POWs set out on foot.)

We were given one Red Cross parcel per each two individuals. Joe and I were together again and so we shared the same parcel. As we moved out of the gates, in columns of four, we started down the tree lined road and saw guards manning machine guns in the woods. At the end of our march there was a train waiting for us. It was all boxcars with guard boxes on each car and guards everywhere. Joe and I climbed aboard and took a corner for more room. Hay and straw had been placed in the boxcar to sit and sleep upon. There were so many men packed into this small European boxcar that we could not all lay down at the same time. To make more room we took our shoelaces and made a hammock with them. The hammock was stretched from a vent window to a tie loop of sorts, and it worked out very well. The only problem was that my feet would get cold from the vent, since it was winter with snow on the ground. It got especially cold at night.

We could not determine what our destination would be as our train started out from the siding and headed west. We noted that the train did not run when there was a possibility of an Allied air attack. Fighter planes, on their way home after escort duty with the bombers, enjoyed targets of

opportunity and railroad engines were one of their main targets.

At one point in our journey, the train stopped. We did not know why until much later. For the next eight days we stayed in these boxcars, our prison on the railway. The food ran out by the third day and there was no water. The train moved into an area of open fields and after the guards were posted, we were allowed out of our boxcar to relieve ourselves and get some exercise for our legs. Only so many boxcars were let out at a time. It seemed the only movement of the train was to find a new place for us to fertilize.

On the evening of the fourth day, in the dark of night, I got so sick that my system emptied out from both ends. We had buckets for this and I was not the only one to be sick like that. Once my system was purged, I do not recall anything for the next 40 plus hours. Joe and some of the others put me in my hammock and I slept through the next day and awoke about midday, too weak even to get up. Also, there was no need to. My feet became very cold and Joe, who had been checking on me, could do nothing to help. He had added some wrappings around my feet to ward off the cold. It did not take long to realize that my feet were frostbitten, as the nights had been very cold, according to Joe and the others.

The train started to move again and before long we were in the city of Stettin. The reason for our long delay and slow movement was that the city had been severely bombed by Allied air power and the rail line had to be repaired. After clearing the town, the train sped up and sometime during the night we arrived at our destination, which turned to be Barth, Germany. The prisoner of war camp was Stalag Luft I, Officer's camp.

The word that was passed down to our boxcar was that we would be marching into the newest compound of this camp. They had just built this addition to the camp and we were designated to occupy it. We got our belongings together, which did take but a few minutes. I tried to put on my shoes but my feet were too swollen and really hurt. I was still weak from my 'bug episode' and the problem of malnutrition was taking its toll.

Word came to fall-out for the march, except for those that felt they could not march. I was still trying to put on my shoes. The Germans were trying to find transportation for us, but after waiting for some time it was suggested the if we would try to walk, we could take our own time. So I forced my shoes on and struggled off. With the help of one another, we marched the distance of about three miles to Stalag Luft I.

I managed to walk into Stalag Luft I, sick, sore and stinking and was assigned to North 1 Compound, which had only three barracks. I found a corner in the barrack and established my claim.

This compound had a Mess Hall where all rations were pooled and we had staggered eating times. The food was good, and with some hot coffee or tea, we held on.

There were a lot of rooms in our compound, so, since Joe and I became separated on the march in, he made an effort to find me. On February 11, four days after our arrival, I heard someone call my name from the next room; Joe had found me.

There was a good shower system and we were allowed one shower a week. The water was turned on long enough to get wet and soap up, then the water was turned on again to rinse off. The operator (an American) would leave the water on extra long if the guard was not in, or watching. Also, it was not uncommon if one fell in with another group for an extra shower. Joe and I cleaned up our clothing after living worse than animals. It took over two weeks before I could walk normally.

The room I was in was a large room and had two stoves for heating and cooking, if and when we had to. There were no bunks or beds and we all slept on the floor around the outside of the room, which was on the south end of the building. It was not as cold here as it was at Stalag Luft IV, and we had more fuel for the stoves. Even though we slept on the floor it was not as cold as you would imagine. All we had was a bare room, no tables or benches, so we just used our bed area for everything.

The guards brought in a crew of Russian POWs who checked the building from roof to underside for anything suspicious. While the Russians were under the building, some floor boards were removable and they asked for items to trade. In trade we received onions, potatoes and some boards they had taken off during their inspection. These had nails imbedded and were reusable. Joe and I seized on this opportunity to build a bunk in our corner with these boards. Two of the fellows in our barrack had illegal metal bars which we used as hammers to remove, straighten and hammer in the nails to build ourselves a double deck bunk in our corner. We did not have many nails and no saw to cut the boards, so we had to break and use them the best we could. After a few hours of work the question came, "Will it hold?" First one of us got in it and it moved around a bit, but it still held okay. So we both got up on the top bunk with no problem of it falling down. We could both put our gear in the bunk and it sure was good to get it off the floor. Still, sitting or sleeping on the bunk was almost the same as being on the floor - it was just as hard, but was much neater and cleaner. Maybe the reason the bunk held was that we had lost so much weight. I was almost half my normal weight.

The daily news reports were more encouraging than ever, as we had moved into March and the weather was getting warmer. Red Cross parcels

were in short supply as, again, the German transportation was being hit hard by Allied Forces. The Red Cross convoy did arrive at the end of March with a supply of Red Cross parcels. The convoy was made up of American vehicles, American prisoners of war, and Swiss Officials of the Red Cross.

With the arrival of the Red Cross parcels, Joe and I decided to make a cake for Easter, April 1, 1945. The cake was made from scraps of German brot (bread), two spoons of margarine, twenty seedless prunes, three spoons of Jerry sugar, powdered milk, three squares of chocolate D bar and six bicarbonate tablets. We baked it in the bottom of the stove for four hours. Slow, as not to burn. When finished we made an icing - it sure tasted good.

After Easter, April 1, 1945, we Kriegie's felt that life was going quite well and with warm sunny days, it made us all feel better. The German boxer, Max Schmeling, visited us one day. Joe went to see him and said he was quite a joker.

We awoke early on April 4th to find the Mess Hall on fire. The guards would not let us out to fight the fire until more guards could be posted. When the German fire fighters arrived it was like the Three Stooges trying to put out a match. By the time we were let out to help, it was gone and there was nothing to save. So, after this our food had to be cooked by ourselves. Joe and I drew our rations together, which made it easier to share whatever we received and we cooked, either taking turns or together.

Extra Red Cross parcels were given out on April 23rd. We received our first Canadian parcels then, and another on April 27th. We knew from radio reports, and the action by the guards, release would come soon. With the extra rations, and with no need to make it last, one did not hear the tune of Yankee Doodle being played by our belly button on our backbone.

We awoke, on April 30, 1945, with artillery fire going off in the distance and went outside to see what was happening. The word came down to dig foxholes as the Russians were not that far away and the Germans may use the camp as a fortification. This question was settled when the guards left, and the camp was turned over to the senior American Officer, Colonel Zemke, at 2300 hours.

The next day, May 1st, many were up early, if they had even gone to bed, and the fences were pulled down. The Russians arrived, and with them came a herd of cattle. Many of them were good milk cows. With the number of farm boys around, the cows could barely keep up with the demand for milk. We also had a huge barbecue, as a whole steer was butchered and put on a roasting spit. We used the old wooden fence posts as fuel. Everyone helped, so no one person had to do it all. Times

were getting good.

LIBERATION WAS AT HAND

After the guards left there were no curfew hours to be concerned with. The weather was good, sunny and dry and we had plenty to eat. So now came the question as to when we would be back into American hands. The staff of Colonel Zemke needed a typist, so I volunteered. Like I told Joe, "I need to be in the 'Head Shed' to find out what's going on."

After a few tries, I finally mastered the German typewriter and was getting messages out to other Compound Commanders. Our office was informed that there were American Red Cross parcels being looted by Germans. So the complete staff, leaving only the Executive Officer, headed to the barracks to help. We started a chain to retrieve the parcels and to get them to the troops that were in need of additional food.

The word was sent out that we should all stick together for safety sake. Some did not and started to leave camp, only to return the next day. The Russian Commander, on his arrival, issued the order to vacate the camp and be prepared for a six hour march. Colonel Zemke called all the staff together and said to prepare accordingly, while he would see what he could do to nullify the order. In the meanwhile he told us to stay in contact with the office.

I returned to the barrack where Joe and I prepared for whatever was to come. We sewed a shirt to make a backpack and filled it with canned goods, etc. Everyone was pretty morbid. How could our Russian Allies do this to us? Not much was said as everyone prepared on their own. I think that some did not do anything to prepare and would take it as it came.

About an hour before we were scheduled to start the march, I returned to Headquarters. The Colonel had not returned from trying to get the marching order rescinded. When he later returned, the march order was call off. Now we knew that the Russians were now in charge and we had no idea what would come next.

After the arrival of a Russian Commanding General, and the conferences held by the Russian-American-British staffs, it was decided to follow General Eisenhower's message to all POWs .. Stand by for evacuation by air.

The Russian Commander placed the city of Barth 'off-limits,' which kept the traffic into Barth at a minimum. Joe and I made several trips into Barth, since working on staff we had a pass signed by Colonel Zemke and the Russian Commander. This allowed us freedom of movement in case we were challenged, but no Ruski MP ever challenged us.

The front-line troops that occupied Barth were very ruthless with the Germans and carried sub-machine guns 'at the ready' and drank vodka like water. Most of these Russian combat hardened

veterans had experienced the scorched earth tactics that the Germans had imposed while in Russia and they gave the Germans no mercy in their daily activities.

Time was long, waiting for our evacuation. The Russian Commander allowed an entertainment unit to give their presentation to us, the same as to their own troops. It was equivalent to our American USO shows.

The day of our departure arrived, May 13, 1945. Word was passed and we were up early and ready to march to the airport for our flight to freedom. The planes were B-17s, B-24s, and C-47s. As soon as they landed the group that was assigned to that aircraft were boarded immediately, without engine shutdown and were ready for take-off. We were a very elated group of 'now Ex-POWs' as soon as the aircraft lifted off the runway and headed west.



Delousing & Showers

We landed at a small American airfield, somewhere in France. The Base personnel took good care of us. We were deloused and had a good shower with soap. I believe Joe and I were almost waterlogged by the time we got out of the shower. And for the first time in seven months we had all clean clothes, plus a few extras for changes. Then it was off to the Mess Hall for food. The first night of freedom we must have been very tired, as I cannot remember what we ate, but do remember going to bed early.

The next day, 14 May 1945, we boarded a C-47 and flew to Camp Lucky Strike near Le Havre, France for processing and return to the USA. We signed in and filled out two 5 X 8 cards, one of which was turned in and the other was our pass to wherever we wanted to go.

Addendum: Four members of our crew who were on the 57 day, 500+ mile "Death March," while Joe Roman and I somehow were skipped over, were -- Mario DiMeo, Leonard Dumas, Edward Galenas and John Scully)

(Thus ended S/Sgt John C. Schumacher's POW experience.)

STALAG LUFT III (Officers POW Camp)

Prepared by **MILITARY INTELLIGENCE
SERVICE WAR DEPARTMENT**

1 November 1945

STALAG LUFT 3

(Air Force Officers)

LOCATION

Until 27 Jan. 1945, Stalag Luft 3 was situated in Province of Silesia, 90 miles southeast of Berlin, in a stand of fir trees south of Sagan (51°35'N latitude - 15°19'30' East longitude).

In the Jan. exodus, the South Compound & Center Compound moved to Stalag 7A, Moosburg (48°27' North latitude - 11°57' East longitude). The West Compound & North Compound moved to Stalag 13D, Numerg-Langwasser (49°27' North latitude - 11°50' East longitude) and then proceeded to Moosburg, arriving 20 April 1945.

STRENGTH

On 14 April 1942 Lt. (j.g.) John E. Dunn, 0-6545, U.S. Navy, was shot down by Germans and subsequently became the 1st American flyer to be confined in Stalag Luft 3, then solely a prison camp for officers PW of the Royal Air Force. By 15 June 1944, U.S. Air Force officers in camp numbered 3,242, and at the time of the evacuation in Jan. 1945, the International Red Cross listed the American strength as 6,844. This was the largest American officers' camp in Germany.

DESCRIPTION

When the first Americans arrived in 1942, the camp consisted of 2 compounds or enclosures, one for RAF officers and one for RAF NCOs. The rapid increases of strength forced the Germans to build 4 more compounds, with USAAF personnel taking over the Center, South, West and sharing the North Compound with the British. Adjoining each compound the Germans constructed other enclosures called "Vorlagers" in which most of the camp business was transacted and which held such offices as supply, administration and laundry.

Each compound enclosed 15 one-story, wooden barracks or "Blocks." These, in turn, were divided into 15 rooms ranging in size from 24' by 15' to 14' by 6'. Occupants slept in double-decker bunks and for every 3 or 4 men the Germans provided simple wooden tables, benches & stools. One room, equipped with a cooking range, served as a kitchen. Another, with 6 porcelain basins, was the wash-room. A 3rd, with 1 urinal & 2 commodes, was the latrine.

A "Block" could house 82 men comfortable, but with the growth in numbers of PW, rooms

assigned for 8 men began holding 10 and then 12, and the middle of Sept. 1944 saw new PW moving into tents outside the barracks.

Two barbed wire fences 10' high and 5' apart surrounded each compound. In between them may tangled barbed wire concertinas. Paralleling the barbed wire, and 25' inside the fence, ran a "warning wire" strung on 30-inch wooden posts. The zone between the warning wire & the fence was forbidden territory, entrance to which was punishable by sudden death.

At the corners of the compound and at 50-yard intervals around its perimeter rose 40' wooden guard towers holding Germans armed with rifles or machine guns.

U.S. PERSONNEL

Lt. Col. Albert P. Clark, Jr., captured on 26 July 1942, became the first Senior American Officer, a position he held until the arrival of Col. Charles G. Goodrich some 2 months later. The enforces seclusion of individual compounds necessitated the organization of each as an independent PW camp. At the time of the move from Sagan, camp leaders were as follows:

Senior Allied Officer - Brigadier General Arthur W. Vanaman

SAO South Compound - Col. Charles G. Goodrich

SAO Center Compound - Col. Delmar T. Spivey

SAO West Compound - Col. Darr H. Alkire

SAO North Compound - Lt. Col. Edwin A. Bland

The staff of a compound was organized into two categories:

- a. Adjutant
 - b. German property
 - c. German rations
 - d. Red Cross food
 - e. Red Cross clothing
 - f. Education & Recreation
- Second Staff Depts.

- a. Mail
- b. Medical
- c. Coal
- d. Finance
- e. Canteen
- f. Orderlies, etc.

The basic unit for organization was the barrack building of block. Block staffs were organized to include the same functions as the Compound Staff, and the blocks themselves were sub-divided into squads of 10 men each.

Each compound had a highly organized Security

Committee.

GERMAN PERSONNEL

The original commandant of Stalag Luft 3 was Oberst von Lindeiner, an old-school aristocrat with some 40 years of army service. Courteous and considerate at first sight, he was inclined to fits of uncontrolled rage. Upon one occasion he personally threatened a PW with a pistol. He was, however, more receptive to PW requests than any other commandant.

After the British mass escape of March 1944, Oberst von Lindeiner was replaced by Oberstleutnant Cordes, who had been a PW in World War I. A short while later Cordes was succeeded by Oberst Braune, direct & business-like. Stricter than his predecessors, he displayed less sympathy toward PW requests. Nevertheless, he was able to stop misunderstandings such as the one resulting in guards shooting into the compounds. In general, commandants tended to temporize when dealing with PW, or else to avoid granting their requests entirely.

Most disliked by PW were the Abwehr of Security officers -Hauptmann Breuli and his successor Major Kircher.

The Luftwaffe guards were 4th rate troops either peasants too old for combat duty of young men convalescing after long tours of duty or wounds received at the front. They had almost no contact with PW. In addition to uniformed sentries, soldiers in fatigues were employed by the Germans to scout the interiors of the compounds. These "ferrets" his under barracks, listened to conversations, looked for tunnels and made themselves generally obnoxious to the PW. The German complement totaled 800.

Occasionally, as after the March 1944 escape, Gestapo groups descended upon the camp for long, thorough search.

TREATMENT

Because of their status as officers and the fact that their guards were Luftwaffe personnel, the men at Stalag Luft 3 were accorded treatment better than that granted other PW in Germany. Generally, their captors were correct in their adherence to many of the tenets of the Geneva Convention. Friction between captor & captive was constant and inevitable, nevertheless, and the strife is well illustrated by the following example.

On 27 March 1944 the Germans instituted an extra appel (Roll call) to occur any time between the regular morning & evening formations. Annoyed by an indignity which they considered unnecessary, PW fought the measure with passive resistance. They milled about, smoked, failed to stand at attention and made it impossible for the lager officer to take a count. Soon they were dismissed. Later in the day another appel was called. This time the area was lined with German soldiers holding rifles & machine guns in readiness to fire.

Discreetly, PW allowed the appel to proceed in an orderly fashion. A few days later, nevertheless, probably as a result of this deliberate protest against German policy, the unwonted extra appel was discontinued.

Since the murder of 50 RAF flyers had been attributed to the Gestapo, acts of atrocious mistreatment involving the regular Stalag Luft 3 guard complement may be narrowed down to two.

About 2200 hours, 29 Dec. 1943, a guard fired a number of shots into one barrack without excuse of apparent purpose. One bullet passed through the window and seriously wounding] the left leg of Lt. Col. John D. Stevenson. Although Col. Stevenson spent the next 6 months in hospitals, the wound left him somewhat a cripple.

About 1230 Hours, 9 April 1944, during an air raid by American bombers, Cpl. Cline C. Miles was standing in the cookhouse doorway. He was facing the interior. Without warning a guard fired at "a man" standing in the doorway. the bullet entered the right shoulder of Cpl. Miles and came out through his mouth killing him instantly.

FOOD

German rations, instead of being the equivalent of those furnished depot troops, compared with those received by non-working civilians - the lowest in Germany. While insufficient, these foods provided the bulk of staples, mainly through bread & potatoes. A PWs average daily issue of foods, with caloric content included, follows:

TYPE OF FOOD	GRAMS	CALORIES
Potatoes	390	331
Bread	350	910
Meat	11	20
Barley, Oats, Etc.	21	78
Kohlrabi	247	87
Dried vegetable	14	38
Margarine	31	268
Cheese	10	27
Jam	25	69
Sugar	25	100
TOTALS	1124	1928

A conservative estimate of the caloric requirement of a person sleeping 9 hours a day and taking very little exercise is 2,150 calories. German rations, therefore, fell below the minimum requirement for healthy nutrition.

Food came from 4 other sources: Red Cross parcels, private parcels, occasional canteen purchases and gardens. Of the Red Cross parcels, after the spring of 1943, 40% were American, 25% British, 25% Canadian and 10% miscellaneous, such as New Zealand parcels, Christmas parcels and bulk issue from the British colony in Argentina. These were apportioned at the rate of 1 per man per week during periods of normal supply. If the International Red Cross at Geneva felt that transportation difficulties would prevent the usual delivery, it would

notify the camp parcel officer to limit the issue to 1/2 parcel per man per week. Such a situation arose in Sept. 1944 when all Stalag Luft 3 went on 1/2 parcels. Average contents of American & British parcels were as follows:

AMERICAN

Food Weight (OZ)

Spam 12

Comed Beef 12

Salmon 8

Cheese 8

Dried Fruit 16

Biscuits 7

Klim 16

Margarine 16

Soluble 4

Orange Powder 4

Liver Paste 6

Chocolate 4

BRITISH

Food Weight (OZ)

Meal Roll 10

Stew 12

Cheese 4

Dried Fruit 6

Biscuit 10

Condensed Milk 14

Margarine 8

Tea 2

Cocoa 6

Jam 10

Powdered Eggs 2

Chocolate 4

Vegetables 8

Since the kitchen equipment of 10 boilers & 2 ovens per compound was obviously inadequate, most all food was prepared by the various room messes in the blocks. These messes obtained from the kitchen only hot water and, 4 times a week, hot soup. Cooking within the block was performed on a range whose heating surface was 3 square feet. During winter months, PW were able to use the heating stoves in their rooms as well. With few exceptions, each room messed by itself. All food was pooled, and room cooks were responsible for serving it in digestible & appetizing, if possible, form. Since the stove schedule provided for cooking periods from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m., some rooms ate their main meal in mid-afternoon, while others dined fashionably late. Below is a typical day's menu:

Breakfast - 9 a.m Two slices of German bread with spread, coffee (soluble) or tea.

Lunch - noon Soup (on alternate days), slice of German bread, coffee or tea.

Supper - 5:30 p.m. Potatoes, one-third can of meat, vegetables (twice a week), slice of German bread, coffee or tea.

Evening snack - 10 p.m. Desert (pie, cake, etc.)

coffee or cocoa.

A unique PW establishment was FOODACCO whose chief function was to provide PW with a means of exchange and a stable barter market where, for example, cocoa could be swapped for cigars. Profits arising from a 2% commission charged on all transactions was credited to a communal camp fund.

HEALTH

Despite confinement, crowding, lack of medical supplies & poor sanitary facilities, health of PW was astonishingly good.

For trivial ailments, the compounds maintained a first aid room. More serious cases were sent to 1 of the 2 sick quarters within the camp. Sick quarters for the South Compound originally consisted of a small building with 24 beds, a staff of 3 PW doctors and some PW orderlies. This also served the North & West Compounds. The Center Compound had its own dispensary and 2 PW doctors. On 1 June 1944, the three-compound sick quarters were replaced by a new building with 60 beds.

The Germans furnished very few medical supplies. As a result, PW depended almost wholly on the Red Cross. Large shipments of supplies, including much-needed sulfa drugs, began to arrive in the autumn of 1944. PW were also glad to receive a small fluoroscope and thermometers.

Most common of the minor illnesses were colds, sore throats, influenza, food poisoning and skin diseases. When a PW needed an x-ray or the attention of a specialist, he was examined by a German doctor. It usually took months to obtain these special attentions. Cases requiring surgery were sent to one of the English hospitals, as a rule Lamsdorf or Obermassfeld. Emergency cases went to a French hospital at Stalag 8C, one mile distant.

Dental care for the North, West & South Compounds was provided by a British dentist and an American dental student. In 14 months, the gave 1,400 treatments to 308 PW from the South Compound alone.

Sanitation was poor. Although PW received a quick delousing upon entry into the camp, they were plagued by bedbugs and other parasites. Since there was no plumbing, both indoor and outdoor latrines added to the sanitation problems in summer. PW successfully fought flies by scrubbing aborts daily, constructing fly traps and screening latrines with ersatz burlap in lieu of wire mesh.

Bathing facilities were extremely limited. In theory the German shower house could provide each man with a three-minute hot shower weekly. In face, however, conditions varied from compound to compound and if a PW missed the opportunity to take a hot shower he resorted to a sponge bath with water he had heated himself - the only other hot water available the year around.

CLOTHING

In 1943, Germany still issued booty clothing of French, Belgian or English derivation to PW. This practice soon ceased, making both Britons & Americans completely dependent on clothing received from the Red Cross. An exception to the rule was made in the winter of 1943 when the camp authorities obtained 400 old French overcoats from Anglo-American PW.

Gradually, Americans were able to replace their RAF type uniforms with GI enlisted men's uniforms, which proved extremely serviceable. When stock of clothing permitted, each PW was maintained with the following wardrobe:

- 1 Overcoat - 1 Blouse - 2 Shirts, wool or cotton
- 1 Pr. Wool trousers - 2 Pr. Winter underwear - 2 Pr. Socks
- 1 Pr. Gloves - 1 Sweater - 1 Pr. High Shoes
- 1 Belt or Suspenders - 1 Cap - 4 Handkerchiefs
- 1 Blanket (added to 2 German blankets)

WORK

Officers were never required to work. To ease the situation in camp, however, they assumed many housekeeping chores such as shoe repairing, distributing food, scrubbing their own rooms and performing general repair work on barracks.

Other chores were carried out by a group of 100 American orderlies whose work was cut to a minimum and whose existence officers tried to make as comfortable as possible under the circumstances.

PAY

The monthly pay scale of officers in Germany was as follows:

- F/O & 2d Lt. 72 Reichsmarks - 1st Lt. 81 Reichsmarks
- Capt. 96 Reichsmarks - Major 108 Reichsmarks
- Lt. Col. 120 Reichsmarks - Col. 150 Reichsmarks

Americans adhered closely to the financial policy originated by the British in 1940-42. No money was handled by individual officers but was placed by the accounts officer into individual accounts of each after a sufficient deduction had been made to meet the financial needs of the camp. These deductions, not to exceed 50% of any officer's pay, took care of laundry, letter forms, airmail postage, entertainment, escape damages and funds transmitted monthly to the NCO camps, which received no pay until July 1944.

Officers at Stalag Luft 1 contributed 33% of their pay to the communal fund, and the entire policy was approved by the War Department on 14 Oct. 1943. Since the British Government, unlike the U.S.A. deducted PW pay from army pay, Americans volunteered to carry out all canteen purchases with their own funds, but to maintain joint British-American distribution just as before.

Because of the sudden evacuation from Sagan, Allied PW had no time to meet with German finance authorities and reconcile outstanding

Reichsmark balances. The amount due to the U.S.A. alone from the German Government totals 2,984,932.75 Reichsmarks.

MAIL

Mail from home or sweetheart was the lifeblood of PW. Incoming mail was normally received 6 days a week, without limit as to number of letters or number of sheets per letter. (German objected only to V-mail forms.) Incoming letters could travel postage free, but those clipper-posted made record time. Correspondence could be carried on with private persons in any country outside of Germany; Allied, neutral or enemy. Within Germany correspondence with next-of-kin only was permitted. A PW could write one letter per month to next-of-kin in another PW camp or internees' camp.

SOUTH COMPOUND INCOMING MAIL

Month	Letters	Per Capita	Age
Sep 43	3,190	3	11 weeks
Oct 43	5,392	5	10 weeks
Nov 43	9,125	9	10 weeks
Dec 43	24,076	24	8 weeks
Jan 44	7,680	7	12 weeks
Feb 44	10,765	9	12 weeks
Mar 44	11,693	10	12 weeks
Apr 44	16,355	15	12 weeks
May 44	15,162	13	13 weeks
Jun 44	13,558	11	14 weeks
Jul 44	26,440	20	14 weeks
Aug 44	14,264	11	15 weeks
Sep 44	10,277	8	16 weeks

The travel time reverted to 11-12 weeks in the autumn of 1944, with airmail letters sometimes reaching camp in 4 to 6 weeks. All mail to Luftwaffe-held PW was censored in Sagan by a staff of German civilian and men and women.

Outgoing mail was limited, except for special correspondence, to 3 letter forms and 4 cards per PW per month. Officers above the rank of Major drew 6 letters & 4 cards while enlisted men received 2 letter forms & 4 cards. Protected personnel received a double allotment. PW paid for these correspondence forms & for airmail postage as well.

SOUTH COMPOUND OUTGOING MAIL

Month	Letters	Postage in RMs
Sep 43	3,852	924.60
Oct 43	6,711	2494.60
Nov 43	7,781	2866.66
Dec 43	7,868	2968.00
Jan 44	7,811	2915.30
Feb 44	7,968	2907.10
Mar 44	7,916	3095.80
Apr 44	8,460	3154.90
May 44	8,327	3050.20
Jun 44	10,189	3789.60
Aug 44	8,780	3366.50
Sep 44	8,777	3288.30

Each 60 days, a PW's next-of-kin could mail him a private parcel containing clothing, food and

other items not forbidden by German or U.S. Government regulations. These parcels too, were thoroughly examined by German censors.

MORALE

Morale was exceptionally high. PW never allowed themselves to doubt an eventual Allied victory and their spirits soared at news of the European invasion. Cases of demoralization were individual, caused for the most part by reports of infidelities among wives of sweethearts, or lack of mail, or letters in which people failed completely to comprehend PW's predicament. Compound officers succeeded in keeping their charges busy either physically or mentally and in maintaining discipline. The continual arrival of new PW with news of home and the air force also helped to cheer older inmates.

WELFARE

The value of the Protecting Power in enforcing the provisions of the Geneva Convention lay principally in the pressure they were able to bring to bear. Although they might have agreed with the PW point of view, they had no means of enforcing their demands upon the Germans, who followed the Geneva Convention only insofar as its provisions coincided with their policies. But the mere existence of a Protecting Power, a third party, had its beneficial effect on the German policy.

Direct interview was the only satisfactory traffic with the Protecting Power. Letters usually required 6 months for answer - if any answer was received. The sequence of events at a routing visit of Protecting Power representatives was as follows: Granting by the Germans of a few concessions just prior to the visit; excuses given by the Germans to the representatives; conference of representatives with compound seniors; conference of representative with Germans. Practical benefits usually amounted to minor concessions from the Germans.

PW of Stalag Luft 3 feel a deep debt of gratitude toward the Red Cross for supplying them with food and clothing, which they considered the 2 most important things in their PW camp life. Their only complaint is against the Red Cross PW Bulletin for its description of Stalag Luft 3 in terms more appropriately used in depicting life on a college campus than a prison camp.

PW also praised the YMCA for providing them generously with athletic equipment, libraries, public address systems and theatrical materials. With YMCA headquarters established in Sagan, the representative paid many visits to camp.

RELIGION

On 1 Dec. 1942, the Germans captured Capt. M.E. McDonald with a British Airborne Division in Africa. Because he was "out of the cloth" they did not officially recognize him as a clergyman, nevertheless, he was the accredited chaplain for the camp and conducted services for a large Protestant

congregation. He received a quantity of religious literature from the YMCA and friends in Scotland.

In April 1942, a Christian Science Group was brought together in the South compound under the direction of 2n Lt. Rudolph K. Grumm, 0-749387. His reading material was forwarded by the Church's War Relief Committee, Geneva, as was that of 1st Lt. Robert R. Brunn active in the Center Compound.

Thirteen members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Later Day Saints, sometimes known as the Mormon Church, held their first meeting in the South Compound on 7 Nov. 1943. 1st Lt. William E. McKell was nominated as presiding Elder and officiated at subsequent weekly meetings. Material was supplied by the European Student Relief Fund, the Red Cross, the YMCA and the Swiss Mission of the Church.

RECREATION

Reading was the greatest single activity of PW. The fiction lending library of each compound was enlarged by books received from the YMCA and next-of-kin until it totalled more than 2,000 volumes. Similarly, the compounds' reference libraries grew to include over 500 works of a technical nature. These books came from the European Student Relief Fund of the YMCA and from PW who had received them from home.

Athletics were second only to reading as the most popular diversion. Camp areas were cleared and made fit playing fields at first for cricket and rugby and later for softball, touch football, badminton, deck tennis and volleyball. In addition, PW took advantage of opportunities for ping-pong, wrestling, weight lifting, horizontal & parallel bar work, hockey and swimming in the fire pool. The bulk of athletic equipment was supplied by the YMCA.

The "Luftbandsters," playing on YMCA instruments, could hold its own with any name band in the U.S.A. according to those who heard them give various performances. PW formed junior bands of less experienced players and also a glee club.

Through the services of the YMCA, PW were shown 7 films, 5 somewhat dated Hollywood features and 2 German musical comedies.

Other activities included card playing, broadcasting music and news over a camp amplifier called "Station KRGY," reading the "Circuit" and "Kriegie Times" journals issued by PW news room, attending the Education Department's classes which ranged from Aeronautics to Law, Sainting, sketching and the inevitable stroll around the compound perimeter track.

SAGAN EVACUATION

At 2100 hours on 27 Jan. 1945, the various compounds received German orders to move out afoot within 30 minutes. With an eye on the advancing Red Armies, PW had been preparing 2

weeks for such a move. Thus the order came as no surprise. In barracks bags, in knotted trousers and on makeshift sleds they packed a minimum of clothing and a maximum of food - usually 1 parcel per man. Each man abandoned such items as books, letters, camp records and took his overcoat and one blanket. Between 2130 & 2400 hours, all men except some 200 too weak to walk, marched out into the bitter cold and snow in a column of threes - destination unknown. Their guards, drawn from the camp complement, bore rifles and machine pistols. They marched all night, taking 10 minutes breaks every hour.

The exodus was harrowing to PW of all compounds but especially those of the South, which made the 55 kilometers from Sagan to Muskau in 27 hours with only 4 hours of sleep. Rations consisted only of bread & margarine obtained from a horse-drawn wagon. PW slept in unheated barns. At Muskau, on the verge of exhaustion, they were in a blast furnace, which was warm and an empty heating plant, which was cold. Here they were given a 30-hour delay for recuperation. Even so, some 60 men incapable of marching farther he to be left behind. The 25 kilometers from Muskau to Spremberg on 31 Jan., the South compound, plus 200 men from the West compound, went to Stalag 7A at Moosburg. They traveled 2 days and 2 nights in locked, unmarked freight cars - 50 men to a car. On 7 Feb., the Center Compound joined them The north Compound fell in with the West Compound at Spremberg and on 2 Feb. entrained for Stalag 13D, Nurnberg, which they reached after a trip of 2 days.

Throughout the march the guards, who drew rations identical with PW's, treated their charges with sympathy and complained at the harshness they all had to undergo. German civilians encountered during the trek were generally considerate, bartering with PW and sometimes supplying them with water.

STALAG 13D CONDITIONS

Conditions at Stalag 13D, where PW stayed for 2 months, were deplorable. The barracks originally built to house delegates to the Nazi party gatherings at the shrine city, had recently been inhabited by Italian PW, who left them filthy There was a room to exercise, no supplies, nothing to eat out of and practically nothing to eat inasmuch as no Red Cross food parcels were available upon the Americans' arrival. The German ration consisted of 300 grams of bread, 250 grams of potatoes, some dehydrated vegetables and a little margarine. After the first week, sugar was not to be had and soon the margarine supply was exhausted. After 3 weeks, and in answer to an urgent request, 4,000 Red Cross food parcels arrived from Dulag Luft, Wetzlar. Shortly thereafter, the Swiss came to make arrangements for sending parcels in American convoy, and soon Red Cross parcels began to arrive in GI (Red

Cross) trucks.

Throughout this period, large numbers of American PW were pouring into camp - 1,700 from Stalag Luft 4, 150 a day from Dulag Luft and finally some men from Oflag 64.

Sanitation was lamentable. The camp was infested with lice, fleas & bedbugs. 3,000 men each with only 2 filthy German blankets, slept on the bare floors. Toilet facilities during the day were satisfactory, but the only night latrine was a can in each sleeping room. Since many men were afflicted with diarrhea, the can had an insufficient capacity and the men perforce soiled the floor. Showers were available once every 2 weeks. Barracks were not heated. Only 200 kilograms of coal were provided for cooking. Morale dropped to its lowest ebb, but Col Darr H. Alkire succeeded in maintaining discipline.

NURNBERG EVACUATION

At 1700 hours on 3 April 1945, the Americans received notice that they were to evacuate the Nurnberg camp and march to Stalag 7A, Moosburg. At this point the PW took over the organization of the march. They submitted to the German commander plans stipulating that in return for preserving order they were to have full control of the column and to march no more than 20 kilometers a day. The Germans accepted. On 4 April, with each PW in possession of a food parcel, 10,000 Allied PW began the march. While the column was passing a freight marshalling yard near the highway, some P-47s dive bombed the yard. Two Americans & 1 Briton were killed and 3 men seriously wounded. On the following day the column laid out a large replica of an American Air Cross insignia on the road with an arrow pointing in the direction of the march. Thereafter, the column was never strafed. It proceeded to Neumarkt, to Bersheim where 4,500 Red Cross parcels were delivered by truck, then to Mulhauser where more parcels were delivered. On 9 April, the compound column reached the Danube which Col. Alkire flatly refused to cross since it meant exceeding the 20 Kilometer-a-day limit. With his refusal the Germans completely lost control of the march and PW began to drop out of the column almost at will. The guards, intimidated by the rapid advance of the American Army, made no serious attempt to stop the disintegration. The main body of the column reached Stalag 7A on 20 April 1945.

SOURCE MATERIAL FOR THIS REPORT CONSISTED OF INTERROGATIONS OF FORMER PRISONERS OF WAR MADE BY CPM BRANCH, MILITARY INTELLIGENCE SERVICE, AND REPORTS OF THE PROTECTING POWER AND INTERNATIONAL RED CROSS RECEIVED BY THE STATE DEPARTMENT.

EXPERIENCES -- WAR & PEACETIME OF T/SGT ALAN MAY

WARTIME

Alan Robert May was born in 1922 in Indianapolis, Indiana and raised in Northern New Jersey. In 1942, at the age of 22, he enlisted as an Aviation Cadet in the Army Air Force. His basic training was in Maxwell Field, Alabama, followed by Primary Training in Jackson, Mississippi. He washed out from the flight program and went to Gunnery School in Harlington, Texas. After completing Gunnery School he transferred to Lincoln, Nebraska where he became a crew member on a B-24 Liberator Bomber.

Following weeks of training with the 451st Bomb Group, the crew flew to West Palm Beach, Florida, then to Natal, Brazil, across the Atlantic to Marrakech, Morocco and finally to their first permanent base in Gioia del Colle, located in the heel of the Italian boot. When the crew began flying bombing missions, Alan had reached the rank of Staff Sergeant and was a waist gunner, manning a 50 caliber machine gun.

After 13 successful bombing missions, Alan's plane was en route to the Ploesti Oil fields in Rumania on April 5, 1944 when it was attacked by 12 German fighter planes, known as FW 190s. Approximately 150 miles short of the target the B-24 was hit badly. Alan was forced to parachute from the burning aircraft at 18,000 feet. Of the 10 crew members, six escaped the plane. The pilot, copilot, tail gunner and the other waist gunner did not survive.

Alan was badly wounded from shrapnel, but his parachute landed him successfully in an open field. He was captured by a Rumanian soldier and placed in prison where he received minimal medical care for his injuries, but was otherwise not ill-treated. He was held as a Prisoner of War from April to October 1944. During this time Alan was listed as Missing in Action.

Alan kept two diaries during the war -- one before he was shot down and one while he was a prisoner. He was released from prison camp when King Michael of Rumania switched allegiance to the Allies in early September of 1944. Later that month Alan returned to the United States on a transport ship. After a thirty day rehabilitation leave in Atlantic City, New Jersey, Alan was assigned to a P-47 base in Millville, New Jersey. Several

months later he was transferred to Mitchell Field Air Force Base in Hempstead, New York until he accrued enough points to be discharged from military service in September of 1945 -- a month after the surrender of Japan. Upon release from the Air Force his rank was Technical Sergeant.

Alan received several medals for his service, including the Purple Heart, Distinguished Flying Cross and two Presidential Unit Citations.

PEACE TIME

It all began when my daughter, Robin, responded to a request for a donation for the construction of a memorial honoring WW-II veterans in Washington D.C.. My daughter, Loren, and her husband, Rob, also contributed.

In the fall of 2003 they sent for tickets for the dedication day, as did thousands of others. Not everyone received them, but the girls were sent five tickets in the spring of 2004. They surprised me and said the Washington weekend would be a Fathers Day and birthday present (DOB July 1st) if I wanted to be there. We weighed the pros and cons as there were warnings of crowds and the necessity of a lot of walking. I opted to go and on May 29th and 30th 2004 proved to be one of the most memorable weekend of my life.

Saturday was a glorious day, weather wise and in every other way. WW-II veterans from every state were represented, along with family members of different generations -- children and grandchildren. All the veterans were in their late 70's and 80's. Not surprising, wheelchairs and canes were everywhere. A handful appeared to be wearing their original uniforms.

I was most impressed with something that occurred countless times throughout the weekend. As I walked around I would make eye contact with a fellow vet. A slight smile and nod of the head said more than a thousand words could. My family observed this unspoken bond between other veterans as well.

Then there were 'connections,' however brief, that were made that weekend. In the section of the bleachers where we were sitting there were about 30,000 people and yet I talked with two airmen who were both members of the 451st Heavy Bomb Group stationed in Italy, as I had been. We chatted



T/Sgt Alan R. May

with a woman from Bozeman, Montana named Eddie. She was there to honor her father, a Navy vet, who was unable to attend. She left for a time and returned and handed me a booklet that had the National World War II Memorial stamp that had just been franked on this first day of issue. There was also a sheet of stamps that she would not take money for. That was the kind of generosity of spirit that we saw throughout the day.

The speeches by our President, George Bush, Tom Hanks, Tom Brokaw, Senator Bob Doyle and Frederick Smith were memorable. The later two were co-chairmen of the World War II Memorial Campaign. Former President Bush, himself a distinguished veteran attended, as did the present and former Chiefs of Staff of the various Armed Forces. Religious leaders gave prayers, witnessed in solemn reverence by the thousands in attendance.

We were seated a mile away from the main stage and watched the activities on a huge screen mounted on a truck directly in front of us. There were several of these screens serving the vast multitudes on both sides of the beautiful Mall. After the dedication there was a fly-by with four jets that roared low along the length of the Mall. It was an impressive sight. Afterwards we walked the length of the Mall to the Vietnam Memorial, which Rob had never seen.

The WW-II Memorial did not open to the public until 7:00 pm that evening, so we returned to our hotel in Alexandria and waited until the next morning to see it up close. When we arrived in the morning we had lots of company, as thousands of others also had the same idea. Just as it had been



Former POW At War Memorial -- Washington D.C.

the day before, the organization was outstanding and despite the crowds we had a chance to walk around the memorial columns, each one dedicated to a State or Territory. This tour was the most emotional experience of the weekend for me. I never saw so many men crying as they dealt with their own memories. Pictures of loved ones, letters and flowers were placed by the thousands at the base of the granite

structures that commemorated WW-II battles.

There were bronze bas-reliefs that had been inspired by photographs. They depicted every branch of the service in action. I found these singularly moving and they were a high point of the Memorial for me. One incident is etched in my memory. An Asian man, who did not quite appear to be of veterans age, was sitting on the balustrade, near the Pacific Tower, sobbing uncontrollably as his Caucasian female companion tried to console him. One yearned to know his story and what was going through his mind.

I will soon be 82 and this was truly one of the most wonderful experiences of my long life, and it was made all the richer because my wife, Joan, and my daughter, Loren and son-in-law Rob, shared it with me. My one regret was that Robin was not able to be with us. Her ticket, however, was given to a stranger who was elated to be able to join her family.

One reflection in passing is that during the entire weekend, in the midst of all the thousands of people, we witnessed only good spirit and gracious behavior. I thank my loved ones for an amazing and unforgettable experience.

ALAN'S CREWMEMBERS: 5 APRIL 1944

KIA	1	Pilot	✓ Brownell, Claremont D. ✓	1st Lt.	0-523467 ✓
KIA	2	Co-Pilot	✓ Smith, Dale W. ✓	2nd Lt.	0-687713 ✓
RMC	3	Navigator	✓ Berg, Robert J. ✓	2nd Lt.	0-691608 RTD
RMC	4	Bombardier	✓ Cadwallader, Samuel H. Jr. ✓	2nd Lt.	0-749582 RTD
EUS	5	Upper Turret	✓ Harding, Walard J. ✓	S/Sgt	20818855 RTD
RMC	6	Lower Turret	✓ May, Alan R. ✓	S/Sgt	12134719 RTD
RMC	7	Right Waist	✓ Shireman, Harold E. ✓	T/Sgt	15335331 RTD
KIA	8	Left Waist	✓ Noll, Henry W. Jr. ✓	T/Sgt	12186264 ✓
KIA	9	Tail Gunner	✓ Wahl, Harold D. ✓	S/Sgt	32558430 ✓
RMC	10	Nose Gunner	✓ Westphal, Keith J. ✓	S/Sgt	17066667 RTD

FROM GENERAL LEE TO HIS 49th WING TROOPS

10 MAY 1944

FROM LEE CO 49TH BOMB WING

TO CO 451 461 484 BOMB GROUPS

FOLLOWING MESSAGE RECEIVED FROM FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE **QUOTE** FOR YOUR INFORMATION **CITE FAF ABLE 27** I WISH TO ADD MY CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING MESSAGE FROM GENERAL BAKER FOR THE BOMBING CARRIED OUT BY THE FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE THE PAST WEEK **QUOTE** DURING THE PAST WEEK US AND RAF FORCES UNDER YOUR COMMAND CONCENTRATED THEIR EFFORTS **CMA** NIGHT AND DAY AGAINST COMMUNICATIONS AND INDUSTRIAL TARGETS IN BALKANS WITH MOST SIGNIFICANT RESULTS **PD** THE ENEMY POSITION HAS BEEN GREATLY WEAKENED BY THE SERIOUS INTERRUPTION TO HIS RAIL AND RIVER TRANSPORTATION **PD** THE PRODUCTIVE CAPACITY OF THE GREAT PLOESTI OIL **RPT** OIL REFINERY SYSTEM HAS BEEN REDUCED TO LESS THAN TWENTY FIVE PERCENT OF ITS NORMAL OUTPUT **PD** ON MAY FIFTH **RPT** FIFTH THE TOTAL TONNAGE OF BOMBS DROPPED BY THE COMBINED AIR FORCES IN THIS THEATER SINCE EIGHT NOVEMBER ONE NINE FOUR TWO PASSED TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND TONS **PD** THIS OCCASION WAS APPROPRIATELY MARKED BY YOUR ATTACK ON PLOESTI ON THAT DATE **PD** PLEASE EXTEND TO THE FIFTEENTH AIR FORCE AAF AND TWO ZERO FIVE GROUP RAF **RPT** RAF MY CONGRATULATIONS ON THEIR EFFECTIVE OPERATIONS AGAINST THE GERMAN STRONGHOLDS IN THE BALKANS DURING THE FIRST WEEK IN MAY **UNQUOTE**

Reproduced at 451st Bomb Group (H)

11 May 1944

ERNIE CUMMINS' 60th AIR SERVICE SQUADRON JOURNAL

(When The Hair Was Short And The Dollar Was Long)

*****COMMENT*****

In the winter of 1944 the snows were heavy in southern Italy. One of the guard posts at the 451st B.G. was a gasoline dump where 55 gallon drums were dispersed over the hillside in groups of twenty or so, to avoid mass destruction. I was put on the "dump" patrol one cold November night, with a jeep to drive over the hill and around the edge of the storage area. It had been snowing lightly, and after I had made some tracks between barrels, I figured to retrace the tire marks the next time around. An hour later a blizzard hit, and Ernie the cop became lost, running into several gas drums and unable to find the fence on the south side. Visibility was about two feet.

Jeeps had hand operated windshield wipers and canvas tops. After my mittens froze to my hands, I made my way to another guard shack on the "back gate" to the field and sort of slithered inside to warm up at his stove. At 2 A.M. the 60th C.O. entered the Base through this gate, spotted the jeep I had parked in back, and gave me some deserved dressing down for leaving my post. My answer was "Show me where it is and I'll protect it, but I can't find it in this storm." The Major relented, and had the O.D. relieve me without another man for that watch.

*****COMMENT*****

About five to fifteen miles inland from the main road, running roughly parallel to it up the coast from Bari, is a secondary road. The towns that the smaller road passed through were, from south to north, Modugno, Bitonto, Terlizzi, Ruva di Puglia, Corato, Andria, Canosa, and then it rejoins the main road outside Cerignola and continues on to Foggia. It is not paved all the way, perhaps 60% was dirt



ERNEST R. CUMMINS
B. 25 December 1916 / D. 20 December 2000

with plenty of pot holes to make it a jolting ride. Army traffic didn't use the route much, except for Ordnance trucks, as a large number of ammunition dumps lined the countryside along the lower stretches. On both sides of the road, usually in olive orchards, were shells, bombs, crates of cartridges, bags of gunpowder, mines; all sorts of explosives were stacked in clusters, extending many miles. Anything unloaded from ships in Bari harbor was stored here until needed at the front lines.

On one of my trips to the Bari Depot I decided to follow the inland route, just because I was sick of the same old scenery on the coastal run. When I was passing through Ruvo di Puglia I pulled up and observed a scene that could have been lifted from a movie made in Hollywood. The town was celebrating a festive occasion; there were crowds of people on the streets, and those still indoors were leaning from windows and looking to the east, where the road led to Terlizzi. Someone had gone to great effort to sweep and wash down the street, getting the usual dung stacks at least into less noticeable places. A few flags were fluttering from poles on the corners of buildings, but the main color was supplied by hundreds of bright bedspreads the women had draped over the balconies, or pinned to cords that were tied to buildings on the opposite sides of the street. It was ten o'clock in the morning of a clear day, and off in the distance was a dust cloud slowly moving towards the town. In twenty minutes it was a mile closer, and I saw it was a formation of marching men.

I got down from the truck cab and asked a bystander what was going on. He told me that the town was, on that day, receiving a gift from God. These men, marching on that road, has been local folks; farmers, students, shopkeepers, laborers, and

mechanics. All conscripted into Il Duce's Army and take off to fight in Africa five years before. They had spent the last two years in POW camps and were just released, and almost home.

A funny thing about this reunion. In the movie version of my mind, all the weeping relatives would be running towards the marchers, and leaping into furious clinches. Here in real life, the returning men, many in shabby uniforms and even some in civilian attire, tried to present a disciplined attitude, and they swung into the outskirts of town with a determination to stay together all the way to the city square. Even if a man passed his own house, he waved to his family and shouted a greeting, but walked on to look at, and be looked at, by a lot of the onlookers from his neighborhood. You knew that a lot of the onlookers were not going to see their loved ones, then or ever, but they seemed happy for those that did return.

They had come by rail from Taranto, and at every grade crossing the train would stop and let off those who lived in settlements close by. Busses and private cars were not in circulation, so they hoofed it the rest of the way. I think something led me to arrive in that town to witness that sentimental event, as it remains one of the genuine thrills I had in my eighteen months in Italy.

Losers get homesick too

21 March 1945

Dear Mabel: Ernie has his earphones on listening to the news. Sounds very favorable too. Golly, the way things are going on at all the fronts, the reporters can't keep up with the tanks. Sure hope that are able to keep closing in on Germany and finish this up soon.

Will baby, when I went down to see Steve (Hatt) on Sunday, I learned Gabe (Laxalt) couldn't go with us, so Reuben (Vogele) and I went alone. Steve is looking fine, just thin and sort of pale, due to being in bed so long. He is almost ready to be released and return to work. A marvelous diet was all he needed. So now he doesn't get to Stateside after all! Just in case we don't meet again before 'civie' life, Steve gave us his "business" address. His older brother has a firm in Pueblo, Colorado that sells refrigerators, stoves and oil heaters. Steve is going into partnership with him after the war.

On our way back to camp we stopped off to see Gabe for an hour. He bought us cheese sandwiches and a drink or two at his outfit's club. We had a

good chinfeest.

Now Peanut, I'm going to tell you something very personal and I surely don't want the wives of the other 60th men to get hold of this news. The only reason I'm even telling my cutie at this time is to explain why you haven't heard from, or been visited, by Min when she had promised to meet. Remember the period when Gabe was complaining about no mail? Then he told us everything was okay. At the hospital Steve told us the story on that, but when we saw Lax he didn't mention a word about it to us. I expect it will be some time before he feels up to making it 'public' to the rest of his friends.

Steve Tanner was in Rome with Gabe last autumn and noticed he was drinking more than usual. Also, it seemed that he was forcing himself to enjoy the sights, as if under a strain. It turned out that after several of Gabe's unanswered letters to Min, Gabe had gotten suspicious and wrote his bank for a statement, which should have shown to have been about \$8,000 in the account. When he got his statement he knew there was a nigger in the woodpile. All he had left was \$900.

Not letting his wife know he had such information at all, he continued to write in his usual way. One day, out of a clear blue sky, she asks for a divorce. Well, that would be enough to drive a man crazy, but good old solid Gabriel kept it to himself, went on a spree to relieve his mind. As it now stands, he told Min if she wants it that way, she can have half of the property, money, etc.. Of course that move is to try to recover three or four thousand that she already has her hands on. Proud fellow that he is, Lax still says to us, "Min is sure busy with her school work," etc.. I didn't let on that Tanner had spilled the beans to us.

Well, enough sad news - some have it, some don't. It just hurts to learn some honest guy gets all torn up, especially when we are such pals. Even after MY Mrs. spent that lovely summer vacation with HIS Mrs. A casualty of the war that doesn't show up on any list, but it is losing a loved one just the same.

30 March 1945

Dear Mabel; Hi ho Peanut, a big hug and a smackeroo to my Mrs.

It is ten P.M. and I have just returned to "Stumble Inn" from a Bingo game the Squadron held, with ten dollar War Bonds for prizes. I didn't even

come close, and I had three cards, too - rats.

Well, Bob Bricker, the cook, is back with us again, and full of tales about his visit home. Boy, how he can make us laugh at the funny things that happened to him. He also make us blue thinking how nice it would have been if WE were there instead of him. I do believe Bob was "plastered" most of the time he was in the U.S., but he remembers every little thing that happened. The first thing the returning G.I.'s received, when they got off the ship, was milk and doughnuts - think of it, real milk! He also became engaged while at home and also had some false teeth installed. Which meant the most to him, I wonder? Right now he's writing to his folks, probably telling them how good it feels to be "home" where he can cook Army chow, instead of munching his mother's cooking.

*****COMMENT*****

There was a furlough system devised to reward servicemen who had spent considerable time overseas, and a "point award" for various activities to determine who was eligible. As I recall, points were given for months of service, campaigns and battle stars, wounds, decorations, and such things; the total points for each man in an outfit was put on a list, and by late 1944 there were some 60th fellows being sent home for 30 day leaves. Not many, but a few. One was a transfer who had spent some time in England before the 60th ever left the States. That was Robert Bricker from Cleveland, Ohio. When P.F.C. Bricker headed home we thought the rotation deal was somehow a re-assignment, and we were quite surprised when he returned to us about two months later. He was bombarded with silly questions about the home front, and feisty little "Brick" delighted in telling tall stories about his encounters with his family, old girl friends, bartenders, M.P.'s and Shore Patrol types, etc.

When he had five or six guys listening intently, hanging on his every word as he gave a vivid description of some date he had with a girl he had known in High School, he would work up to a real interesting part and then say; : "Excuse me, gang. I've gotta' go to the John---."

One story about his train ride to Ohio from New York bears repeating. Civilian trains, in those days, carried several pairs of Military Police who patrolled the cars to insure the Military riders behaved themselves. So here we have Bricker sharing a seat with an Infantry Joe who is wearing, over his shirt

pocket, the Rifleman's Badge, a Purple Heart, a Soldier's Medal and Ribbons for the European Theater, Good Conduct, etc. Across the aisle sat two little grandmothers, grey haired and bespectacled. There are a few other Military up and down the aisle, but most of the seats are filled by business types, or elderly retired people.

The Rifleman has a bottle of hootch in a paper sack and from time to time he and Bricker take a sip as the exchanged tales about their experiences. Two large M.P.s come through the car and spot the booze. They are both "three stripers" but have no Overseas Bars or Service Medals, and when they attempt to relieve the owner of his illegal refreshments, they are met with resistance. During the discussion, the Grandma's across the aisle join in, chastising the M.P.s for what they said was "spoiling well deserved relaxation," by the Vets. "They weren't bothering anybody, so you leave them alone! And besides, we don't see any medals on YOU!"

After the M.P.s retired in confusion, with the entire car full cheering the action, the Rifleman trots down to the water cooler and gets some little paper cone cups. He pours the ladies each a snort, gets them a water chaser and watches them trickle it down, eyes watering but "dead game." So it was possible to bend the rules if public support was on your side, after all.

Early in the war it was hoped that some strikes deep into Germany proper could be made without the requirement that bombers had to return to their starting points. Three cornered missions were envisioned, starting from England and landing in Russia, then going from there to Italy and returning to England. The Russians didn't cooperate until 1945 however, and even then there were problems in working out details.

The aircraft from British Bases (via Russia) landed at Foggia Air Bases, the normal complement of aircraft stationed there had to be doubled up, or dispatched to other countries, such as Southern France. It was easy to tell the English based GI lads circulating with our guys, because we wore sun tans and the strangers wore olive woolens.

"LITTLE FRIENDS:" THE 49th FIGHTER SQUADRON (Continued 15th Installment by Dr. Royal C. Gilkey)

The Squadron was non-operational on October 5, 1944; but a rough strafing mission was flown the next day to Greece. Four flights of our P-38s started this mission, but only eight of thirteen finished it. Takeoff was at 1205 hours (12:05 p.m.), on Oct. 6, 1944. A trio returned early, two for engine trouble and one as escort. Ten reached the target at 1435 hours (2:35 p.m.), leaving it several minutes later (1438 hours--2:38 p.m.). Their mission was to strafe any enemy planes found parked on the Salonika/Sedes airdrome in Greece. This they did most effectively, destroying a Ju-88, three planes believed to be Ju-52s, an He-111, an unidentified plane, and a flak boat. In addition, they damaged a single-engine float plane & two planes concealed under a couple of camouflage nets. Also shot up were a flak boat, a building, a gun position, and a couple of shacks at the northwest end of the field. All this strafing took place on the Salonika/Sedes airdrome (40°32'N 23°02'E) and on a bay at 40°32'N 22°57'E). Throughout this strafing, there was no enemy air resistance.

Flak, however, was encountered all over the place. From the airdrome itself, it was apparently fired from 40 mm guns. Five flak boats with pom-poms located at 40°32'N 22°57'E were also firing on the strafers. Several bright orange flak-bursts could be seen over Salonkia itself. Our pilots thought these were warning shots. That occurred at 1420 hours (2:20 p.m.). On the airdrome being strafed, a couple of flak positions could be seen.

Losses were incurred on this mission. Flak from the airdrome struck 1st Lt. Lloyd a Bro (Minneapolis, Minn.), causing his plane to burst into flame. He managed to bail out 700 feet above Salonika Bay (40°32'N 22°55'E) at 1439 hours (2:39 p.m.). Airdrome flak also struck 2nd Lt. David W. MacArthur (Leesville, La.), flaming his right engine. He, too, bailed out

at 800 feet above the Bay (40°32'N 22°56'E) at 1439 hours (2:39 p.m.). Both parachutes opened. Pilots saw one P-38 plow into the bay (40°33'N 22°57'E) at 1439 hours (2:39 p.m.).

Another "Lightning" pulled up and turned over at an altitude of 700 feet, with no pilot bail-out visible. The time and place of this occurrence were 1439 hours (2:39 p.m.) at 40°34'N 22°55'E in the Gulf of Salonika (Thermaic Kolpos).

The two "Hangmen" seen bailing out of their flaming P-38s were presumed to have survived by landing safely in Salonika Gulf. They were listed in document identifying "Pilots Lost Due to Enemy Action ..." during Oct. 1944 as "OK" under their "Status" column. Identical entries (except for name, rank, and serial number) reported this about each pilot: "ON A STRAFING MISSION, HE WAS HIT BY FLAX [sic] AND BAILED OUT OVER THE GULF OF SALONIKA...DATE October 6...[1944]...STATUS OK" (page 13). This was far better for 1st Lt. Lloyd A Bro and 2nd Lt. David W. MacArthur than having either MIA or KIA entered after their respective names.

On the positive side, individual pilots rang up an impressive box score in terms of the havoc they wrought during their strafing mission. Virtually all participants made specific claims.

Witness:

1. 1st Lt. Donald A. Luttrell (Dallas, Tex.) 1 He-111, destroyed on target A/D. 1 unidentified e/a, destroyed on target A/D. 1 single-engine float plane, damaged in Salonika Bay (40°32'N 22°57'E). 1 building, shot up at northwest end of target A/D.

2. 1st Lt. Kenneth R. Warren (Yakima, Wash.) 1 flak boat, destroyed in Salonika Bay (40°32'N 22°57'E).



Wartime Insignia of the 49th Fighter Squadron

3. Capt. William H. Edwards (Ironton, Ohio). 1 e/a believed to be a Ju-52, destroyed on target A/D. 2 shacks, shot up at A/D's northwest edge.

4. 1st Lt. Ernie D. Latham (Fort Worth, Tex.) 1 e/a thought to be a Ju-52, destroyed on target A/D. 1 flak boat, peppered with damaging hits in Salonika Bay (40°32'N 22°57'E).

5. 2nd Lt. Lloyd J. Fried (Chicago, Ill.) 1 Ju-88, destroyed on target A/D. 1 e/a thought to be a Ju-52 destroyed on target A/D.

6. 2nd Lt. Revis G. Sirmon (Abbeville, La.) 1 gun position, shot up (jointly with Lt. Lewis) NW of target.

7. 2nd Lt. Harvey C. Lewis, Jr. (Huntington Park, Calif.) 1 gun position, shot up (jointly with Lt. Sirmon) NW of target.

 Ten "Hangmen" worked over the target area, giving it rough treatment. Of these, eight got back to base safely. Some wondered whether it was a hexed mission, given three early returns and two shot down (but saved by bailing out in time). All returning strafers submitted their film magazines to the 14th Fighter Group's S-2, after completing forms relating to their claims. Flying last in the Group, the 49ers were glad to be back from a 950-mile mission at 1638 hours (4:38 p.m.). Oct. 6, 1944 was a day that was to linger on in memory.

(Editor .. Although the 451st did not have a part in this type 'strafing' mission, it should be noted that we flew into Greece twice during late September. On the 24th of September we bombed the Athens/Eleusis Airdrome, and the following day, the 25th, we dropped our bombs on the Sub Pens in the Athens area (Missions #127 & 128 for the Group). According to my records, we suffered no losses.)

It must have been a relief for Squadron pilots not to be assigned another strafing mission the next day, October 7, 1944. Instead were sent on escort duty to Austria's capital, Vienna (Wien). Two 49th Wing Bomb Groups (designated "red") were to be escorted by the fighters on penetration and over the target, which was Vienna's big Winterhafen Oil Depot, and then protected during withdrawal. Thirteen Squadron "Lightnings" took off at 1033 hours, two left the formation early because of mechanical difficulties & returned to base.

Rendezvous was effected with the bombers at Banokszyorgy (46°33'N 16°47'E). The time

was 1250 hours (12:50 p.m.) and the altitude 26,000 feet. Flying second in the Group, our pilots reached the target area at 1314 hours (1:14 p.m.). They flew over the target area at 28,000 feet until 1350 hours (1:50 p.m.). Then they left. In an efficient operation, the P-38s escorted the assigned groups of bombers into the target, catching them as they emerged from the attack. They stayed with the heavies during their withdrawal as far as Okoli (45°35'N 16°32'E). Departure occurred at 1425 hours (2:25 p.m.). Their altitude then was 23,000 feet. After leaving the bombers, the fighters followed the briefed route homeward, all 11 landing at 1548 hours (3:48 p.m.). At interrogation, the pilots reported the bombers flew a good formation, matching their own. Bombing results were good. Vienna's Winterhafen Oil Depot was hit. Flames flared and three columns of oil smoke rose to 10,000 feet over the target. Aerial resistance was nil; but what appeared to be diminishing flak, barrage in type, could be seen in the air over the target. An airdrome with unidentifiable aircraft on it was spotted at 48°03'N 16°42'E. The time was 1315 hours (1:15 p.m.) and the altitude 28,000 feet, too high to determine the number of planes parked on it. That was in Vienna's vicinity. A trio of smoke screens sought to conceal the target area, but this effort at defence was considered ineffective. A large vessel was seen at anchor but with steam up at 43°09'N 16°42'E (along Yugoslavia's Dalmation coast). The time of that observation from an altitude of 16,000 feet was 1530 hours (3:30 p.m.). There was favorable weather over the target, the pilots reporting it as CAVU. While there was unnecessary chatter over the radio, no communication between fighters and bombers took place. Sortie credit went to each of the 11 pilots completing this long 1,100-mile mission. An announcement of their Intelligence Officer's promotion to 1st Lt. appeared in the Squadron diary's entry for the day, which read: "2nd Lt. Royal C. Gilkey was appointed 1st Lt." No losses and a promotion made 7 October 1944, a good day for those concerned.

(Editor .. On this mission, 7 October 1944, we did not come out unscathed. We lost aircraft # 42-51409 (LUCKY TEN) to flak over the target. Pilot, 2nd Lt Harvey Robinett and four other survived, five were KIA).



CHATTER FROM THE FLIGHT DECK

Bob Karstensen

FEATHERED ENGINES

Well; It's happening again. Another Bomb Group is shutting its engines down and folding its wings. The latest newsletter ("Black Panther") from the 460 Bomb Group announced that it will cease to exist after their final reunion later this year, 2005, in Savannah, GA. Declining membership, due to deaths, and the inability to locate new members has brought about this decision. From a membership high of some 650 members a few years ago, to now less than 400, they felt it was time to cease and desist.

If I may gloat a bit about our membership; To date we have located 1,961 verified 451st members (not including 60th Service Squadron and 451st Strategic Missile Wing members). Of those we have lost some 855 through death, but/and have maintained a mailing list of some 1,106 viable members. True, new members are almost impossible to locate, and if located are hesitant to join.

Case in point; One of our newer members, Don Walker, asked if we had his pilot (will not mention name) listed as a member. When I looked up his pilot's name in my database, I found that I had mailed to him twice (2000 and 2002), but got nothing positive, in fact what I got from him was, "I'm not interested." Although I had a current address, and Walker did contact him, I don't know if that would be enough to get this pilot into the new 451st. We'll just have to see if Don has any leverage.

So, I can see where the 460th (Black Panther) is coming from as far as shutting down. But, as I've said before .. "We're still active and will stay that way for as long as you guys give me 'backing.'" That "Last Man" bottle of brandy is still in my cupboard.

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT

Through the Internet I've gotten quite a few overseas contacts wishing to get answers to some of our 451st exploits that involve their country.

One such contact, **Jure Miljevic**, from the province of Slovenia (located in the northern part of

Yugoslavia). His first interest was in the events of the Nick Zender crew, as of 25 February 1944. Since this incident was fairly well documented and he was in contact with Nick Zender, most of his questions were answered.



Larry Horn's Crew W/Partisan Soldiers

But then came the case of Pilot Larry Horn and his 'wheels down' forced landing along the Kolpa River near the city of Griblje (native spelling) in Slovenia. Since no documentation was made of this incident by the US Government, we've been having a field day putting this together.



Jure Miljevic Standing In Field Where Forced Landing Took Place

Three way e.mail communication between Jure, Larry and myself has resulted in much clarification as to how, why, when and where. Needless to say, Larry and his crew, with the aid of friendly partisans, all got back to Castelluccio Air Base okay.

Another, more involved case, arose when M/Sgt **Paul Perron** from the USAF (Stationed in England) made contact and wanted to confirm a situation that was reported to him by a former WW-II

Italian Anti-Aircraft Gunner. It involved two aircraft that were 'downed,' one according to Perron's source as having crashed into the Gulf of Monfalcone on 16 March 1945, due to anti-aircraft fire by the informant, with the crew being rescued by a Catalina sea plane. Everything that Perron could glean from the Missing Air Crew Report was that it was Paul Harden's (725th) aircraft that was involved. The other aircraft lost that day, but not in this immediate vicinity, was from the 450th Bomb Group.

What throws this incident into a 'cocked hat,' is that, after contacting the Copilot, Dr. Louis Head, it was verified that the Harden Crew bailed out 7,000 feet near Bihac, Yugoslavia. Nowhere's near the location that was reported by the Italian gunner. At

this point in time, the conundrum had not been resolved, but communication between Sgt. Perron, Dr. Head and myself continues.

The third overseas correspondent/researcher is **Peter Kassak**, out of Yugoslavia. He is basically interested in crash sites of our 451st aircraft that fell on his homeland. He had a particular interest in Major Reichenbach, CO of the 726th Squadron, who, with Pilot 1Lt Gerald Naylor and crew, were POW'd on 7 February 1945. He also lists other 451st aircraft and casualties that he wants to get verification about. So don't be surprised (if you once trod the soil of southern Europe as an escapee, evadee or POW), you get a questioning letter from me, or my overseas contact.

OUR DIMINISHING RANKS -- THEIR FINAL FLY-BY

REPORTED SINCE OUR LAST NEWSLETTER

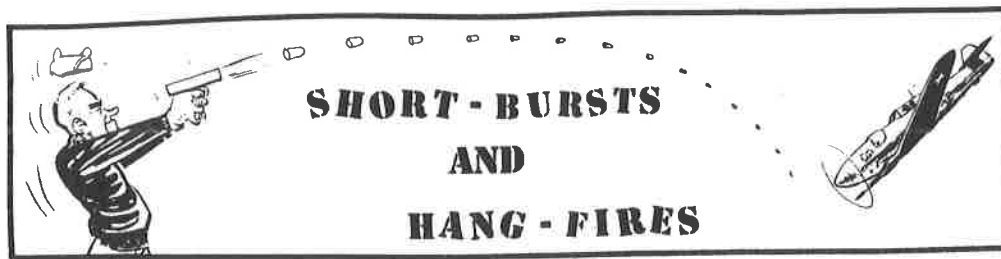
Burton, John A., 725th - 27 October 2004
 Coon, Howard C., 727th - 6 May 2004
 Davidson, Robert E., Hdqs - 23 May 1996
 Davie, Perry M., 724th - 2 February 2005
 Gasparovic, Rudolph S., 726th - 13 December 2004
 Harrington, Austin F., 727th - 20 September 2002
 Hawkins, Patrick H., 724th - 24 November 2004
 Hayes, Bertram R., 726th - 21 November 2004
 Knight, Capers W., 727th - 12 March 2003
 Machovec, Steven G., 727th - 20 December 2004
 Martin, Carl A., 727th - 13 February 2005
 Miller, Jr., Charles F., 725th - 9 March 1996
 Mitchell, Robert P., 727th - 22 December 2004
 Newkirk, Dello H., 727th - 8 June 2004
 Odom, Hubert D., 725th - 14 November 2004
 Rinehart, Harry S., 725th - 7 June 2003
 Rupe, Burrell T., 727th - 5 March 2002
 Schroeder, Clarence E., 726th - 22 November 2004
 Torres, Reyes V., 725th - 29 May 2004
 Trimmer, Kenneth P., 725th - 15 February 2001
 Walkey, Thomas E., 726th - 11 February 2005
 Wohl, Robert J., 724th - 12 October 2001
 Zika, Joseph L., 725th - 1 April 2005

REMEMBER

A donation of \$50 or more to the 451st Bomb Group in the memory of a deceased comrade (or family member), as an alternative to flowers and other memorials, is an option for all members to consider.

SPECIAL MEMORIAL TRIBUTE OFFERED IN THE NAME OF:

Tribute to the Crew of "Our Gal" - From William 'Chuck' Paddock
 Tribute to the 60 Air Service Squadron - From Joseph Demshok
 William E. Bodie, 726th - From Donald Walker
 Gates P. Christensen, 724th - From Edward Gambeski
 Harold E. Edinger, 726th - From Donald Walker
 Richard F. Fulmer, 725th - From Louis Head
 Harland J. Greenman, 724th - From Irving Levine
 Philip Hershkowitz, 727th - From Wife, Lois and Family
 Capers W. Knight, 727th - From Wife, Martha; Children, Wesley & Shirley
 Frank J. Lather, 727th - From Wife, Sally
 Carl A. Martin, 727th - From Leora Mitchell
 David Messer, 724th - From Marie Elder
 Donald Milligan, 724th - From Wife, Phyllis
 Robert P. Mitchell, 727th - From Wife, Leora
 Robert P. Mitchell, 727th - From Lotus Kendall
 Robert P. Mitchell, 727th - From Lee & Bonnie Michaels
 Robert P. Mitchell, 727th - From Donald Schaffner
 Robert P. Mitchell, 727th - From Sally Lather
 Harold I. Moe, 727th - From Winson "Big" Jones
 Hubert D. Odom, 725th - From Louis Head
 Edward B. 'Ras' Rasmussen, Hdqs - From Daughter, Kaye Kelly
 John C. Robertson, 726th - From Donald Walker
 Clarence E. Schroeder, 726th - From Charles Fishbaugh
 Leonard L. Strickler, 727th - From Harold McWilliams
 Bernard L. Waldt, 727th - From Winson "Big" Jones
 Thomas E. Walkey, 726th - From Son, William "Cliff" Walkey



Charles M. Thomas, 727th [PILOT: AIR-CRAFT COMMANDER]

Bob,... If you can stand it --- I would like to wax philosophical for a moment. When an opportunity presents itself, I brag to the "less fortunate" that the 451st Bomb Group gatherings are akin to family reunions without any of the rancor that I've heard sometimes exists in blood family gatherings. Sixty years ago most of us seemed to be reluctant to become too close to those around us, except our crew members and the ones we worked with daily. I believe that most of us feared making close friends during the war because the prospect of suddenly losing them would bring too much grief.

Now at our reunions, our fears are pushed aside with the realization that between each reunion some of us will join the "High Flight." So we should enjoy our friends while we can and make new friends to fill the vacancies of those called away. Bob, I hope many, many years pass before you and I share a bottle of brandy as the last of a memorable group of comrades.

(Editor ... Chuck ... No could have said it better. You always come through in every positive way: verbally, spiritually, and for sure -- financially.)

Louis R. Head, 725th [COPILOT: PAUL HARDEN'S CREW]

The latest issue of the "Ad Lib" is excellent. Pilots landing and taking off at Vis need commendation for their flying skills, since the runway (3,500') was short compared to Castelluccio (6,000').

Stalag Luft III's evaluation depicts it as a country club compared to escape and evasion with the Partisans. However, aging POWs deserve their government stipend recognizing the health hazards they encountered.

(Editor ... The two subjects you chose to comment on were 'right up your alley.' As a Copilot you probably memorized each possible landing strip that you may have occasion to use. And in reviewing the Prison Camp Report it may have sounded

like a country club, but I'm sure it was less than that. It was your good fortune, or misfortune, that on that mission to Moosbierbaum [16 March 1945], when you were downed by flak, the rest of the crew were captured and sent off to POW camp, you found friendly Partisan's to secure your escape.)

Fred Kuhn, 724th [PILOT: AIRCRAFT COMMANDER]

I was very disappointed that I could not attend the reunion in Des Moines last year. We had planned but physical problems did not permit us to go.

I do thank you for your effort in keeping the bunch together and keeping us informed of the events that affected those of us who are still among the living.

(Editor ... I thank YOU for sticking with me, both financially and spiritually. Both are appreciated.)

Gerald Bowker, 727th [COPILOT: ROBERT STACEY'S CREW]

I enjoyed the latest 451st Ad Lib very much. It was probably the largest we ever had. Your comments on the first page covered a lot. I belong to several national and local organizations and it's the same in all of them. At least WE have the families of our deceased members attending our reunions, which is a rare thing. Keep up the good work.

(Editor ... You're RIGHT ... 44 pager is the largest to date. Anything larger would really tax me, the Group's treasury, post office and the printer to get it into your hands. So far I've gotten good cooperation out of all the afore mentioned entities.

Your second point, about incorporating the families of our deceased members, or interested historians, into 'our world,' pretty much helps fill the void. Unless I'm requested not to send further mailings, I like to include the widow so the offsprings (if interested) can review things that 'dad' did during the 'big one.' I'd just like to know one way or the other from them.)

John C. Bownds, 726th [GUNNER: WESLEY McCLURE'S CREW]

It was with great interest that I read, in one of the back issues of your "Ad Lib" [Issue 25 - Page 14], about the June 26, 1944 mission of Lt. McClure.

That was our crew [#50] and our ship, "Flabbergasted Fanny" [41-29242] that was involved. I was the Tail Gunner. Waist Gunners were Gene Hinton and W.V. "Pop" Berus. Ball Gunner was Clyde Bell with Louis Matkowski flying Nose guns. Top Turret Gunner, and AEG, was James Rodgers. Bombardier was Russell Hempel with James Kaplan as Navigator flying their positions in the nose section. The Pilot was, of course, Wes McClure, but I don't recall the Copilot's name.

This was to be our last mission, and fortunately in the same ship (Flabbergasted Fanny) that we left Lincoln, Nebraska to fly overseas with the rest of the Group.

Enclosed are pages of the Mission Journal I kept, which include that last day.

Thirty Fifth Mission: 6-26-44 10 - 500 lbs bombs for Oil Storage at Vienna, Austria. Closest mission ever made. Lost two engines over target; lost Group; fell to 6,000 feet. Ready to bail out but waited. Gas Low. 13 German fighters attacked us and two Libs from the 461st came down to us, guns blazing and saved our lives. Prepared to ditch in Adriatic, but barely made it to land. Prepared to bail out over Italy but spotted Spitfire Base on coast and landed on one engine. RAF boys gave us good Scotch Whiskey and fed us. Got to home base 5 hours late. Thought this was it. Gene got a ME 109 on this raid.

After the 26 June mission, the next day our Pilot (McClure) got a plane and we all flew over to the 461st, found the two crews that aided us and thanked them.



Flabbergasted Fanny (#41-29242)

(Editor ... Thanks John for bringing that episode back to my attention. As to the crew mates you listed, aside from Lester Snyder (your original Pilot), who died 23 March 1996, we have: Mission Pilot, W.E. McClure, deceased August 1971; Copilot, unknown; Navigator, J.H. Kaplan, Member #1620; Bombardier, R.C. Hempel, deceased 23 October 1988; AEG, J.T. Rodgers, not found; ROG, C.M. Bell, not found; Gunner, E.J. Hinton, Member #0862 - deceased 16 May 1989; Gunner, W.V. Berus, not found; Gunner, L.F. Matkowski, not found.

As to your beloved "Flabbergasted Fanny," I have it in my data base that it was condemned as of 20 September 1944, for whatever reason I don't know. At that period of time we were flying the Supply Missions to Lyon, France. Musta just plum wore out!)

**John Q. Schneider, 726th [COPILOT:
RICHARD LONG'S CREW]**

Looks like the 451st Bomb Group is sputtering on about two engines! Hope you can keep it flying.

(Editor ... Agreed ... But two engines ain't bad. As long as they are not on the same side. By that I mean; interest on the part of our members, on one side, and financial support for it's continuation on the other side. So far those two means of propulsion have served us well.)

**Frank P. McNerney, 725th [NAVIGATOR:
WILLIAM MATTES' CREW]**

I got to thoroughly read your latest Ad Lib, and once again congratulations on a terrific job of telling the 451st story.

The Ernie Cummins Journal is always especially enjoyable telling us so much about what the Ground Crews had to go through to "Keep 'em Flying."

The reference to the mission to Oswiecim, Poland on 26 December 1944 is quite memorable -- getting there, getting out of there and getting back. Yes it must have been 9 or 10 hour mission.

(Editor ... Thanks for making mention of Ernie's Journal. Although I get some stories from the Ground Crews, I still don't get enough to credit them for "Keeping 'em Flying."

As to the Oswiecim mission .. I can offer some input as to the 724th's effort. I was flying Nose Turret on the Deputy Lead plane, flown by Captain Rollins. Over the target I saw the Lead plane, flown by Captain Stanley Jackson and Major Douglas Sanford, take a hit in the bomb bay section and saw

a lot of white (smoke or gasoline) coming from that area. They held formation and dropped their bombs on-target. All the time T/Sgt Robert Macey (AEG) was repairing the gasoline rupture, so's to keep them airborne.

We saw them peel-off and leave the formation in the direction of Russia. Luckily they found a Russian airstrip and landed safely. They returned to Castelluccio, after a couple weeks of being shuttled around. In the meanwhile, Captain Rollins was appointed Squadron Commander in lieu of Major Sanford's absence. From my point of view, it t' was more than a memorable mission.)

James P. Locke, 726th [GUNNER: PILOT & CREW UNKNOWN]

I must compliment you for all the great work you have done for all the 726th and the 451st guys.

I was drafted on March 11, 1941 and served in the 180th F.A., 26th Yankee Division. When Pearl Harbor came I volunteered for the Air Force. That's my story, and I'll stick by it!

(Editor ... Thanks for the kudo's and the donation, but I'd much rather find out who your original [going overseas] Pilot and Crew were, even before you were shot down and evaded on 26 December 1944 with the pilot by the name of Edward Nall.:-)]

Jack (Little) Jones, 727th [GUNNER: HOPKINS' CREW]

Bob, the last issue of Ad Lib was most enjoyable. The story on "The Ordeals And Fate Of Lt. Collins P. Byrn," of the 727th was especially interesting and touching. Also, the Isle of Vis was of much interest as Andy, 'Big' Jones and I, along with the rest of our crew, visited the Isle overnight with Lt. Tedesco in the Pilot's seat. Actually, I read all of the issue from cover to cover before putting it down. Regards from Louisiana.

(Editor ... Thanks Jack .. I've been getting good vibes regarding the last Issue #39 of the Ad Lib. I hope I can keep up the pace. Hopefully this issue will have nuggets of information that will hold your interest.)

Kaye (Rasmussen) Kelly, [DAUGHTER: & ASSOCIATE MEMBER, HDQS]

Hello at last! I've been meaning to write for so long. There is no excuse for me NOT keeping you informed "officially" of Dad's death. In spite of his death on October 29th, he was not buried at Arlington National Cemetery until December 1st. Mourning is never easy, as you know, but during

the holiday time, it's horrible. This may sound funny, but if anyone has a memory of him that they would like to share, it would mean so much to me. I love memories of Dad. You may know that Mom and Dad met at the University of Illinois, when she was singing and he - tap dancing.

I think one of my fondest memories of him as a Master of Ceremonies (such as he was at your San Antonio Reunion) is from Randolph AFB, TX, in the 50's. He was MC'ing a show and threw in a little tap dancing. The floor was slick and he fell! So what did he do? He pretends it was part of the act and began doing push ups!

(Editor ... Kaye, I never knew your Dad was a "HOOFER!" I knew your Mother was, at one time, a professional singer - cause she gave us a song after the Banquet part of our San Antonio reunion was winding down, and before the musicians put their instruments away. I forgot which bands she worked with .. but they were 'big time' bands, as I remember.

I hope your request for stories about your Dad will generate some results. I'd be glad to pass them on if someone has a tale to tell. I'd rather not put out your address, as our policy is not to expose our membership to unwanted mail. An address or two, for crewmembers contacts, or for historical purposes, is about as far as I wish to take it.

Thanks for wanting to stay involved with your Father's old outfit. You are officially on our mailing list.)

Stanford G. Weinberg, 726th [ORDNANCE SECTION]

I attended the reunion in Des Moines and had a great time. I was so sorry that I missed the previous reunions. It would have been wonderful to have seen some of my old friends. My only disappointment was that no one was able to attend from my Section, the 726th Ordnance. Nevertheless I will always remember this reunion.

(Editor ... I'm glad you got some satisfaction from the Des Moines Reunion, even though there was a lack of 726th Ordnance guys there. Maybe next time there will be a bevy of your buddies in attendance ... We can only hope.)

Marie B. Elder, [ASSOCIATE MEMBER, 724th]

I don't mean to make a pest of myself; I just feel that someone from the 451st has to know David Messer. I'm including a photo of David

when David was 19 years of age.

As to David's association with the 8th Air Force in England, he served some of his tour with the 44th Bomb Group at Shipman, England, from the middle of May 1944 until he was transferred to Attlebridge, England. At the end of September he was transferred to the 451st in Italy.



David Messer

that Major Dwyer kept on all his photographers, that David Messer flew Cameraman duties from 2 March 1945 to 15 April 1945. David must have left the ranks of Spare Gunner and volunteered as cameraman to fill out his missions. He flew some seven missions during that time. And to add further to the mystery, letters that you received from David showed his earliest return addresses were from the 724th Squadron, whereas Major Dwyer lists David Messer as being from the 726th Squadron. Now, perhaps we can shift some of our attention to the 726th, should he have transferred to that Squadron and see what those Squadron members can recall.

David only flew 2 missions while at Shipman and 7 more when he transferred to Attlebridge. His very first mission, while in England, was to Berlin.

(Editor ... Marie, doing a little research into this situation, I found, by examining the Photo Log

The big problem, with our diminishing ranks, that we don't have the base of members that we used to have, so that we can call upon them to verify or substantiate our questions. And with the passing of the years, remembrances of faces and places fade somewhat -- er' maybe quite a lot.)



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