Beasts of War

1st Lt. Brandon A. Fullam 1943

BEASTS OF WAR

The WWII Journal of Brandon A. Fullam,
1st Lieutenant, Company G, 422nd Infantry Regiment,
106th Division

Edited by Brandon A. Fullam, Jr.

Cover design by Alexis Gayle

"Golden Lions," the 106th Division Uniform Patch

Contents

Editor's Preface

On December 11, 1944, the 106th Infantry Division took up positions along a winding 26-mile front in the Ardennes Forest adjacent to the fortified Siegfried Line on the western border of Nazi Germany. The 422nd Regiment was assigned the forward position at the eastern-most curve of the Schnee Eifel, a nine-mile section of the Ardennes Forest in Western Germany and Eastern Belgium named for its cold, snowy ("schnee") winters. To the 422's north, separated by a gap of a mile and a half, was the 14th Cavalry Group, and to the 422's south was the 423rd Infantry Regiment, which occupied a line that ran briefly on the Schnee Eifel and then dropped away to the western portion of the Alf valley. Such was the disposition of the 106th on December 15, 1944.[1]

Undetected by the Allied Command, however, was the massive armored assault force Hitler had been preparing on his western front. "He selected the Ardennes sector for the breakthrough," military historian Antony Beevor wrote, "because it was so thinly held by American troops."[2] The thickly forested area would also hinder Allied air reconnaissance from observing German troops, tanks, and artillery which were stealthily moved into the Ardennes under cover of night. By December 15, the Germans had assembled three complete armies for the assault. In all there were twenty-four divisions, including no fewer than ten Panzer divisions, an immense concentration of fighting power.[3] The Allied command, as Beevor wrote, "had no idea of what was about to hit them on their weakest sector." This would

arguably be the most consequential intelligence failure in American military history, resulting in over 8,000 battle casualties including those killed, wounded, missing, and taken prisoners of war.[4]

In the early morning of December 16, the German offensive began suddenly with a heavy artillery barrage followed by an assault with infantry and tanks on the American lines. The 422nd and 423rd Infantry Regiments positioned in the Schnee Eifel held their ground as German troops and tanks attacked up and down the line in overwhelming numbers. By the afternoon of December 16th, however, German forces had already broken through on the left flank of the 422nd and the right flank of the 423rd, threatening to encircled the two regiments. On the following morning, December 17, it became clear that the Germans had surrounded and cut off the Americans on the Schnee Eifel.

It was at this point, according to the official history of the 106th Division in the Battle of the Bulge, "that on the whole the Americans [of the 422nd and 423rd] were left to their own devices....Their story henceforth has little connection with events outside the pocket."[5] And so, as the broader historical perspective of the battle shifted elsewhere, the official account of the 422nd and 423rd Regiments essentially ended on December 17, 1944.

The real story of those two regiments, of course, does *not* end there. Surrounded, disorganized, unreinforced, and unsupplied, elements of the 422nd and 423rd fought on for four more days until the afternoon of December 20, when the Germans finally closed in. The Americans were taken prisoner on Thursday morning, December 21. These men – that is those who survived

their subsequent captivity – spent the rest of the war as P.O.W.s. My father was one of them.

The account that follows was written by my father, 1st Lieutenant Brandon A. Fullam, of Company G, 422nd Infantry Regiment, 106th Division. The narrative is from his personal WWII journal and contains his first-hand descriptions and commentaries about the battle and his subsequent experiences as one of the P.O.W.s who was forced to march over 600 miles through Germany and Poland, with little or no food, in sub-freezing weather. As an army officer, he was in the habit of keeping daily written records, and he managed to continue that practice as a P.O.W., scribbling brief notes whenever he was able in small memo pads that he carried.

I have transcribed his journal virtually verbatim, with only some minor technical and editorial alterations. My father's own journal entries are presented here in italics, and I have taken the liberty of occasionally adding, in brackets, related pertinent information obtained from other sources.

Finally, the *complete* story of the trapped 422nd and 423rd Regiments, has not – cannot – be fully told. The official records and papers of those two regiments were destroyed before their capture, as were undoubtedly many other documents when St. Vith, the HQ of the 106th, fell to the Germans on December 21. As a result, the extant story of the 422nd and 423rd is really just a patchwork quilt threaded together from too few written recollections and from interviews with some of the men after they were liberated from German prisons. And now that generation of men has sadly all but passed. It is my hope that my father's account, published here for

the first time, will add one more useful patch to that unfinished quilt.

The title *Beasts of War* is borrowed from the following poem written by my father to personify the human degradation endured during the bitter winter of 1944-45.

Brandon A. Fullam, Jr.

Then Ares loosed the beasts of war
To roam, it seemed, for evermore.
I knew the fear all humans knew
And with them, fear to terror grew,
Lest terror's sweat might cast a scent
To call the beasts, on my trail bent.

I saw them in their putrid lair:
Unwashed, half-human, unkempt hair;
Thick snarling lips, with yellow teeth
That hungered for my flesh, beneath;
Their eyes insane with burning rage,
Which only my pain could assuage.

To The Schnee Eifel

In human affairs, any great calamity is given a name and we refer to it by this label. World War II was such a disaster. Book upon book has been written on the subject. But the tragedy of World War II is more than all that has been written of it. If the most seasoned veteran admits to being an authority on World War II, he takes liberties with the meaning of the word. No soldier can truly know more than his own personal experience of war. It takes thousands and thousands of individual tragedies to make such a great tragedy.

Nevertheless, it is not necessary to experience things first hand in order to learn from them. My participation in the Battle of the Bulge may help to show something of the savvy, bungling, planning, confusion, danger, luck, tragedy, and humor which are inherent in any war. Even a little understanding of war should foster a fervent desire for peace. And the surest way to ensure peace is to be well-prepared for war. "How much is enough" is a moot question. But we had better be right in our decision. To be wrong is to doom our children and their children to untold suffering.

In September of 1939 Germany invaded Poland. Two days later Great Britain and France declared war on Germany. Soon the whole world was involved in war. Millions would die. Myriads would suffer. Few alive at that time would escape the scourge of World War II.

The United States instituted the Selective Service Act [on September 16, 1940] *in a belated attempt to prepare for the inevitable. I was called in the first draft and entered the army in January 41. After basic training I was*

assigned to the 27th Division, formerly the Fighting 69th of WWI fame.

As Germany had attacked Poland without a declaration of war, Japan struck Pearl Harbor without warning on 7 December 41. The Unites States declared war on Japan and quickly followed with a declaration against Germany. We were now directly involved in the maelstrom.

Quickly the 27th Division moved to California and sailed for Hawaii on 3 Mar 42. We were to bolster the defense of the Philippines. This plan was aborted when the speed of the Japanese campaign rendered it impractical. I returned to the states to attend Officers Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia. The 27th Division took up the difficult task of island hopping in the Pacific.

After receiving my Second Lieutenant's bars, I trained men for a time and was then assigned to Company G, 422 Infantry Regiment, 106th Division. As a First Lieutenant I was given the weapons platoon. Our Division was badly mauled in the Battle of the Bulge, perhaps the biggest battle of WWII. When I was captured, I kept a one-line diary of each day's events.

Do not expect a tale of great deeds. Only personal experience. My daily one-line diary was not kept with the idea of writing or telling about it. It was "busy-business." Those were hectic, desperate days. We had not eaten for two or three days before we were captured. We had inadequate sleep. We were bitterly cold, bone-weary, and growing weaker each day. Something was needed to occupy the mind. Something which could distract from the burden of reality.

There were other gimmicks too. I would plod along for hours in the snow figuring how my monthly pay broke down per day. Then how many days since I had last been paid. Then how much the army owed me to date. Next day I would figure it all over again. And then there were little catch phrases: "This is another mile closer to the end of this march," or "This is another day closer to our next meal."

Sooner or later all soldiers work out their own little formulas for sanity. Mine ran something like this: I want to go back, away from this damn war. But I can't. Well, I'm either going to be hit or I am not. If I'm hit, I'll either be killed, or not. If I'm killed, it will be all over. If I'm not killed, I'll probably be sent back, and that's what I want in the first place. It is astounding how these mental gymnastics can help.

On 21 Oct 44 the 106th boarded the SS Aquitania in New York and headed out to sea. On 29 Oct we landed in Scotland, just a few miles from Loch Lomond. As the troopship neared port, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth came out in a launch, their colors flying. They circled our ship and waved a royal welcome.

We boarded a train, rode through Glasgow and down into England, de-training at Adlestrop. Adlestrop was close to several other towns just as wee, with such magical names as Moreton-in-Marsh, Chipping-Norton, Stow on the Wold, and Bambury. I enjoyed my first tea and scones in their quaint little tea houses. We were comfortable in this area for about a month. I managed four marvelous days in London and another in Oxford. Then we were off again by train to Southampton.

On the last day of November we sailed on a channel ship, landing at poor, trampled Le Havre, France, 1 Dec 44. The city had been so badly battered by the Allies and the Germans it looked for the most part like the dumping grounds for all the debris in Europe. Acre upon acre of destruction met the eyes. Reason argued that there once had been streets, but could not suggest where they had been. We transferred from the channel ship and came in on landing crafts.

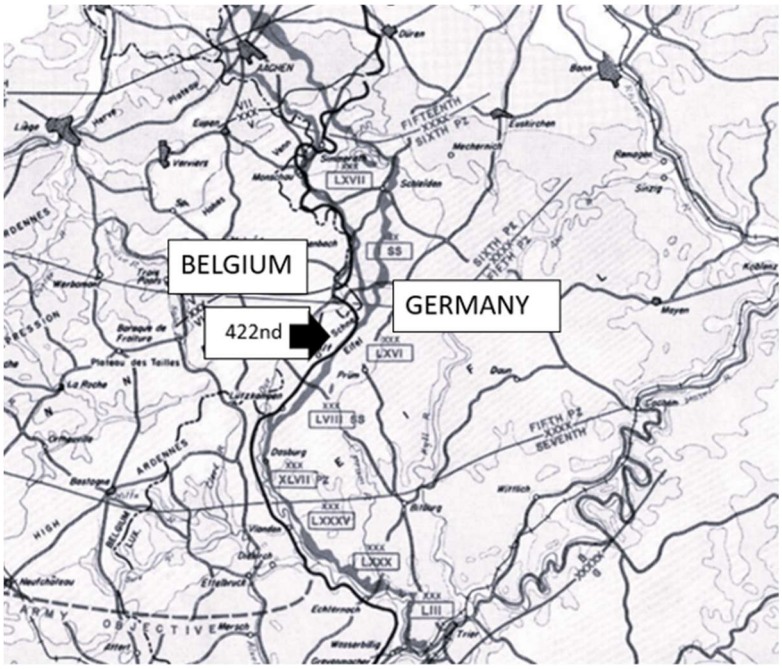
We marched to Rouen. Here we boarded army trucks and drove to Belgium. We left the trucks one night and slept a little way off the road. It was dark and we showed no lights. It was only the next morning that we saw signs warning that the area was mined. We dipped into a piece of Luxembourg on our way to Aachen, the first German town taken in the Allied offensive. We spent some time there.

[The battle for Aachen had concluded on October 21, 1944, when American forces captured the city.]

I recall standing outside an old stone building about the size of a garage. It had no roof and was completely empty. A single German fighter plane came over and for some reason, chose me for his target. As he dove, I

popped into the building. When he zoomed over, I popped out again just to taunt him a bit and show that I was unhurt. He did a flip and dove again. I popped to safety again. He dove a third time and I popped a third time thinking, "If he wants to waste his ammo, it's alright with me, but this has to be the silliest incident of the war." About then a lone American fighter came over and shot the German down in an old-fashioned dog-fight. He crashed some thousand yards off. A G.I. took off and came back later with the pilot's boots and pistol.

From Aachen we moved up to positions on the Schnee Eifel forest where we relieved another outfit on, I think, 10 Dec 44 [actually 11 Dec].



Position of the 422nd on 16 Dec at the Schnee Eifel

[The outfit that the 106th relieved was the 2nd Infantry Division. The front-line shelters they had vacated "probably did little more than take the raw edge off the miserable weather prevalent when the 106th marched to the bunkers, foxholes, and dugouts. By 15 December a number of trench foot cases already had occurred, particularly in the 422d Infantry, which had been the last regiment to draw overshoes."[6] "Trench foot" was a term originating in WWI to describe the foot damage soldiers suffered from standing in wet, muddy trenches.]

This unit had seen much battle and had been sent to this area as a sort of vacation. It was considered such a quiet sector that the 106thDivision was assigned an impossible twenty-six-mile front to defend.

[According to the Field Manual for Infantry Regiments, "The frontage of an infantry regiment…may be as little as 2,000 yards in broken, heavily wooded terrain, and as much as 5,000 yards in flat, open terrain. In partially open, rolling terrain the regiment is usually assigned a frontage of from 3,000 to 4,000 yards."[7] The 422nd Infantry on the Schnee Eifel was defending a front of eight to nine thousand yards.'[8]]

We were so stretched out that it was necessary to send out patrols regularly just to keep contact with units on either side. One of these patrols brought back a wounded man, our first casualty.

The incident gave me a psychological problem. I knew the man and liked him, but as I spoke a few words of encouragement to him, I had a strange feeling of elation. I was ashamed that I could feel this way. Later I

understood the incident. I knew someone had to be the first man shot. I was elated not because he was, but because I was not.

These men we relieved were so hap-hazard that I did not trust the information they gave us. I asked for and received permission to fire a few mortar rounds. With chalk I wrote. "Lou and baby" [Lucille, his wife and my mother] *on several shells. Then I went up to the outpost to direct the fire by field phone. When we were finished, I felt confident that I could hit what I needed to if anything happened.*

16 Dec 44

[At about 0500 16 Dec, the German offensive opened suddenly with a heavy artillery barrage on the American lines, followed immediately by an assault with troops and tanks. "Our first engagement was about 0500 16 Dec," wrote a lieutenant from Company H, "when a strong enemy combat patrol contacted the Co. G outpost."[9]]

On the morning of the sixteenth the Germans shelled our position with artillery and the Battle of the Bulge was on. The outpost called in and said they were under attack. I fired mortar shells about seventy-five yards in front of them, but the attack pressed on. I then brought the fire in to fifty yards. Finally, I had a desperate call from the outpost saying the Germans were about twenty-five yards off and they were about to be over-run. These outposts were dug in and roofed over with logs. I told the men I would drop shells at zero yards and walk the fire forward. This broke up the attack on our front, but we learned sometime later that the units on both sides of us had been over-run, and that the Germans had swept far behind us.

Some of the men asked me what was going on. I told them it was nothing to worry about, that the Germans no doubt knew we were a new outfit on the line and that this was probably just a combat patrol with orders to feel us out and take a few prisoners. That was my initial estimate of the Battle of the Bulge.

Later I went up to the outpost. The men said that I had dropped a round or two on their log roofs. I took a few men and went forward to collect weapons. We found the bodies of several German officers, their skin that yellow-white of the newly dead.

As we collected weapons in the woods, a strange feeling suddenly came over me. I turned quickly and saw a German in a grotesque position. He was half up, half down, half in, half out of a shell hole. One arm was raised in front of him. Bones protruded where the hand should have been. His face was covered with a layer of ice. I concluded he had died some time ago and had been disinterred by our shells.

17 Dec 44

Next morning with field glasses I saw the Germans moving forward well off to our left front. I tried to have artillery fire brought in, but the Germans had swept in deep behind us and we had no artillery.

That afternoon we were told to prepare for a move. The situation was in a state of controlled confusion and I wondered if the outposts had gotten word. About dusk I went up to check the outposts. I found no one. On the way back I met a captain leading a group of men in the direction I had just left. I gave him the right heading.

When it was dark, we moved out. A night march in the woods can be very tricky. If close contact is not maintained, a column can easily be split into several groups and become lost. Fearing this, I moved just off the dirt road and doubled my pace. I soon came across several men in a huddle. When I asked what was up, they told me one of the men could not walk and had to be left

behind. I said that was ridiculous with so much man-power at hand. I told them to carry the man for five minutes and pass him on to another couple. The man's eyes held a ton of gratitude. Continuing forward, the ground suddenly disappeared under me and I thought for a moment I had broken my back. I had stepped into a fox-hole. I scrambled out and caught the head of the column.

There is no doubt about the mind having powers we have not begun to tap. Retracing my steps back along the column to my platoon in the dark, I was fearful of falling into that fox-hole again. I mentally gauged the distance, and when I thought I was near the hole I slowed down and felt my way forward step by step. I was about five feet from the hole. It had to be the one I tumbled into, because if there had been another, I would have found it on my way forward.

18 Dec 44

About dawn we halted and took up positions. I was told to set up a defense in a dry creek bed. It was about six or seven feet deep and afforded excellent protection. It twisted across a big open meadow. I strung riflemen along the ditch and had two machine guns set up to sweep the field. This was just about completed when a German tank hove into view at the head of the meadow. One of the men was half out of the creek bed, fussing with his machine gun. I told him to take cover. He said "OK," but continued with his last-minute adjustments. I grabbed his jacket and yanked him into the ditch just as the tank fired a shell where the kid had been. The machine gun tilted crazily. Remember, I had been in the army since Jan 41. I had absorbed so much more of the

business at hand that the young kid's lack of understanding amazed me.

Several hours later I decided that I had better check in at the command post to see what was happening. The CP was located in the woods to my rear, but to reach the woods I had to travel a good piece of open ground. I was familiar with these German tanks and their 88s. Their shells had high velocity and their gunners would even fire at one man. I left the ditch where some bushes offered concealment from the tank's view. Then I made a wild dash and dove behind a big rock as the tank fired. I felt they would expect me to run for the woods from the near side of the rock. I made my next sprint from the far side and dove behind a little hill as the tank fired again. From this hill the ground sloped away so that I was hardly exposed as I sprinted to the woods. The tank then fired a few rounds into the woods.

That night we made another night march.

19 Dec 44

In the morning it was decided that we would attack Schoenberg, some miles away. Without artillery or tanks or planes or even a bazooka, we had no chance for success. I never did see the place. We were shelled again, enough for us to move forward in groups, hoping to regroup later. At one point we came to a meadow between two woods. Three tanks were blasting away as fast as they could fire. But it had to be crossed. I paused for a second to pick a route and then ran for dear life. It was a surprise to reach the other woods unscathed.

At length we came to the woods we would leave as prisoners. We were about to exit the trees to cross a

small meadow when some G.I.s came bursting out of the trees from across the meadow. They had run into more tanks up ahead. We all holed up in the woods and tried to create some order. Our controlled confusion was now closer to chaos. We were a mixture of motor pool men, medics, and Lord knows what else. I had some of my platoon and we hung together because the rest was a hodge-podge.

20 Dec 44

Early in the morning the Germans began to spray the woods with machine gun fire. The first volley came a few feet to my right as I walked. In these circumstances the mind can think volumes in a split second. There was a small ditch filled with iced-over muddy water close on my left. But a machine-gunner in this situation will fire, traverse a notch or two, fire and traverse until he has covered his field of fire. If I jumped into the muddy ditch, I would be perfectly safe. If he traversed the other way, there would be no need to jump into the icy mud. I decided to play it safe… and the gunner traversed the other way.

I got up and went to the edge of the woods to see where the German guns were. Three machine guns were firing, two dug in on the edge of fox-holes, and another from the back of a truck some two hundred yards off in a field. I found a small opening in the trees and had the mortars set up so that they could fire without hitting any branches.

Mortars fire by using an aiming stick. To put it simply, they aim at the stick and fire into the air. An observer then sees where the shells fall, say fifty yards over and fifty yards to the right. The gunner can adjust up or down

and left or right for so many yards with a click of his sights. With three mortars firing in a triangle, and each shell with a bursting radius of twenty-fife yards, a deadly fifty-yard equilateral triangle can be quickly set up.

The problem was getting to a place to observe the bursts and direct the fire. I could do it by standing at the edge of the trees and yelling the information back. But to do this I was exposed to an enemy-held spit of woods about seventy-five yards across an open field. It was an eerie feeling, yelling from such a place, but I never drew a shot.

I had the first round fired some distance away from the machine guns so as not to disturb them. Then the corrections were made and we fired for effect. The first salvo dropped a shell into one of the foxholes. We adjusted and one of these hit the truck. We adjusted again and the third gun was knocked out. The whole operation took about three minutes.

In the late afternoon some German officers came in under a flag of truce to speak to our commanding officer, a Major. I was not privy to the meeting.

Later the Major called all officers together. He told us we had done all we could. All the Germans had to do now was to shell our woods to a pulp. He had therefore agreed to the terms of surrender to save needless slaughter. Surrender would take place in the morning. We were to stack our equipment and not destroy. Things looked pretty grim, but this solution to the problem had never entered my mind and came as a shock. It was a terrible feeling even though I could understand the sense of it.

[The decision to surrender was not made by this major, but rather by Col. Descheneaux, 422nd Regimental

Commander, who was in the field and made the assessment. “We're being slaughtered,” he lamented on 19 Dec. “I don't believe in fighting for glory if it won't accomplish anything...I'm going to save as many men as I can, and I don't give a damn if I'm court martialed."[10]]

I spent the night burying vital parts of weapons. It was late when I called it quits. Two of the men had dug a good-sized fox-hole and invited me to share it. I corked off quickly, but the men had not dug drainage channels and water seeped in.

Newspaper Coverage Jan. 18 – 26, 1944

Army Tells How 106th Division Went Down Fighting in Bulge

Had Been in Line Only 5 Days When Nazis Struck, 2 of Its 3 Regiments Were Virtually Destroyed but the Third Battled On, Helped to Slow Foe

By The Associated Press

WITH THE 106TH DIVISION, Belgium, Jan. 21.—It was a "quiet sector" they handed the 106th Infantry Division, fresh to the front and eager for battle, on Dec. 11. The quiet ended in a shattering eruption of fire and steel five days later. In another two days two regiments and supporting artillery and armor of the Golden Lion Division were put out of action.

In those two days the men of the two regiments were engulfed by the overwhelming weight of Field Marshal Karl Rudolf Gerd von Rundstedt's break-through spearhead. They went down fighting.

Only a handful came back from the 422d Regiment and the 423d. This little group—less than 300—pitched in and helped the remaining regiment, the 424th, to make gallant delaying stands before and behind St. Vith.

Up to now, censorship has forbidden transmission of these details.

[Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson announced Thursday that the 106th suffered 8,663 casualties in the German offensive, including 416 killed and 1,246 wounded. He

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106th Division

(Continued from page one)

said most of the division's 7,001 missing men are presumed to be prisoners.]

The story of the 106th's disaster started in the foggy dawn on Dec. 16 as they occupied positions in and around the Schnee Eifel, a rocky wooded ridge ten miles long and two miles wide astride the Siegfried line. The division was spread thin along a twenty-seven-mile front.

The attack started at 5:50 a. m. with a tremendous artillery barrage against the 106th line, which curved northward from the center of the Schnee Eifel in a sector held by the 14th Cavalry Group, an armored outfit attached to the infantry. Then the barrage moved across a field artillery battalion, also attached. By 6:20 a. m., more than one hundred rounds had hit squarely among the artillerymen.

The Germans turned their guns then on the 422d and 423d Regiments and followed with infantry and tank assaults. By daybreak of Dec. 17 the Germans had thrown two divisions into this part of the front and by mid-morning enemy columns were swarming around the Schnee Eifel. They swamped the 422d and 423d Regiments and the 424th was forced to withdraw.

At 3:35 p. m., on Dec. 18, the radio reported that all units of the two regiments were in need of ammunition, food and water. Parachuting of supplies was out of the question because of the fog. The last message came from the 422d at 4 p. m. that day and from the 423d at 6 p. m. Both messages were identical—"We now are destroying our equipment." That was all. Presumably most of the two regiments were taken prisoners.

The Germans then headed for St. Vith and were stopped temporarily by the 81st and 168th Engineer Battalions who fought heroically. They were outgunned many times over and it was mainly by sheer courage that they held the Germans off all night with three tank destroyer guns and three 57-mm guns.

Early on the morning of Dec. 18 division headquarters began moving west out of St. Vith. Some units were halted by M. P.'s who had on American uniforms and talked with a Mid-Western accent. The M. P.'s turned out to be Germans. One of them fired a rocket which signalled the opening of a terrific barrage against the halted vehicles.

"That was my first artillery ambush and I hope my last," said Major Matthew R. J. Giuffre, of 2538 Grand Concourse, the Bronx, New York.

After a stiff fight by the 424th, one combat command from the 9th Armored Division which had moved up on Dec. 19, and the 112th Regiment from the 28th Infantry Division, the Germans occupied St. Vith at 11 p. m., on Dec. 21.

Sorely exhausted and badly depleted, the 106th pulled back to reorganize Dec. 23, but the next day they were thrown into the line and helped halt the Germans finally on the north side of the salient betwen Stavelot and Manhay.

DAILY NEWS

Saturday, January 20, 1945 — Tel. MUrray Hill 2-1234

[illegible]

MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

[illegible]

GETTYSBURG AND THE BULGE

Prime Minister Winston Churchill day before yesterday made a House of Commons address which was regarded by most of his hearers as one of his greatest speeches ever.

Winston Churchill

Mr. Churchill's most dramatic single passage, from the point of view of Americans, was his statement that in the Battle of the Belgian Bulge, started by von Rundstedt's Dec. 16 smash, "United States troops have done almost all the fighting and have suffered almost all the losses. They have suffered losses almost equal to those of both sides at the Battle of Gettysburg."

Gettysburg, turning point of the Civil War, was fought July 1-3, 1863, with the Union's Army of the Potomac (about 82,000 men) under Gen. George G. Meade finally defeating the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia (about 75,000) under Gen. Robert E. Lee. Estimated casualties totaled 43,454 for both sides—5,664 killed, 27,206 wounded, 10,584 prisoners or missing.

Secretary of War Stimson a few days ago vaguely put our casualties in the Ardennes sector at "slightly less" than 40,000. On Thursday, War and Navy Department reports (incomplete as to the Army) put U. S. World War II casualties from Pearl Harbor through Jan. 7, 1945, at a grand total of 663,859, or 17,479 over the total of 646,380 through Dec. 29, 1944, reported Jan. 11, 1945.

Breakdown of this latest casualty total of 663,859: killed, 143,108; wounded, 380,880; prisoners, 61,940; missing, 77,931.

And there we have the latest available indication of what it will cost us to win these wars—wars out of which our rulers, just as last time, aver we want to get nothing.

Mr. Churchill in this speech also gave some interest[illegible] into the—

N.Y. World-Tel. [illegible]

By the United Press.

WASHINGTON, Jan. 13.—Secretary of War Henry L. Stimson announced today that U. S. ground forces alone suffered [illegible] casualties on the Western Front from D-Day on June 6 to Jan. 1.

As Mr. Stimson made this revelation in his weekly press conference, Prime Minister Churchill in London told Commons that the Americans have done "almost all the fighting" and have lost "60 to 80 men for every one of ours" on the Western Front since the German breakthrough Dec. 16.

The total American losses, which include those during the most severe period of fighting in the Germans' Ardennes offensive, represent [illegible] killed, [illegible] wounded and [illegible] missing, Mr. Stimson said.

German Losses Greater.

He estimated that German casualties in December, including the period of heaviest fighting in the breakthrough, were more than one-third heavier than American losses.

He revealed that U. S. ground forces on the entire Western Front suffered [illegible] casualties in December—[illegible] killed, [illegible] wounded and [illegible] missing. But German casualties in the same month, he added, totaled [illegible] to [illegible], including [illegible] captured.

106th Hard Hit.

Mr. Stimson had no new estimate of American losses confined strictly to the period of the German offensive. On Monday, however, he estimated U. S. losses in the Ardennes area from Dec. 16 to Jan. 7 at 40,000, including 18,000 missing.

Today he reported that one American division, the 106th, [illegible] casualties equal to more than half its entire strength in a "gallant stand" against the Germans in the Ardennes.

This one division suffered 8663 casualties, including 416 killed, 1246 wounded and 7001 missing.

"It was the contribution of the men of this division and of other [illegible]," Mr. Stimson said, "which helped to make possible the halting and repulse of the enemy."

Mr. Stimson also announced total Army combat casualties in all theaters as compiled by the War Department here through Jan. 7. This compilation, however, reflected casualties actually suffered only up to the early days

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106th Infantry Sent to 'Quiet' Front Took Shock of Nazi Break-Through

By The Associated Press.

WITH THE 106TH INFANTRY DIVISION, in Belgium, Jan. 21 (AP) —It was a "quiet" sector they handed the 106th, fresh to the front and rarin' to go, on Dec. 11.

The quiet ended in a shattering eruption of fire and steel five days later; in another two days two regiments and supporting artillery and armor of the Golden Lion Division had been wiped out.

In those two days the men of the two regiments were engulfed by the overwhelming weight of Field Marshal Karl von Rundstedt's breakthrough spearhead. They went down fighting.

Only a handful—fewer than 300 —came back from the 422d and 423d Regiments. They pitched in and helped the remaining regiment, the 424th, to make gallant delaying stands before and behind St. Vith.

Up to now censorship forbade transmission of these details.

[Secretary of War Henry Stimson announced that the 106th had suffered 8,663 casualties in the German offensive, including 416 killed and 1,246 wounded. He said most of the division's 7,001 missing were presumed to be prisoners.]

The story of the 106th's disaster started in the foggy dawn on Dec. 16 as the men occupied positions in and around the Schnee Eifel, a

Continued on Page 5, Column 3

106th Infantry Sent to 'Quiet' Front Took Shock of Nazi Breakthrough

Continued From Page 1

rocky, wooded ridge ten miles long and two miles wide astride the Siegfried Line. The division was spread pitifully thin along a twenty-seven mile front.

Maneuver Problem Duplicated

Ironically, the 106th was in an almost identical defensive position to that it had held during Tennessee maneuvers in March, 1944, when it did so well that the referees had to call time.

The attack started at 5:50 A. M. with a tremendous artillery barrage against the 106th line, which curved northward from the center of the Schnee Eifel in a sector held by the Fourteenth Cavalry Group, an armored outfit attached to the infantry. Then the barrage moved across a field artillery battalion, also attached. By 6:20 A. M. more than 100 rounds had hit squarely among the artillerymen.

The Germans meanwhile switched on dozens of searchlights to introduce a ghostly note. Their idea was that the lights would bounce off the low clouds and light up the American positions while the Germans advanced unseen through the shadows. It failed to work, however.

Five minutes after the shelling of our lines had started, the Germans opened up against St. Vith. The civilians, most of whom had pretended to be friendly but actually were pro-Nazi, all were in their cellars when the firing started. They popped out again promptly after the last shell had fallen at 2 P. M. The Americans later captured a radio receiver by which the Germans had notified the civilians of the impending shelling.

One Forced to Retreat

The Germans then turned their guns on the 422d and 423d Regiments. Infantry and tank assaults followed. By daybreak of Dec. 17 the Germans had thrown two divisions into this part of the front and by mid-morning enemy columns were swarming around the Schnee Eifel. They swamped the 422d and 423d Regiments and the 424th was forced to withdraw.

Until radio contact was lost, the two regiments continued to send back reports of the fighting. They were routine in nature but they added up to disaster. There was no sign, however, that the men realized this.

At 3:35 P. M. on Dec. 18 the radio sputtered that all units of the two regiments needed ammunition, food and water. Parachuting of supplies was out because of the fog.

The last message came from the 422d at 4 P. M. that day and from the 423d at 6 P. M. They were addressed to Lieut. Col. Earle B. Williams of Louisville, Ky., division signals officer, and signed by Sergeants in charge of the regimental radio teams.

Both messages were in code and were identical: "We now are destroying our equipment."

Foe Stalled All Night

The Germans then headed for St. Vith and were stopped temporarily by the Eighty-first and 168th Engineer Battalions, which fought heroically under Lt. Col. Thomas Riggs of Huntington, W. Va. They were far outgunned and it was mainly by guts that they held the Germans all night.

Early on Dec. 18 division headquarters began moving out of St. Vith. Some units were halted by military police who had on American uniforms and talked with a midwestern accent. The MP's turned out to be Germans. One fired a rocket that signaled the opening of a terrific barrage against the halted vehicles.

"That was my first artillery ambush and I hope my last," said Maj. Matthew R. J. Giuffre of 2538 Grand Concourse, New York.

After a stiff fight by the 424th, a combat command from the Ninth Armored Division that had moved up on Dec. 19, Colonel Riggs' fighting engineers and the 112th Regiment from the Twenty-eighth Infantry Division, the Germans occupied St. Vith at 11 P. M. Dec. 21.

Exhausted and depleted, the 106th pulled back to reorganize Dec. 23, but the next day it was thrown into the line and helped halt the Germans finally on the north side of the salient between Stavelot and Manhay.

When Maj. Gen. Alan W. Jones activated the 106th at Jackson, Miss., in March, 1943, he told the division, "You're brand new; you have no past history to live up to, and no past sins to live down."

It still has nothing to live down and much to be proud of.

DAILY NEWS, MONDAY, JANUARY 22, 1945 • 10

Disaster Befalls 106th, But Not Without a Fight

By E. D. BALL

With the 30th Division in Belgium, Jan. 21 (UP).—It was a "quiet sector" they handed the 106th Infantry Division fresh to the front and rarin' to go, on Dec. 11.

U. S. Casualties 74,788 in Month On Nazi Front

December Total Is Highest for Any Month of the War, Foe's Losses 33% Higher

By Leo Cullinane

WASHINGTON, Jan. 18.—American casualties on the western front during December reached a record high of 74,788—larger than for any other month of the war—reflecting the heavy and costly fighting incident to the German counter-offensive which began in Belgium on Dec. 16, Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, revealed officially today.

Of this number, 10,419 Americans were killed, 43,554 wounded and 20,185 are missing. "A great many of the missing are probably prisoners of Germany," Mr. Stimson told his weekly press conference.

Mr. Stimson made no effort to minimize the heavy casualty toll, recalling that he had issued on Monday a special preliminary report covering three weeks of the counter-offensive fighting, which showed casualties of 52,594 at that time. However, Mr. Stimson did emphasize that the German losses for the same period were about one-third larger than the American. "As against our own

(Continued on page 9, column 1)

"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times.

CITY EDITION

VOL. XCIV....No. 31,743. NEW YORK, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 21, 1944 THREE CENTS

NAZI PUSH MOUNTS IN POWER, 13 DIVISIONS USED; FOG BALKS AIR BLOWS AT RAMPAGING COLUMNS; AMERICANS TIGHTEN FLANKS OF 45-MILE BREACH

STETTINIUS SHIFTS EPARTMENT SET-UP S AIDES TAKE OATH

Phone Girls Vote Long-Lines Strike

EX-PASTOR SEIZED IN NEWARK AS SPY

Conspiracy to Aid the 8 Nazi Saboteurs of June, 1942, Is Charged in Indictments

LEYTE FOE FLEEING

Yamashita Line Broken by Two Converging American Forces

HUGE SUPPLIES WON

PT-Boats and Planes Bar Japanese From Attack on Mindoro Outpost

OUR TROOPS STRIKE BACK, BUT FOE'S ASSAULT GAINS STRENGTH

WEST FRONT CRISIS

Foe Adds to the Gravity of Situation, Pouring More Men Into Breach

WE REGAIN 2 POINTS

Stavelot and Monschau in Our Hands—Early Restoration Unlikely

THE WEATHER

THE EVENING SUN

7 STAR FINAL AND SPORTS

3 Cents

NAZIS 4 MILES FROM MEUSE, WIPE OUT SALIENT AT ST. VITH

War Training Bill High On Docket Of Congress

Thefts Blamed For Death

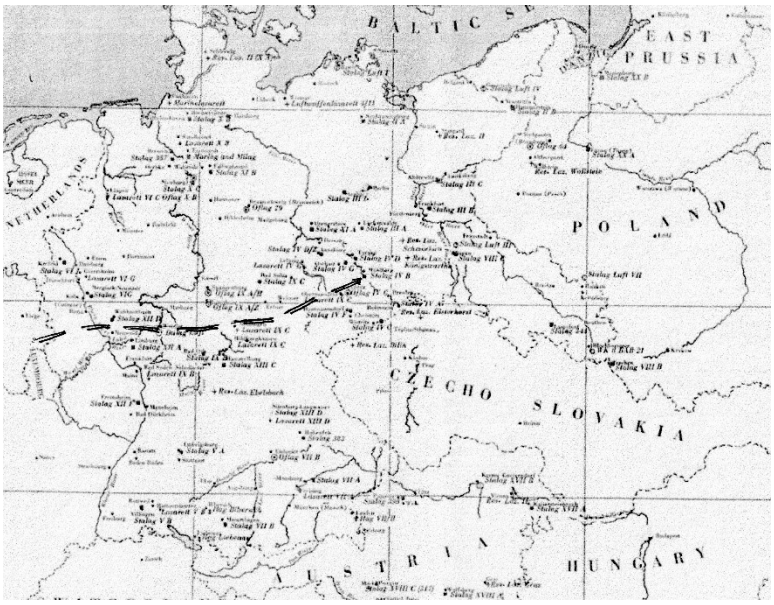
Dynamite Found Near Scobie's Athens Hotel

Nazi Unit Got In U.S. Lines In Attempt To Kill Generals

Foe 50 Miles Inside Belgium; 2d U.S. Force Trapped

Surprise Choice On Canterbury Held Likely

The 110-Mile March to Stalag IV-B



21 Dec 44

In the morning one hip was so stiff from the cold and water I could hardly step over a little twig. The two men supported me and I hobbled along. A German officer came over and asked in German if I were sick. In a mixture of English and German I said, "No, No, just my foot," and kept hobbling. The German's attitude was actually kindly, but I was afraid they had orders to shoot any prisoners who could not keep up. In a few hours I worked the stiffness off completely.

The Germans marched us off close to where I had clobbered the machine guns the day before. Several of the bodies were still there. I took great pride in the

accidental accuracy, but also great care that no satisfaction showed on my face. We later crossed a field with many G.I. and German bodies. Many seemed very young. I noticed their hair gently stir in the breeze.

The Germans marched us to Prum, where, in spite of the circumstances, a somewhat funny thing happened. It was late evening as we walked through town. We had to make way for a big truck driving past. I happened to be right at the corner where it had to make a turn. The driver cut too soon and the back wheels jumped the curb. He would have squashed me if I did not jump up on the stone steps of a house. I yelled, "Vat der Hell iss loss," into the darkness. The driver stopped, got out of the truck with all sorts of German apologies, no doubt hoping he had not offended a German big-wig. Then he drove off.

22 Dec 44

When we were marched away as prisoners, we were told to leave our helmets and canteens. The canteens might be used in an escape attempt. Without helmets we would be more easily spotted. I wore the following: The woolen cap usually worn under the helmet to insulate from the cold metal; cotton long-johns, not thermal; belt; woolen pants; shirt; a woefully inadequate field jacket; socks; shoes; and a pair of 4-buckle boots.

I had used my extra pair of socks when I jumped into the icy mud-hole the day before capture. The wet ones were soon frozen and foolishly forgotten in the morning's excitement. When the boots wore out, they let water in, doing more harm than good. I cut off the soles and used

the uppers as king-sized spats until the weather became tolerable.

In addition to the clothing the following is an inventory of my possessions: 1 G.I. blanket; 1 towel; 1 handkerchief; 1 canteen cup; 1 knife, fork, spoon; my wedding ring; G.I. watch; a small pencil and small pads; a razor and blade; my wallet; some cigarettes; pipe and tobacco; a lighter.

Everything was stuffed into pockets or rolled inside the blanket. It is interesting to see how things change in importance as circumstances dictate. In rain or snow the blanket was rolled and carried over my shoulders so that part of it would be dry for sleeping at night. On dry days it was used as a cape for warmth. A carry-all would free the blanket and provide a place to store food or anything useful that might turn up. The towel was folded in half, and the handkerchief used to tie one end. The other end was closed and a loop, made with part of a shoelace or bits of rag or rope, was used to sling over the shoulder.

The inventory grew in quantity as it changed in character. A tin can was added, a tin-can pot, a pot cover, a small supply of wood, when it was scarce, bread, potatoes, sugar beets, food items from red cross packages, as well as matches, cigarettes and soap. Most soap was used for bartering. White soap was of little use, but the strong brown borax soap was highly regarded by the Germans.

We marched on to Gerolstein where we were given food for the first time, One third of a loaf of bread and a one-inch cube of cheese. The loaves were always the same size, small. I would say they measured 4x4x8 inches.

Ben Fleissig and I both came from Brooklyn, N.Y. We were inducted together, took basic training, went on to

the Tennessee, Arkansas, Texas, Louisiana maneuvers, went to Hawaii, came back to Officers Candidate School, and were assigned to the same outfit together. At the Battle of the Bulge he was in a different battalion. At Gerolstein on 22 Dec the Germans merged two columns of P.O.W.s, mine and Ben's. We were together until we were liberated.

23 Dec 44

We were loaded and locked into boxcars where we stayed the rest of the day and all night.

24 Dec 44

Christmas eve.

In the morning an Allied plane strafed the train several times with fifty caliber bullets. The guards ran for the woods. In the locked box-cars some of the men went berserk. A few tried to climb through the little window, which would have been impossible even without the steel bars four inches apart. The only thing to do was to get as close to the floor as possible, and hope and pray.

There were too many of us for all to get to the floor. The plane would make a pass firing at the cars, turn and make another run at us from the other direction. One big man hauled a smaller man from the floor and took his place. On the next pass he caught a bullet in the head and the smaller man was not hit.

When the plane left, we tried to break out of the boxcar. The guards came back and unlocked the doors. We all insisted we were not going back into the cars.

After the guards let us out, we had the dead and wounded stretched out in what seemed like an endless line. It

would be hours before the wounded men could expect any medical help from the Germans. Some who might have lived, died for the delay. It was a vast tableau of carnage with nothing to be done.

I got word that one of the wounded was asking to see me. It was our First Sergeant. He had two bullets in his back. I thought surely he would die before he got proper attention. It was obvious that he was in great pain. I said, "Hi, Sarge, how is it?" He answered, "It hurts." As I carefully examined his back, I told him his wounds did not look too bad, that the Germans were known for their medical know-how. I assured him he would be alright. Years later I learned that he did live to go home.

For some time before the Battle of the Bulge, the Allies enjoyed air superiority. The German attack was delayed until predictions promised foul weather would prevail for a week or more. And the predictions were accurate. The German armor chewed forward for ten days while Allied planes were helplessly socked in. Unfortunately, one of the first flights to get off strafed us in our box-cars, killing and wounding some hundred P.O.W.s.

The strafing and bombing by our own planes did not rouse resentment in us, as one might think. On the contrary, we were comforted by the knowledge that they were on their lethal missions again. If we suffered a hundred casualties, what must the Germans have suffered. We read a shortening of the war and an earlier deliverance from these attacks.

The very sight of one Allied plane was a comfort. In fact, we identified with it. When the lone German fighter tried to strafe me at Aachen, I considered it a silly affair. The German pilot must have felt the same way. Neither could

harm the other, and we both resorted to insults. I made sure he saw me contemptuously leaning on the stone wall each time he dove. He made sure I scrambled for cover from his bullets.

But when the American plane appeared and the dog-fight began, the whole incident took on new proportions. It was as if the honor of both armies rested in the balance while Allied and German soldiers watched the planes joust high in the air. Each side saw its man as David. His opponent was the hated Goliath. The one side would glory in victory. The other would watch in dismay as Goliath held aloft the head of its beloved champion.

25 Dec 44

Christmas. The march started again. We reached Boos, where we were given food again, one third loaf of bread and a tablespoonful of sorghum.

26 Dec 44

Passed a town called Noyem and spent the night at Kelburg. Watched Allied planes bomb a factory.

27 Dec 44

Marched through a little place called Montabaur. Crossed the Rhine at Coblenz. The bridge had been bombed so we had to zig-zag around the big holes. We went to a place near Coblenz. A sign read "Limburg 10km." They gave us a bowl of soup.

This place was just about identical with the horse training building in the motion picture, Patton. We were on a dirt and manure floor, which had been chewed up by hoofs. Around the walls were painted pictures of men on horses in various postures.

28 Dec 44

Marched to Wirges. We received one red cross package per twenty-five men.

We very rarely got one per man as they were intended, but I cannot recall any serious problem with the division of it. In odd cases we raffled an item off. These packages were great. They might contain a little tin of instant coffee, a little tin of jelly, a chocolate bar or hard candy, some powdered milk, powdered eggs, some oleo, a tiny can of beans or stew, soap, razor blades, cigarettes, matches. I would guess about five pounds of goodies in all. The non-edibles were wonderful for trading for food among the civilians. Trading or begging for food we P.O.W.s called "shopping."

P.O.W. slang..."Caput" meant dead, finished. "Bash" meant a feast. A "bash caput" meant we were going for broke on our food.

"Ersatz" means synthetic. The German coffee and bread were ersatz. The bread was brown with a good percentage of sawdust, but not too bad.

30 Dec 44

We went a short way to the rail line. We shuddered at the thought of box-cars again. But at the same time, we had marched some distance and were weak enough not to object. They split us up into car-load groups. German box-cars are much smaller than ours. Twenty men to a car might have been almost tolerable. We were about thirty. The car loads were taken into a little station to await each loading turn. One of the guards demanded my G.I. blanket. I refused to give it to him. He grabbed it and tried to yank it away. The weather was bitterly cold and I felt I

had nothing to lose. I held on like grim death yelling, "Nien! Nien!" Finally, an officer came out of an inner office and told the guard to lay off. We were loaded and the train took off.

31 Dec 44

We unloaded near Muhlburg and walked to Stalag IV-B, arriving at 1700.

From 21 Dec to 31 Dec we were given one loaf of bread, one bowl of soup, one tablespoonful of sorghum, two one-inch cubes of cheese, and one twenty-fifth red cross package. On this we walked 110 bitter winter miles.

Main Gate Stalag IV-B[11]

Guard Post Stalag IV-B[12]

Some of the inmates at the camp got word to us that we would be searched. Things of value, especially watches, would be confiscated. We were to note name and identification on a piece of paper, and were told what to do. I only had two things of value, my G.I. watch and my wedding ring. I put the ring into a can of powdered milk, where I thought it might be missed by a probe.

We were taken into the mess-hall in groups. The kitchen was closed off by a counter and solid wooden "windows," which slid up to allow food to be served. As instructed, I tap-tapped on one of these windows. It slid up about three inches. I pushed my watch and ID paper through, and the window closed. We then filed past guards at

mess-tables where we were ordered to lay out all our possessions.

I had no trouble understanding the guard who performed the search. He said, "Americanish cigaretten," very pointedly indicating the pack on display. I took the hint and gave him three cigarettes. It seemed a necessary price to protect my belongings. The note-pads and wallet were examined carefully. The wallet contained a few pictures and personal papers. The pads, pictures, and papers were stamped "Gepruft" [checked] *and returned with the wallet. The cigarette lighter was a beat-up old thing and soon ran out of fuel. I later used it for trade when shopping for food. Sometimes I used the razor to dry-shave as we walked. Not that my light beard was a problem. It was "busy business." It helped the miles to slip by unnoticed.*

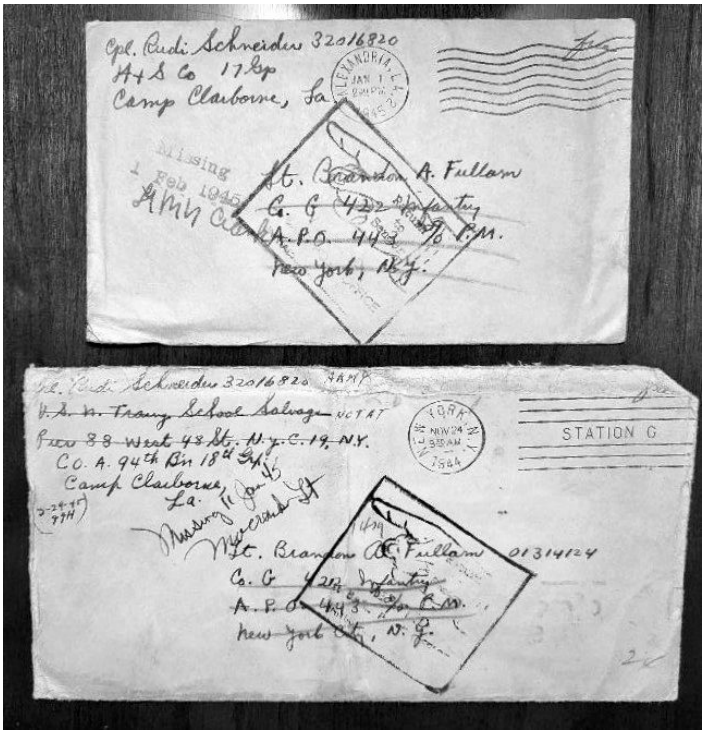
The guard probed the can of powdered milk but missed the ring.

1 Jan 45

Stalag IV-B must also be near Schlossenback as I have a note saying we were numbered and recorded there. For the first time we were registered as P.O.W.s. Before that we were essentially non-persons and the Germans were not seriously accountable for our lives. I was issued a kriegsgefangene (prisoner of war) tag, like a dog-tag. It was stamped "Stalag IVB 313577." I still have it.

[Also recorded in my father's notepads were the names and family contact information for 53 other P.O.W.s. See Appendix A.]

Rudi Schneider and I met in basic training and have been good friends ever since. We parted in Hawaii when I returned stateside for OCS. He went on to rough times in Saipan and Guam. On 24 Nov 44 and again on 1 Jan 45 Rudi wrote to me. Both letters were returned to him marked "Missing." After the war we again made contact. In June 57 he re-sent me the two letters. I still have them, unopened. I thought it would be a good idea to keep them to open when we see each other again. I am still hoping for our reunion.



2 Jan 45

Still at Stalag IV-B. Wrote a letter. I was interrogated by an officer here. He was fairly courteous and gave me no problem. I bummed a cigarette and was dismissed in a short time.

3 Jan 45

I was out in the yard when a P.O.W. I never saw before came up to me and asked, "Lieutenant Fullam?" I said, "Yes," and waited for him to continue, but he never said another word. Instead, he glanced around at the guards, slipped me my watch, and walked away. I brought that watch and my wedding ring home with me.

4 Jan 45

We were glad to reach Stalag IV-B. We assumed we would be fed, we had access to some water, we would be indoors and if not warm, at least out of the bitter cold. But we soon began to doubt our good fortune. The food turned out to be starvation rations. It consisted of a bowl of soup and a little of the ersatz bread once a day. Sometimes without the bread, sometimes without the soup. Once the soup contained a pig's eye and two teeth.

5 Jan 45

The P.O.W. camps, the box-car trips, and the forced marches all presented unique problems. At the camps we had some food and some shelter from the elements. In the box-cars we were cold, were given no food, and were in constant danger of attack from Allied planes, but did not have to walk. The marches taxed our endurance. Nevertheless, each change spurred our hopes for better things... and each soon failed our expectations.

6 Jan 45

There was an air raid nearby. This gave us hope that something good was happening.

7 Jan 45

I suppose I should anticipate the question, "What were the Germans like?" They were a group of individuals who reacted according to their own personalities. The fanatical SS troops were a special danger and even the German civilians feared their cruelty. The average German tended to like Americans and America. The following will help answer the question, or show that there is no satisfactory answer:

The troops who captured us treated us with some level of respect, as one front-line soldier to another.

While hiding in the woods after my abortive escape from Hammelburg later in March, I saw a twelve-year-old boy with a rifle as big as himself. What stories he could tell if he were lucky enough to shoot one of us.

A woman once put on a show of being busy in her yard and bravely threw me a piece of bread. Then she scurried into her house as if she was appalled at her own temerity.

A man once sidled up and slipped me a slice of bread from his breast pocket.

An SS officer walked up, viciously kicked Ben several times, and walked away.

We were treated kindly by the mother of a four-year-old girl who had lost an arm in an air raid.

Once while trudging along in deep snow, I grabbed onto the back of a horse-drawn sleigh as it slowly passed. The driver quickened the horse's pace until I had to let go. Who is to say whether he begrudged me that little help or whether he feared bodily harm for aiding an enemy.

I suppose a few words should be said about us, as soldiers and P.O.W.s.

In a war or a tornado or any great upheaval which shakes people's lives, those closest to the disaster generally have the highest morale or attitude. I was better off than most of the men because I had the benefit of two or three years more experience and training. I had been pushed to the limits of endurance during various training

exercises and field maneuvers. This is important. I can cite some incidents which demonstrate the effect of training:

Hope, Arkansas, likes to be called the watermelon capital of the world. On maneuvers there before the war, we of the "Blue" army met elements of the "Red" army at a big watermelon field. Both sides deserted the "war" and began smashing open watermelons to slake our parched throats. Umpires ran among us frantically screaming, "You're all dead! You're all dead!" but we just kept smashing and eating. It was written up in the local newspapers as "The Battle of the Watermelons," and cost the army several thousand dollars in reparations. But it points up the lack of control in men with insufficient training.

Later, on a training problem in Hawaii, my tongue stuck to the roof of my mouth and I was afraid the skin would tear off if I pried it loose. I came across a small house with a ¾ inch above ground water supply pipe. There was a visible hose bib, but I left it undisturbed.

In Officers Candidate School I once fought five men in succession. I believe it was called "nobody wins." Fifty men were lined up in two rows about thirty feet apart. The first man from each line met in the center. The idea was (no punching or maiming) to cut off the wind or inflict enough pain to make the opponent give up. As soon as there was a victor, he had to fight the next fresh man from the opponents' line.

By similar training the individual learns his physical endurance is far greater than imagined. The self becomes convinced it is equal to the task until proven

otherwise. And the man learns to think under stress. We all had youth. Those of us with more training fared better.

There were rumors we would be leaving the camp, We started hoarding bread from the meager meals to protect against foodless days.

To Oflag 64

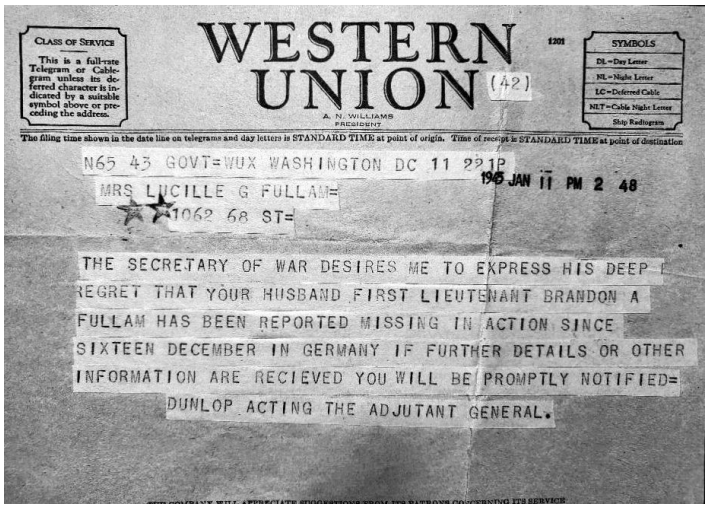
9 Jan 45

They marched us to the train where we were again loaded into box-cars, and the train started that night.

It was very cold in these boxcars. A field jacket and blanket were not enough, no matter how close we huddled together. There was a guard in our car. He opened the door and the car scooped in the bitterly cold air as we sped along. We asked him to close the door. He did, but warned us that if we "passed gas," he would open the door again. We had not washed in many days, and I suppose that was enough. But we all had diarrhea and cramps and passed tremendous amount of the foulest

gas. We could not hold it back. The guard wore a coat, gloves, and leather boots, but these were not enough to keep him warm. Nevertheless, he chose the biting cold to the stench of us. He opened the door again.

10 Jan 45
11 Jan 45



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MRS LUCILLE G FULLAM=
1062 58 ST=

THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP
REGRET THAT YOUR HUSBAND FIRST LIEUTENANT BRANDON A
FULLAM HAS BEEN REPORTED MISSING IN ACTION SINCE
SIXTEEN DECEMBER IN GERMANY IF FURTHER DETAILS OR OTHER
INFORMATION ARE RECIEVED YOU WILL BE PROMPTLY NOTIFIED=
DUNLOP ACTING THE ADJUTANT GENERAL.

[It was not until Jan. 11 that he was officially listed by the Army as MIA.]

We travelled all the next day and night, and then the train stopped. We unloaded and walked to Oflag 64 at 0939 This camp was in Poland. To reach it we passed the villages of Schubin and Altbergund. We later learned it was twenty miles north of Gnesen, which is about forty kilometers east and a little north of Posen.

[I found this approximately 9½ x 12in 1945 Oflag 64 calendar folded and tucked away among my father's army papers and paraphernalia. The camp is depicted at the top.]

12 Jan 45
13 Jan 45

The P.O.W. quickly learned many things which were important. He lit a match on a tiny bit of emery paper to conserve it. Matches were carried so that sweat or outside moisture would not wet them. He could light a paper match by rubbing it vigorously on his scalp and then drawing it sharply across a pane of glass.

He could bring water to a boil in a paper cup or plastic bag over a candle or tiny flame, so long as he was careful not to let the flame go over the water-line.

He could fashion ingenious plates and pots and little stoves from tin cans. Even the tiny drops of lead on cans were carefully removed to seal tin-can canteens for approved escapees. The little stoves, called smokeys, were fired by bits of paper or wood. To this end, bed slats were reduced in number and size, as were parts of the building which might not be missed.

Once I asked to borrow a tin-can pot from a long-time P.O.W. He let me use it with the caution to be sure to clean it. When I had finished, I rubbed it with sand until it shone. He was completely unhappy when I returned it because the bottom showed a little of the carbon deposit. I brushed him off at the time, but later realized he was probably thinking in terms of how much more precious paper or wood that carbon deposit would use up.

14 Jan 45

It was my intention to tell each event in as few words as possible. But it soon became evident that the simple facts are not enough. Their very simplicity can lead to error. When the Germans marched us past the bodies of the machine gunners I had knocked out the day before our capture, one might conclude from my reaction that I gloated over their deaths. This is not the case. I simply took pride in a job well done.

More than once the soup we were given was so thin that we converted it to coffee by an addition from a red cross package. This is not to say we found the insipid concoction revolting and had to change the taste. We never objected to the quality of the food, only the quantity.

15 Jan 45

We were herded into a building where we were to be given shots of some sort by an English P.O.W. doctor. The shots were being administered in the chest. It seemed awfully fishy to me and I was going to refuse. But some of the men said he was really a doctor and a P.O.W., so I took the shot.

[SS doctors at Auschwitz-Birkenau actually did inject phenol into the chests of sick or infirm prisoners as an efficient way to kill them.[13] Allied P.O.W. doctors and medics, of course, did treat fellow P.O.W.s, as apparently was the case here. The practice was permitted by the German guards, who relied on treatment from them in the event that German doctors were unavailable.]

16 Jan 45

It was not uncommon to go for as long as two weeks without a bowel movement and not suffer constipation. I concluded that the under-nourished body drew sustenance from food even in the lower intestines. When captured, I was a healthy 175-180 pounds. At one time I was down to some 110 pounds. After our liberation the army hospitals weighed me every day and amazed me with their statistics. I gained a pound a day for five or six weeks.

17 Jan 45

The human body has been extolled as a masterpiece of beauty, and it is a remarkable creation. But left on its own, untended, there is soon little to admire. From mid-December to the first week in May I believe I had three showers, though it may have been four. A shower alone will not rid the body of lice. In our case, one shower could not wash away all the dirt deep in the pores and layers of calloused skin.

We knew of Hitler's order to exterminate all prisoners. Most of the high command never did attempt to carry out the order. But we were wary of any German conduct which seemed out of the ordinary. I suspected one shower was designed to give us pneumonia. We had to leave the hot shower and walk some hundred yards in sub-freezing temperatures, clad in a towel. But whatever they lacked in total hygiene or peace of mind, these few showers were glorious things and did wonders for our morale.

[News of the execution of 85 American P.O.W.s at nearby Malmedy in Belgium on December 17 had

"spread like wildfire" through the American lines. The P.O.W.s had been herded into a farmer's field — stripped of their rings, cigarettes, watches, and gloves — and then mowed down with automatic weapons from SS troops and machine-gun fire from German tanks. At Honsfeld, Belgium, earlier that same day, 19 American P.O.W.s and 2 civilians were executed. All of these war crimes were committed by the fanatical *Waffen* SS troops under the command of SS-*Standartenführer* Joachim Peiper.[14]

On July 16, 1946, at the U.S. Military Tribunal Trials in Dachau, Peiper and 72 of his troops were convicted: 43 (including Peiper) were sentenced to death, 22 to life in prison, and 8 to terms of ten to twenty years. The death sentences were later commuted to life imprisonment, and then to time served. Peiper was released after eleven and a half years and secluded himself in Traves, France, where on July 13, 1976, former members of the French Resistance tracked him down and killed him.[15]]

Bodies of U.S. P.O.W.s massacred by the *Waffen-SS* 17 Dec 1944[16]

18 Jan 45

Our obsession with food was not a fantasy. Only one who has experienced some degree of starvation will be able to comprehend our state of mind. We sometimes went several days without any food at all. On the first march I found a half-eaten, half-rotten apple discarded some time ago and frozen in the snow. I dug it out and ate it. When the column stopped for a brief rest at a likely spot, I dug under the snow and ate the roots of any grass or weeds I could find. When we did have food, we licked the container and caught any crumbs to be sure no nutrition was lost.

In one P.O.W. camp three of us risked our lives in a scheme to steal one loaf of ersatz bread. A wagon load of bread had been delivered to the camp, and for some reason known only to the Germans, was left in the camp street. It was a small flat-bed wagon and held several hundred loaves neatly stacked like a load of bricks. They were uncovered. On the right hand side the loaves were uneven, so that if one disappeared it would not truly be missed. The horse had been unharnessed and led away. The wiffle-tree [bar connecting the harness to the wagon] *rested on the ground, preventing approach from the front. One rifleman was left to guard this treasure trove. He stood at the rear of the wagon and could see both sides.*

With a simple plan I had once stolen a can of peaches under the nose of an army mess-sergeant. Now I enlisted two P.O.W. confederates in what I felt was a fool-proof, though far more dangerous, variation of the peach theft. I walked down the street on the right side of the wagon, on a line that would take me close to, but not quite within

reach of, the bread. Number two man followed about twenty feet behind me, carrying a few pieces of equipment. Number three man was abreast of me across the narrow street, his half-buttoned shirt under a loose jacket. According to plan, the guard eyed my progress suspiciously. When I was beside the wagon, number two man tripped and fell, his equipment clattering loudly to the ground. As soon as the guard looked toward the commotion, I snatched a loaf from the wagon and threw a lateral pass to the number three man, who tucked it inside his shirt. When the guard looked back at me, he only saw a man also attracted by the clatter and standing a good two steps out of reach of the treasure.

19 Jan 45

20 Jan 45

It quickly became apparent that the amount of food we were issued could not sustain us. Day by day we would be going down-hill physically. When rumors began to hint of a move by foot, we were not happy. It would be cold and difficult and yet we felt a move might offer some sort of welcome opportunity.

[On January 21, 1945, there were 1,471 P.O.W.s at Oflag 64. Because of approaching Soviet troops, all P.O.W.s capable of walking were marched out. Approximately 100 Americans were too sick to move. Two days later, on January 23, the camp was liberated by the Soviet 61st Army.[17] The Americans who were marched out from Oflag 64 in Poland by the Germans on January 21 spent the next forty-six days trudging nearly 350 miles through snow and bitter cold, with little food, to Parchim in Germany. Hundreds would leave the column, too sick and frostbitten to continue.[18]]

The 347-Mile March From Oflag 64

[The miles noted in parentheses are the cumulative distance the P.O.W.s were marched after leaving Oflag 64, converted from kilometers.]

21 Jan 45 (16mi)

With hopes of better things to come, we set out from Oflag 64 at 1000. We passed the village of Wirsitz and went 5km beyond Exin, a total of 27km.

On the road we saw streams of civilians evacuating to safety. They were a pitiful lot caught up in the realities of war. They had left their homes with whatever they could carry of their precious possessions loaded onto wagons or sleighs. Helpless women tried to comfort crying

children in the bitter cold. Horses would slip and fall on the ice. The floundering horses had apparently pulled one wagon over an embankment and once over, the wagon had pushed the horses into three big trees. Both horses were dead. I could see where the family had then chosen what they could pack on their backs, and continued on.

I plodded over to one of these wagons and in what German words I could muster said, "I have great hunger." In a burst of compassion which came from her heart, the poor woman said, "Ach, Gott." The man produced a round loaf of home-made bread and, drawing a knife toward his body, cut off a slice which he gave me. I thanked them and we parted. I hope those poor people fared well.

As our column stopped for a rest, we took care of our toilet needs along the side of the road, wherever we happened to be, in town or out. We stopped for the night at a little farm and slept in the barn. We were issued no food. There was water at the farm but we dared not take it as manure was piled high around the well.

22 Jan 45 (28mi)

We crossed the Bromberg canal on a little bridge fixed with explosives, ready for demolition. Along the road German artillery fired from positions nearby but hidden in the woods. Oddly enough, a column of evacuees had to hold up until we passed.

We walked 26km and stopped at a place called Eichfield. The Polish people were very friendly. Ben and I got about ¼ pound of margarine and some ersatz bread from them.

The artillery we heard meant that the Russians must be near. Since the people were friendly, Ben and I decided

to escape. Our plan was to hole up in some friendly house and let the battle-lines roll over us. We were not happy that we would be under Russian influence if successful, but it seemed a better prospect than what we had. We slipped off and when we had made some distance, knocked on the door of a house. A German officer opened the door. We pretended we were only looking for food. In jig time a soldier marched us back to the column.

Many were too sick to continue and stayed there. About a thousand of us P.O.W.s had started on this march the previous month. From time to time others joined us. Of the original thousand only about a hundred of us were together at the end.

23 Jan 45 (32mi)

We marched 7km and stopped at a big farm beyond Charlottenburg. The people were very friendly. We slept in a big barn and were reasonably warm. I sneaked in among the cows with a P.O.W. who had been raised on a farm. We swiped a big can of milk and gulped it down. It gave us an awful case of the runs.

24 Jan 45 (39mi)

In the morning we discovered that the guards had pulled out because they were afraid the Russians might over-run the area. Some of the P.O.W.s took off, but Ben and I decided to stay until we knew more of the situation. Roaming around on our own, we would be fair game for either side. At the farm there were friendly people and food. In a few hours, however, the guards returned and we pulled out in the afternoon.

We walked seven miles to the little town of Lobsens. The people were unbelievable. The town was garrisoned with

Latvian soldiers who struck the people with their rifles if they caught them helping us. But in spite of the danger, they called encouragement to us and dared to slip us food. Ben and I got some cheese, cake, butter, and even an egg.

We slept in a cold barn with snow coming through the roof.

25 Jan 54 (53mi)

We marched 20km to a farm in Flatow. Ben and I slept in a hayloft. Flatow was a pro-German town and the people were unfriendly toward us. They were very depressed at the prospect of being over-run by the Russians. Nevertheless, we got ¾ loaf of bread, some oleo, and a lump of cheese. They also issued some soup that night but ran short, so Ben and I missed out.

When we stopped for the night, the guards would show us our boundaries and designated a place we were to use for a latrine. A Russian had escaped from a work detail and tried to make his way east. He had frozen to death, and his body lay in our field. The Germans marked out a tight little area with the body in the center. This was our latrine. These were soldiers stationed in the area, and not our guards. Our usual guards, under a Col. Schneider, were as considerate as the circumstances allowed. But the local soldiers were in command and the guards took orders from them.

26 Jan 45 (53mi)

In the morning as we assembled for a march, the soldiers peppered the haystacks and barns with grenades and burp-guns to be sure no P.O.W.s were hiding.

There were battle sounds in the air behind us. The soldiers questioned the people about the area and then moved out. We were not sorry to see them go and our guards shared our feelings. We stayed at Flatow another day and night. Two groups of sick left us.

27 Jan 45 (65mi)

In the morning we set out again. We covered 18km, through Lukow nearly to Justrow. Many more poor evacuees were fleeing to safety. German soldiers were dug in near a river 5km from Justrow. Some wore white ski-suits. The snow was very deep. We plodded on to Justrow where we saw another column of P.O.W.s. Many nations were represented.

Ben and I drew an open stable. The air was cold and the snow was deep. Another box-car load of sick left us.

28 Jan 45 (78mi)

Pushed on 20km to an empty church in Zuppenow. The deep snow and bitter temperatures were unbearable. One guard was evacuated because his nose froze. My hands were freezing. They were black and blue from the palms to the back. The nails were black. My fingers split open. I had to use them like paws. Some days later when I had a chance to take off my shoes, I discovered my toes were also black.

29 Jan (81mi)

We went another 8km through deep snow to Stalag II-D, near Redenik. As we walked past the villagers they jeered, calling, "Isn't there room for you in America?" I caught as many as I could with my eyes and stared daggers at them.

Snow. We were given a bowl of sauerkraut soup.

[Stalag II-D was near Stargard in northwestern Poland, close to the Baltic Sea. The P.O.W. column spent just one night there before moving on.]

30 Jan 45 (89mi)

Marched from Stalag II-D 14km to Machelin. Stalled truck caused a detour. Arrived late, freezing. Miserable weather. Split up, houses and barns. Drew barn. Some bread and grass soup. Reds rumored in Justrow.

31 Jan 45 (100mi)

16km to Templeburg. Barn. One loaf bread. Town crowded with troops, evacuees, P.O.W.s. Civilians better to us.

1 Feb 45 (103mi)

7km to Heinrichdorf. Slush. Barn. Barley soup and bread. Potato soup supper. Woman says roads have been crowded for eight days. Town largely populated but still signs of readiness to evacuate.

2 Feb 45 (114mi)

17km, 7km beyond Falkenburg between Falkenburg and Dramburg. Started march 1300.

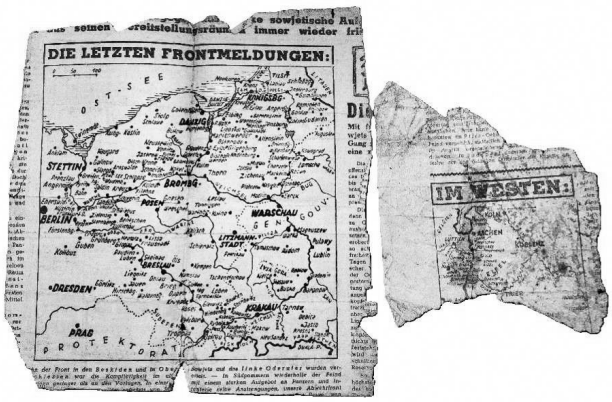
Arrived late, stumbled around in dark barn, terribly crowded. Pea soup did not go around. One loaf bread and some oleo.

Ben and I were in the hayloft here. During the night I had cramps from diarrhea. I groped my way past the sleeping men to the long wooden ladder, the only exit from the loft. I could not go down the ladder backwards, by hand and foot, because to bend over would contract my stomach and force a bowel movement. I walked upright down the ladder. When I neared the middle of the ladder, it started to sway a bit. When the ladder swayed, my stomach muscles contracted. When my stomach muscles contracted, my bowels moved, and by the time I reached the ground, I was finished.

This presented another problem. I had no change of underwear, and I was afraid of catching pneumonia if I threw these away. With a tin can, I scraped what I could from my underwear, washed as well as I could with snow, and buttoned up.

3 Feb 45 (114mi)

Same, passed Drolshagen. Potato soup. In this general area I found a piece of newspaper showing two little war maps. With these I could tell where I was in relation to the rest of the world. It was a wonderful piece of luck and I kept them carefully.



4 Feb 45 (124mi)

Through Dramburg, 17km to Ginow. Roads almost dry. Much easier walking. Bread and potato soup. Split up in barns.

5 Feb 45 (136mi)

German radio says Russians 20mi from Stettin, so instead of Stargard we turn north at Wangeran. 20km to Leitxits. 180 sick left us on train.

6 Feb 45 (149mi)

Oatmeal, potatoes, coffee in morning. 1/6 bread, coffee at noon. Many French and British P.O.W.s at small work camps. Small column of miserable Russians, including women. 22km to Regenwald. Attractive, good-sized town. Stayed at a German submarine school.

7 Feb 45 (161mi)

Walked 20km through Plathe to Lebbin. Cabbage soup in morning. Bread and coffee later. Barn crowded, no aisle.

We were always crowded into the barns, but usually could form an aisle of some sort.

Anyone caught smoking in these barns would be shot, but we all did it. Once I felt perfectly safe smoking with a guard standing right beside me. I lit up under the blanket and the rest was easy. The guard could not smell the smoke because the stink from us was so bad. He could not see smoke because it was so cold everyone, including himself, exhaled steam.

8 Feb 45 (173mi)

Cabbage soup in morning. Through quaint Greifenburg to Stuchow, 20km. Saw a long column of P.O.W.s including seven nationalities. Their guards were brutal to them. Chatted with Serb, Russ, Check, Dutch friends. Coffee, potato soup for supper. Slept in hayloft.

9 Feb 45 (180mi)

14km to place near Stresow. Tea in morning. Bread and potatoes later. Slept in hayloft.

Little as people understand love, it may well be that they know even less about hate. It is a powerful word denoting an emotion which demands a depth of malignity few people possess. Hate is not a prerequisite for war.

This evening the column stopped at a farm and, as in most cases, I was assigned the hayloft. In mid-winter a hayloft will defy sleep. The deeper one burrows, the colder one gets. There would be no sleeping this particular night.

The people at the farm were very friendly. Two of our better guards had entered the farmhouse. I could see them all chatting in the kitchen. I longed to be warm, even if only for a few minutes. In desperation I dared to attempt the impossible dream. I went to the door and knocked. One of the guards opened the door. I told him I was sick and, not knowing the German word, indicated my stomach. He said something to the group, apparently received their approval, and gestured me inside.

In addition to the two guards, there was an aging woman and another I took to be her daughter. One of the women took a brick from the oven, wrapped it in a towel and placed it on a wooden chair. She had me sit on it. The other woman gave me a cup of hot broth. The hot brick almost cooked me. I had to shift from cheek to cheek in order to stand it. When the brick cooled down to a comfortable temperature, one of the women would put it back in the oven and give me a fresh one to hatch.

As I tried to catch a word or two of their conversation here and there, I marveled at these people. I was not just dirty. I was filthy, disheveled, stunk to high heaven, and was infested with lice. But they only saw a human being. If the tables were turned, I doubted I would do as much for them.

10 Feb 45 (189mi)

Tea and potatoes in the morning. Walked 15km through Fritzow to Deivenow, a pretty town on the island of Wolin in the Baltic Sea. Beautiful spring-like day. Coffee for lunch. Potatoes, gravy, turnips, and a loaf of bread for supper. Slept at a Flying School. School full of Hungarian and German boys and girls. Signs read, "Tunis," "Stalingrad," "Who would live must fight."

All the planes in WWII were propeller driven. Here for the first time I saw a jet, which the Germans were developing. It was much faster than anything I had seen before.

New weapons were a source of worry. Once in London I watched a V-1 bomb come over. It sounded like an old washing machine rather than a rocket. These were given fuel calculated to carry them to their targets. The fuel would burn out and they would fall with their payloads. There was no threat while the motor could be heard. On that first march after capture, I saw a V-2 rocket take off from its launching pad in the woods. It was at least twice the size of the V-1, more accurate, and gave no warning.

11 Feb 45 (198mi)

Pretty country. Went 16km through Heidebuile, Kolgow, to Nuendorf. Barley soup and coffee for supper. We all slept in a barn, stacked in like logs.

12 Feb 45 (213mi)

Wolin Island hilly, wooded. Military area and fine homes. Went 26km to a naval base at Swinemunde. Slept in naval barracks. Gruel and coffee.

13 Feb 45 (217mi)

Went by ferry to Usedom Island. 8km to Garz. Boiled potatoes and gravy. Slept in small barn.

14 Feb 45 (225mi)

Through Zirchow, 15km to Stolpe. Barn.

The friendship between Ban and me was a warm, hundred percent thing from the beginning. When the SS Officer viciously kicked him as we sat on the ground, I was struck by the fear that he might make the fatal mistake of defending himself. Later, in April, I confronted a Burgermeister, probably in his own house, Ben worried for me and quickly hustled me to safety. There was only one discordant incident, and it passed quickly:

On the days the Germans gave us no food we were forced to delve into our meager hoard. And Solomon could not have handled the situation with more wisdom. We would decide what we could afford to eat. I would divide it and Ben would have his choice of the halves. No brain surgeon ever operated with more care than I in the division. But how do you divide a potato or an uneven piece of bread into two equal parts? One day I decided it was impossible, and so gave way to jealousy. Whatever half Ben left looked smaller than the one he took. At this rate, in two or three weeks I would lose a day's food. I told Ben he should divide for a change. He very quickly agreed.

Ben was a better cook and he was a better barber, but a surgeon he was not. He demonstrated this on his first food operation. I could see one part was definitely bigger than the other. But friendship demanded I take the "smaller" piece. Then it dawned on me that Ben had

agreed to the change in roles with a terrible quickness. The pieces he had left for me must have seemed bigger to him than those he chose. I became the chief surgeon once again.

15 Feb 45 (225mi)

Marched. Layover. Rest by the Baltic Sea. Tea, potatoes in the morning. Coffee at noon. 1/10 lb oleo, potatoes and gravy at night.

100 sick left us.

16 Feb 45 (240mi)

Went through Usedom and Pinnow. Crossed bridge to mainland. Stopped at Morow, 24km. Crowded barn. Tea in morning. Coffee at noon. Cabbage and bread at night.

17 Feb 45 (255mi)

Walked 27km to Gutzkow. Housed in barn. Tea and 1/6 bread in morning. Hot water at noon. Barley soup at night.

It had been some time since our last red cross package, so it was necessary to supplement what they gave us. Our German overseer, Col. Schneider, met the column here to tell us that red cross packages were at hand. It was a humane effort to boost our morale.

18 Feb 45 (255mi)

Layover at Gutzkow. Red cross packages issued. We drew for items we could not divide, and used as much as we dared for a bash caput.

19 Feb 45 (262mi)

Through Breechen to farm beyond Jarmen, 12km. Barn. Potatoes and cabbage soup.

The Germans had a catch-all rule by which they could shoot a P.O.W. for almost anything he did. Destroying or endangering the property of the Third Reich was a charge which could cover just about everything. In the minds of the fanatical SS men, even breathing their air came under this law. In one camp two P.O.W.s were under sentence of death for tearing down a type-written regulation tacked up on a bulletin board. They had used it for fuel in their smokeys. We moved out of the camp before the sentence could be carried out. Another man killed a pigeon for food, but his crime was not detected. I am convinced many P.O.W.s in other columns died because of brutal treatment.

A French P.O.W. received a rifle-butt strike to the mouth for singing his national anthem. A Polish civilian in Lobsens suffered the same punishment for calling encouragement to us. Unless I under-estimate the human body, both these men had their jaws broken. The civilian would probably receive help from his friends and might survive. The Frenchman, unable to eat even the little food he got, would surely die.

20 Feb 45 (275mi)

Went 22km to barn beyond Demmin, a big town. Red cross packages again. Issued 1/6 bread and coffee at noon. Soup at night.

21 Feb 45 (275mi)

Layover. We are at Deven. Many Polish and Russian women. I sneaked into a pigpen and saw pigs feeding on potatoes. The potatoes had many blemishes, but looked like blue ribbon winners to me. The pigs were mean, tenacious brutes, but I kicked them away and took as many as I could. They were a heavy load but well worth the pain.

22 Feb 45 (285mi)

17km. Through Dorgain to barn in Neukalen. 1/6 bread and barley soup at night.

23 Feb 45 (296mi)

19km. 7km beyond quaint Malcken. Slept in barn. 1/6 bread and cabbage soup at night.

I never witnessed one traitorous or cowardly act by a P.O.W. in the whole campaign. The big man who took the smaller man's place when we were strafed in the boxcars was a good soldier, the type who, in a different situation might storm an enemy position single handed. Perhaps claustrophobia was his "Achilles heel." When the German machine guns sprayed our woods the day before capture, I moved up to spot their positions. As I crawled forward, I came upon several men who had taken cover. Some had rifles. I said, "Come on, let's get some lead

going their way," and continued forward. At the edge of the woods I looked back and was surprised to see the men had not left their cover. My men would have followed. These were motor pool men and medics. The motor pool men would drive a jeep through an artillery barrage. The medics would risk their lives trying to reach a wounded soldier. They were simply not combat soldiers.

24 Feb 45 (309mi)

Through Kirch, Grubenhagen, 22km to barn in Vollratharuhe. Passed men building road block. Have walked over 300 miles now, 1/3 bread, turnip soup and potatoes at night.

25 Feb 45 (322mi)

21km by dirt and mud trails in woods. Through Karon to barn at Flauerhagen. Boiled potatoes at night.

26 Feb 45 (322mi)

Layover. We got to mix with some Serbian men on a work detail. Ben and I got a haircut and a couple of eggs from them. Had two meals with this and boiled potatoes and barley soup from the Germans.

27 Feb 45 (331mi)

17km. 3km beyond Lubz to barn at Lutheran. Turnip soup and potatoes at night. Saw a German general. Many evacuees, apparently from Stettin.

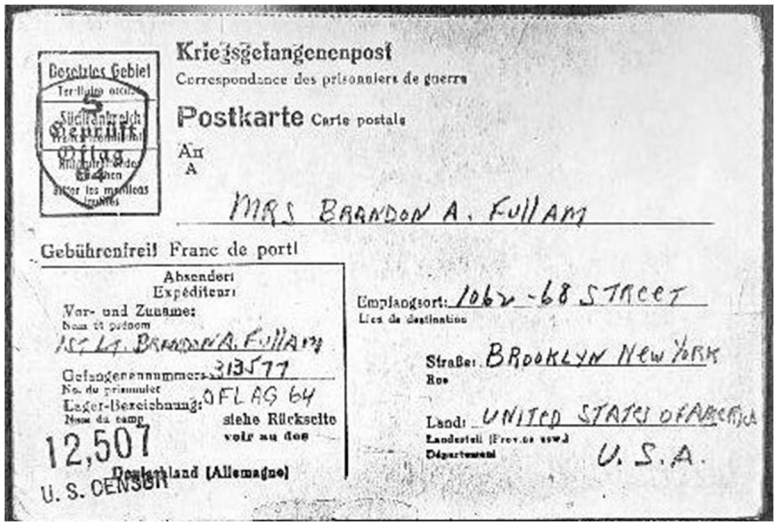
28 Feb 45 (340mi)

15km to barn at Siggelkow, a town near Parchim. Turnip soup, ½ loaf of the best bread in Europe, and some potatoes. ½ red cross package.

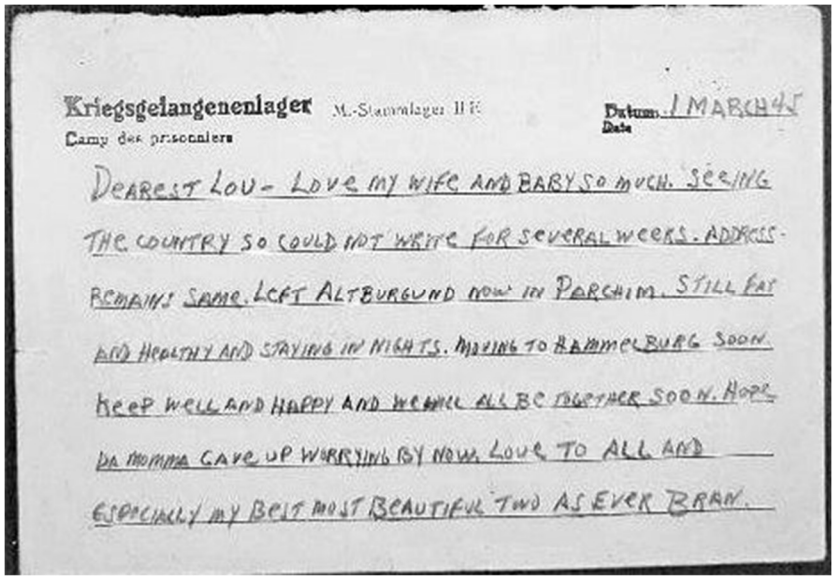
1 Mar 44 (340mi)

Layover. Awaiting box-cars for train trip. They let us write a brief P.O.W. card home. Issued barley soup and potatoes. Got some eggs from the people.

As P.O.W.s we were allowed to write home several times.


Kriegsgefangenenpost
Correspondance des prisonniers de guerre
Postkarte Carte postale
An
A
MRS BRANDON A. FULLAM
Gebührenfrei Franc de port
Absender:
Expéditeur:
Vor- und Zuname:
Nom et prénom
ICT Lt. BRANDON A. FULLAM
Gefangenennummer: 313577
Lager-Bezeichnung: OFLAG 64
Nom du camp
siehe Rückseite
voir au dos
12,507
Deutschland (Allemagne)
U. S. CENSOR
Empfangsort: 1062 - 68 STREET
Lieu de destination
Straße: BROOKLYN NEW YORK
Rue
Land: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
U. S. A.

I was very careful that my remarks were complimentary to the Germans so they would not destroy them. Two of these, a letter from Stalag IV-B, dated 2 Jan 45, and this postcard from Parchim, dated 1 Mar 45, reached home via the red cross. This was the first the family knew I had been captured. They had the news before the War Department.



Kriegsgefangenenlager M.-Stammlager III E
Camp des prisonniers

Datum 1 MARCH 45
Date

DEAREST LOU - LOVE MY WIFE AND BABY SO MUCH. SEEING THE COUNTRY SO COULD NOT WRITE FOR SEVERAL WEEKS. ADDRESS REMAINS SAME. LEFT ALTBURGUND NOW IN PARCHIM. STILL FAT AND HEALTHY AND STAYING IN NIGHTS. MOVING TO HAMMELBURG SOON. KEEP WELL AND HAPPY AND WE SHALL ALL BE TOGETHER SOON. HOPE DA MOMMA GAVE UP WORRYING BY NOW. LOVE TO ALL AND ESPECIALLY MY BEST MOST BEAUTIFUL TWO AS EVER BRAN.

2 Mar 45 (340mi)

Layover. Given potatoes and gravy and ¼ red cross package. We were able to beg eggs from the people in this area a couple of times. This was a rare treat.

3 Mar 45 (340mi)

Layover. Given potatoes, 1/3 bread and some grass soup.

4 Mar 45 (340mi)

Layover. Barley soup and potatoes.

Ben and I made quite a team. If we went shopping, begging for food alone, we never ate anything but pooled it all and shared it. When we went together, Ben did most

of the talking because his Yiddish was a fairly good substitute for German.

One time we slipped away from the column at night. We went to a house, hoping the people would let us sleep on the floor. We knocked on the door and Ben asked the occupants if we might sleep on "das decker." The owners went into fits of laughter. They let us in, gave us some food, and we did sleep on the floor. But their laughter puzzled us. Later we learned that "decker" means ceiling.

5 Mar 45 (340mi)

Lice inspection. Given 1/6 bread, barley soup and potatoes.

6 Mar 45 (345mi)

We were given some meat broth, ½ bread and some oleo at 0600 and marched 10km to the train at Parchim.

Col. Schneider was commanding officer of our guard. He was a short, gray-haired German and actually had gone to great pains to care for us. His men reflected his humane attitude. We did not appreciate this fact at the time. We had seen other groups under brutal guards, and ruthless soldiers mistreat civilians. We only knew we were miserably cold and starving most of the time. The Colonel now said good-bye to us in what should have been a moving speech. We listened with mixed emotions. When it was over, Ben and I began to recall some of the things he had done for us. We crossed over the area and gave him a snappy salute. He returned it with gratitude.

We watched planes bomb Lidwigalust. Our box-car took forty-two men.

7 Mar 45 (345mi)
8 Mar 45 (345mi)

We heard many air raid sirens, but our train was not attacked. The train passed Lidwigslust, Wittenberge, Magdenburg, Halle, Kersenburg, Naumburg, Weimar, Bad Kissingen, Schweinfurt, and stopped at Hammelburg, We stayed in the cars the rest of that day and all night.

9 Mar 45 (347mi)

In the morning we walked 4km to Oflag XIII-B.

Oflag XIII-B at Hammelburg

[From: Comite International de la Croix-Rouge
The Roster of American Prisoners of War interned at Oflag XIII-B, Hammelburg

Lager-Hammelburg
American Oflag XIII-B
25 March 1945[19]

Fullam, Brandon A.
1st Lt 0-1 314 124 PW#313 577]

10 Mar 45

We were deloused. This took all day. Met old P.O.W. friends. Went to sleep at 0330.

11 Mar 45

Received at Mass by our old Chaplain, Fr. Cavanaugh. Visited. Cooked.

[According to the above-cited International Red Cross inspection conducted 25 March 1945, conditions for the American P.O.W.s at Oflag XIII-B were very poor: "Around 200 men were crowded into each barrack. The amount of coal for heating during the bitter winter months was strictly rationed, and the average temperature in the barracks was about 20 °F (−7 °C). There was no hot water for washing, and the number of latrines was inadequate...."[20]]

12 Mar 45

Baby about three months old.

My first child was due to be born in Dec. 44. At the time of my capture I took great comfort in the belief that my wife would not hear the news until after the baby was born. I "celebrated" 12 Dec as the baby's birthday because that is Lucille's.

[I was born the day before, on Dec. 11, 1944.]

13 Mar 45

Chatted with P.O.W. Col Scales. [Lt. Col. William C. Scales, Commander, Company E 422nd Infantry] *Weather broke. This "chat" was the preliminary discussion of an escape plan.*

14 Mar 45

Still good weather. Registered for sick call.

I do not hold completely with Shakespeare's "he jests at scars, who never felt a wound." As often as not the uninitiated might doubt if he would "measure up" in similar circumstances. This of course is a mistake. A man does what he has to do. To doubt this is to do oneself an injustice. Dwellers in tents do have stronger nerves than dwellers in houses. The men of whom I speak in this journal were all citizen soldiers. In trying times dwellers in houses quickly become dwellers in tents.

15 Mar 45

Wrote a letter. Night bombing close.

16 Mar 45

Meeting with Col. Scales. ¼ red cross package. Social.

17 Mar 45

Played hearts. Started a book.

Death is a certainty. There are few more acceptable ways for a man to die than for his country. It is proper and fitting that the country honor its soldier dead, bury them in a place apart, a hallowed place. But let no tears fall in their memory. Weep rather for the drug addict, the drunken driver, the suicide, and all those who find an ignominious death.

18 Mar 45

Morning parade interrupted five times by air raid warnings. The camp was not hit. I think they may have known this is a P.O.W. camp.

19 Mar 45

Finished book. Started another. Washed clothes. Played chess. Wrote a letter.

20 Mar 45

A Serbian P.O.W. had died and they carried him off to a hole in the ground. The body was in an open-ended wooden box. Apparently they made only one size. The bare feet protruded. He was stripped of useful clothing and buried in his underwear.

21 Mar 45

To celebrate my second wedding anniversary Col. Scales, Ben, and I had a little bash. Ben and I had come off the road with a few goodies. One of these was a pocketful of split peas. Col. Scales provided the smokey and fuel. I know he thought this was a mixed blessing because it took so much fuel to cook the peas.

Received at Mass.

Lt. Weeks buried. The Germans had passed some sort of restriction about going to the latrine, but they never said anything to us. Lieutenant Weeks went out to the latrine, breaking this secret rule. A guard rested his rifle on a fence post and shot him through the head from about ten feet.

22 Mar 45

Lice. Received at Mass. Warm again. Washed clothes, read.

23 Mar 45

Received at Mass. Read in the sun. Got bridge system. Was "CQ" [Charge of Quarters] *for the day.*

24 Mar 45

Received at Mass. Finished "Gentlemen Prefer Blonds." Sat in the sun. P47s over Hammelburg.

25 Mar 45

Received at Mass. Sun-bath. Read.

Col. Scales, Ben, and I made a plan to escape The escape committee approved the plan and would supply tin-can canteens. We had to provide our own food. The valley approach to the camp was studded with "dragon teeth," cement tank obstacles. The area was supposed to be mined, but we had walked to the camp here and knew the path.

26 Mar 45

Received at Mass. Air raid, heavy snow.

The Hammelburg Raid and Escape

27 Mar 45

Gen. Patton's son-in-law, Col. Waters, was at our camp. It is said the following was an attempt to free the Colonel (and us). A force of some thirty tanks and half-tracks were sent fifty miles behind the German lines with this objective. This force certainly created havoc for the Germans. I think about half of them survived to subdue Hammelburg and temporarily capture our camp.

They could not transport all of us. Some remained in camp, some took off on foot, some climbed onto the tanks and half-tracks. Ben and I climbed onto a half-track and the column moved out.

There were a number of wounded in the vehicle. I was perched on a three-inch rib of steel protruding from the side, about six inches from the floor. Several times I heard groans before I realized that my heels had occasionally sagged down and brushed against a man's bandaged head.

Our vehicle was about seventh in the column. The Germans hid on the side of the road in the darkness and fired "panzerfausts," their version of the bazooka. They hit some of the vehicles. When one was disabled, a tank would push it aside and the column moved on. The tank ahead of us was hit, but continued to move.

[Lt. Gen. George S. Patton was considered by many, including the German field commanders, to be one of

America's greatest generals, but his daring raid on Oflag XIII-B at Hammelburg 50 miles behind German lines on the evening of March 26, 1945, was a disaster. Initially Patton planned to send an entire combat regiment consisting of ten companies, but in the end the operation was limited to just two companies, one from the 10th Armored Infantry Battalion, and one from the 37th Tank Battalion. Altogether the force numbered 11 officers and 303 men, 16 tanks, 28 half-tracks, and 13 other vehicles. The plan was to smash through the German line and reach Hammelburg while it was still dark. Unfortunately, by the time the mile-long column overcame German resistance, it was broad daylight and they had already lost a number of vehicles. On the afternoon of the 27th, the column finally made it to Hammelburg with only about half of the men and vehicles in fighting shape. After a brief skirmish the Americans subdued the German resistance at the P.O.W. camp and took over temporary control.

They immediately realized that the reduced task force was unable to transport very many of the P.O.W.s, whose numbers they had drastically underestimated. Most of them remained at the camp, many too sick or weak to accompany the column which would have to fight its way back to the American lines. A few took off on foot and some clambered up onto half-tracks or the steel hulls of tanks as the column moved out at 8:00 that night. About ten minutes out of Hammelburg, the column was ambushed by a force of Germans armed with panzerfausts. In the end, every vehicle in the task force was hit, and nearly all of the surviving Americans were captured and brought back to Hammelburg as P.O.W.s.

The raid had cost 25 men killed, 32 wounded, and nearly 250 taken prisoner.

Controversy surrounds the motivation behind the operation, since Lt. Col. John K. Waters, Patton's son-in-law, happened to be one of the P.O.W.s imprisoned at Oflag XIII-B at that time. While Patton took responsibility for the failure of the mission, he defended his actions due to fear that retreating Germans might kill the prisoners in the camp.[21]]

Ben and I decided on a course of action. If our vehicle was hit on the right side, we would jump off and head for the woods on the left. If hit on the left, we would exit right. A shell exploded on our left. Ben and I jumped off on the right side and crawled towards the woods. Machine gun fire opened up. The bullets kept coming closer. Then we realized the Germans had fired from the right and missed, their shell exploding on our left. We were inadvertently crawling toward their position. We moved off on a lateral.

Travelling cross-country as we did, I do not suppose we covered very many miles, but we walked all night. Once as we entered a meadow, we heard the clink of metal. We crouched in the weeds as the sound came closer and finally revealed two cows with bells that clanked from time to time.

Another time we came to a paved road. We crept to the edge and studied the trees. The silhouette of a big German tank stood out blacker than the night about seventy-five feet down the road. We felt they would not

see us since we barely picked them up. We flitted across the road and into the field. The tank moved up to where we had crossed the road, the turret swinging toward us as it moved. We knew they could not be sure of anything, but we dared not show any movement. We lowered our heads to appear like an old tree stump. We stood for a long minute until the tank moved back to its original position.

We avoided signs of life where we could, but did skirt a little place called Dossdorf. When dawn was breaking we holed up deep in the woods.

28 Mar 45

We were asleep for what seemed like a very short time when the sound of a wagon woke us as it came down a dirt road. Moving deep into the woods for safety the night before, we had almost come out on the other side. The wagon passed ten feet from us. We retreated further into the trees and slept all day, planning to travel at night. There were shots in every direction. Toward evening there were two big explosions followed by columns of smoke. We could only hope that it was some of the disabled vehicles being destroyed. We stayed another night in the woods.

29 Mar 45

Things quieted down the next day, so that night we set out. Some hours later we came to the Main River, a branch of the Rhine. We could see the water through the trees, about a hundred yards off. But the bank was steep and covered with a thick blanket of leaves. We

would have sounded like a herd of buffalo in this terrain. We followed a dirt road hoping it would wind down to the river. Suddenly a big uprooted tree loomed on the side of the road. Somehow I knew it was trouble. Ben did too. As we turned to go back, a figure popped out from behind the fallen tree and in German, yelled, "Halt!" We answered with a few disconnected words in German and kept walking. "Halt," the command came even louder so we stopped. We had a little conversation with the soldier, and then about a dozen men swarmed out of hiding places. Later, Ben said he had a notion to over-power the first man and take his rifle. If he had, the others would have clobbered us. As it was, they treated us decently, marching us to a little town where we slept the few hours to dawn.

30 Mar 45
31 Mar 45

We drew good guards. It should be noted that by now many Germans believed they would lose the war and tried to feather their nests. Later we even signed papers stating this German or that had helped us. These they would show to the Allied Forces in the hope of better treatment. I have several letters sent in the years after the war by Germans in the British and American zones after occupation. I never did get a good translation. The writers are all people who helped us on the last march, and for whom we signed papers attesting to their good treatment of us. Nevertheless, these guards were decent men by nature. They let us beg

food from civilians and chatted with us along the road.

We had reached the Main River west of Seifridburg. Returning, we passed Anchenroth and Obereschenback before we reached Hammelburg and joined the main body of P.O.W.s. At the train siding we were given a bowl of soup and ¼ red cross package. Planes came over low and bombed a factory some hundred yards off, but gave us no trouble.

We were very crowded in the box-cars. From a distance we watched planes bomb Bamburg. The train passed Bamburg, Forcheim, Erlangen and arrived in Nuremberg. We slept in the cars that night. There were many air raids but we were not hit.

Stalag XIII-D

1 Apr 45

In the morning we walked 12km through Nuremberg to Stalag XIII-D near a little place named Gaster. Nuremberg had been badly bombed. It was often impossible to tell where some streets had been, in all the rubble.

2 Apr 45

Bash caput. Food good but very little.

3 Apr 45

Read. Picked lice and powdered. Rumors of another move. ½ British red cross package.

To Stalag VII-A

4 Apr 45

The column moved out of XIII-D at 1300. We covered 10km, passing Ochenbruck and Faucht, and bivouacked in a woods near Pfeiferhutte.

At Faucht a lone Allied fighter-bomber appeared over the column. As we walked, I took note of nearby ditches and rocks and trees, in case he attacked. Suddenly he was on us, dropping bombs as he strafed. I dove for the base of a big tree. He made two passes. A few were killed and a few wounded.

Somebody came up with a great idea: The column was divided into three sections. When a plane came over, we were to run into an open field, the sections forming the big letters "P-O-W." We used this maneuver once. It took a lot of will-power to stand there like a sitting duck. But it was successful. The plane circled us and then dipped its wings in salute. Apparently, the pilot reported the incident and they checked our progress, because we were never attacked again.

[Five days later, on April 9, the following article appeared in The New York Daily News acknowledging the fact that P.O.W.s had been accidently strafed. Actually, the inadvertent strafing of P.O.W.s in boxcars had occurred at least as far back as December 24, 1944. (See the 24 Dec entry.)]

DAILY NEWS, MONDAY, APRIL 9, 1945 3

Yank Strafing Of Prisoners Held Mistake

Washington, D. C., April 8 (AP).—Masses of migrating war prisoners in Germany occasionally have been strafed in mistake by American planes, a War Department spokesman said last night.

"It is hard to understand how this happens, as our pilots are briefed about prisoner of war movements," Brig. Gen. B. M. Bryan, assistant provost marshal, told a meeting of prisoners' next of kin. "But the truth is that things are changing so fast over there that it is impossible to brief the pilots accurately.

Disrupt Transportation.

"The pilots' instructions are to disrupt transportation and strafe every German vehicle they can on the roads."

Gen. Bryan described three great mass movements of prisoners forced by their captors to march westward because of the Russian advance. Information obtained from Swiss sources, he said, showed the largest of the three was a migration of about 800,000 prisoners, including some 25,000 Americans, up the Danube past embattled Vienna.

Gen. Bryan said about 100,000 prisoners of war, including 15,000 Americans, are moving along the northern German coast into the area of Hamburg, Bremen and Lubeck. He added that a third column of 60,000 prisoners, of whom 10,000 are Americans, is moving west in a line south of Berlin.

When we bivouacked in the woods at Pfeiferhutte that night, there was an incident which would appear to have all the ingredients of a harrowing ordeal, but actually seemed no more than a nuisance. The night was noiseless and dark. If the moon was out, its light did not filter through the trees. The big bombers came over to pound Nuremburg, some six miles away as we were just settling down to sleep on one side of a little hill. Some of the planes attacked what must have been a secondary target on the other side of our hill. I think they used thousand-pound bombs. We could hear them scream down through the black silence. The earth shuddered beneath us when they exploded. We hugged the ground, of course, but with no great worry about a stray or an erring bombardier. When it was over we simply went to sleep.

5 Apr 45

Walked 15km through Oberferrieded, Post, Bauer, Polling. Watched bombers over Nuremberg again. Traded well. Arrived in Neumarket wet from a cold rain. We stood around till 0200 for a little soup and 1/9 loaf of bread. Ben and I slipped off and slept in a little barn.

6 Apr 45
7 Apr 45

In the morning we went to the farmhouse and struck gold. Two Germans from the Home Guard, Carl and Hans, were there. They had had enough of the war and were goofing off. We made friends with them.

The people in the house were friendly too. We had two bowls of soup, potato balls, gravy, some meat, cocoa, rolls and butter. Ben and I washed and shaved.

We moved out with the two guards. Carl had a little push-cart and Hans a bike. We had long conversations in their broken English and our broken German. With their help we got a good supply of bread and even some butter from civilians.

We walked past Sengenthal, Atgreibel, Plankstettin, Dasseltahl, Bailinggries, Paulushofen, Amtmannadorf.

8 Apr 45

Through Pondorf, Scham, Haupten. Cooked in house at Sanderadorf. Weather swell.

Our ability to forage on this march was a blessing. When we were eventually liberated one correspondent wrote that the men of the 106th seemed to be in better condition than other prisoners. I met many prisoners who had been in P.O.W. camps for years. I often wonder how they survived on the scant rations.

9 Apr 45

Marched through Mindelstettin, Forcheim. Crossed the Danube. Caught the column at Neustadt and got ½ red cross package. Slept in a little barn at Mauern.

10 Apr 45
11 Apr 45

Passed Muhlhausen, Siegenburg and stopped at the house of a little old woman on a small farm in Oberumelsdorf.

Ben and I felt we could do better on our own, but kept in touch with the main body of P.O.W.s. There were many sick stragglers so it was easy to keep up with the News and still come and go. When we heard of food or red cross packages, we could join up. While we were at Oberumelsdorf we heard that the column would lay over. Since Ben was sick, we decided to stay with the old woman, sleeping in her attic and using her kitchen.

She had given us some pretty bad soup and we realized that she had very little food herself. We foraged in the neighborhood and shared our food with her. Twice she cried. Thinking she was afraid we would harm her, we asked, "What is the matter, Grandmother?" She made us understand that she was grateful for "all we had done." She said, "It is a bad day when you will leave."

11 Apr was a beautiful day. We washed and loafed in the sun. Some planes dropped bombs nearby and shook the house. An incendiary cluster fell in a nearby field. A few men were hurt. Later we watched planes bomb Engelstadt and Munchen (Munich)

12 Apr 45

Still at Oberumelsdorf with old woman. Eggs and bread and milk. Ben still sick.

13 Apr 45

We took leave of the old woman on the morning of 13 Apr. We gave her what food we could spare. The poor thing hugged us and said she would never forget us.

Joined the column, marching to Weilergaven. On the way as we trudged along the road, a tall German guard came up beside me and said, "Roosevelt caput." I could not

read his face. It was not sad, neither was it overly happy. I wondered if he was saying Roosevelt is dead or Roosevelt, the symbol of America, the mainstay of Hitler's opposition, is finished and Germany will win the war. As I studied him, he repeated his message, "Caput…Roosevelt." He shrugged and left me to my thoughts. Was Roosevelt dead? Was he assassinated by German agents? Had there been an Allied defeat, a great German victory? Was it another war rumor, or Nazi propaganda? I decided any conjecture on my part could not yield good fruit. I dismissed it from my mind.

[President Franklin D. Roosevelt died 12 April 45 of a cerebral hemorrhage while sitting for a portrait at Warm Springs, Georgia. VP Harry Truman took the oath of office the same day.]

The ability to "dismiss from the mind" is a sort of necessary retreat. When faced with a problem to which there is no solution it is natural to withdraw from it, and sometimes from reality.

The human psyche is both delicate and rugged. It is capable of withstanding enormous shocks at times. But when caught with its defenses down, it can crumble quickly. I once had an occasion to give a class in first aid to a group of trainees. To make the session realistic, I gathered a few props. At the given time some dynamite, simulating artillery, was set off. A man was afterwards carried up on a stretcher. He wore a rubber "glove" showing a hand blown off and bones protruding. The simulated stub of a hand was generously doused with catsup. Half my class fainted and most of the rest threw up.

Confronted with a real traumatic shock, I imagine this could lead to what was called "shell-shock" in WWI and "battle fatigue" in WWII [and today, PTSD].

They housed us in a big roomy barn. There was an SS-manned radar installation some distance away. We had been given strict boundaries because of this radar station.

The area had very little wood we could use for cooking. One of the men saw a branch just beyond our boundary, about twenty feet in verboten territory. He went to get it and an SS trooper at the station shot him. He had aimed for the P.O.W.'s head but the bullet hit the man in the nose.

14 Apr 45

We'll stay over until Monday, it looks like. Planes over again but no damage.

15 Apr 45

Layover. Ben and I cut each other's hair. Artillery louder and longer.

16 Apr 45

Moved through Ludmannsdorf, Pfeffenhausen, Holzhausen. Watched bombing of Landshut and Regensburg. Received one American, one French red cross package per four men. Stayed in Barn.

In one little village Ben and I were in a house when the Burgermeister, the Mayor, entered. He was a dumpy little man with graying hair and a "Hitler" mustache. He wore

a silly looking uniform and a bayonet in a scabbard on his belt. He started screaming at us in German, half drawing the bayonet as he yelled. He was such an obnoxious little bully, I lost my head. I went and shoved the bayonet home in the scabbard and told him if he tried to draw it again I would stick it up his back-side. He left in a subdued huff. Ben wisely suggested he might come back with some goons, so we left.

17 Apr 45

Layover. More shopping in Neidermunchen. ½ American red cross package. Watched hundreds of bombers go over. Sudden move. Through Gammelsdorf. ¼ British red cross package on the road.

We felt exaltation watching hundreds of our bombers deep in enemy territory in broad daylight.

We felt anxiety as anti-aircraft fire opened, as black mushrooms suddenly appeared, filling the sky, a hundred pieces of shrapnel tearing at our planes with every black puff, while our planes seemed to move so slowly.

We felt suspense as the tip of one wing seemed to flutter, began to flap, and tear off.

We felt anguish as the big plane drifted from formation, billowed smoke, lost control in a nightmare of slow-motion.

Desperately we counted one, two, three, as the parachutes opened.

Helplessly we pleaded for more.

Soberly we prayed for the crew, living and dead.

Pragmatically we returned to the business of survival.

19 Apr 45

At Reihesdorf. Layover. Beautiful country, beautiful day.

Stalag VII-A at Moosburg

Stalag VII-A Entry[22]

[Kriegsgefangenen Mannschafts Stammlager (Stalag VII-A) Was Germany's largest prisoner-of-war camp during World War II, located just north of the town of Moosburg in southern Bavaria. The camp covered an area of 86 acres.[23]]

20 Apr 45

Through Durnseibolesdorf and into Moosburg, Stalag VII-A. Shower, good supper and a bash. Made a smokey. One plane bombed.

One simple, desirable shower was a shock to me. I had not been undressed for a long time and peeled off my clothes with visions of being clean again. But under my clothes was a stranger's body. Bones were evident where muscles and flesh had been on chest and arms

and legs. I turned to mental gymnastics: "You feel fine…what more do you want? A man shouldn't bleed until he is cut."

21 Apr 45

1/6 red cross package.

It was the German policy to keep the enlisted P.O.W.s separate from the officers. The two areas were separated by a barbed wire fence. I received word that someone at the fence was asking for me. It was one of the young men from my platoon. He told me their column from Nuremburg had been bombed with twenty-five dead and twenty-seven wounded, and went on to describe the hard times they had been through.

I had had a shower and some food and actually felt pretty well, but listening to this poor kid tell of his experiences, the same things we had been through, was like living them all over again. I gave him some food and some positive words of encouragement. Reliving those difficult times with the young man left me mentally and physically exhausted.

22 Apr 45

Cold rain. Made cover for pot. Cooked.

One of the men got word. that his best friend had been killed. The news shocked him badly. He took a religious medal out of his pocket and hurled it to the ground. I do not particularly care for religious medals. Never did. They are fine for those who like them, but simply seem too showy for me. Nevertheless, I was disturbed by this act. I picked up the medal and tried to return it to the man. He refused it. I told him I would hold on to it, but he could

reclaim it whenever he wanted. He never did. And I, who had little regard for medals, would carry this one for many years. It is now so worn that the religious figures depicted look like refugees from the ape house at the zoo. But I would never think of discarding it.

23 Apr 45

French fried potatoes on smokey. Read a little. Looks like another move.

24 Apr 45

Looks as though move is off. Wonderful news. We'll be free this month. Thinking of Lou and baby. Played hearts. Changed clothes, first time for pants.

25 Apr 45

News still stirring. Maybe just a few days.

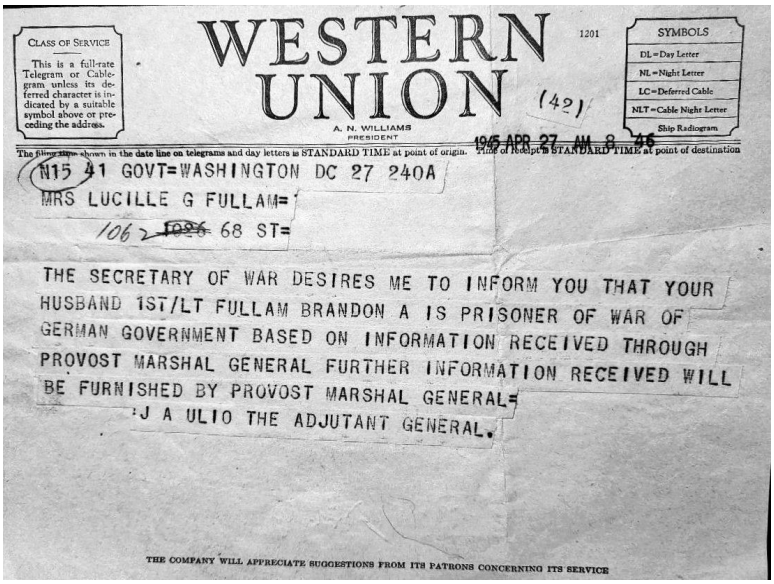
26 Apr 45

Had picture drawn by Fred. We ground some wheat and barley.

27 Apr 45

We took over inner guard today at 1500. Very calmly. Finished reading "Cross Creek."

[It was not until April 27 that my mother received the first official notice from the War Department that my father was a P.O.W. She had known, however, since January. (See the March 1 entry.)]



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WESTERN UNION

1201

SYMBOLS
DL = Day Letter
NL = Night Letter
LC = Deferred Cable
NLT = Cable Night Letter
Ship Radiogram

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

1945 APR 27 AM 8 46

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

N15 41 GOVT=WASHINGTON DC 27 240A
MRS LUCILLE G FULLAM=
1062 [illegible] 68 ST=

THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO INFORM YOU THAT YOUR HUSBAND 1ST/LT FULLAM BRANDON A IS PRISONER OF WAR OF GERMAN GOVERNMENT BASED ON INFORMATION RECEIVED THROUGH PROVOST MARSHAL GENERAL FURTHER INFORMATION RECEIVED WILL BE FURNISHED BY PROVOST MARSHAL GENERAL=
J A ULIO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL.

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

28 Apr 45

Bavarian Partisans announce new government. I expect patrols today.

Liberation

29 Apr 45

The Germans had dug in outside the stockade. We were elated as elements of the American 14th Armored appeared. The battle started at 0645. We huddled low on the floor and ate our food as shells zoomed down the street. We were free about 1330. It was a great sight to see, one of our tanks crashing through the barbed wire gate.

"Old Glory flies over Stalag VII-A"[24]

30 Apr 45

[On this day Adolf Hitler committed suicide by gunshot to the head in his bunker in Berlin.]

Beautiful High Mass. Not feeling well. Imagine, I can't eat. Snow.

Under war-time conditions information was difficult to obtain. Mail was censored along with the news. Names of prisoners held by the opposing force could be learned by the home country only as it suited the fancy of the other side. The rules of the Geneva Convention were largely ignored. When the U.S. Army lost contact with us, all they could know is that we were missing. Some of their missing could conceivably turn up in a few days. They were understandably reluctant to notify relatives until they knew what they were talking about. This situation sometimes resulted in "one hand not knowing what the other was doing."

When we were liberated at Moosburg, I was sick. Ben collared a War Correspondent from a Baltimore paper and pulled a fantastic coup. He hurried back to have me write my name and address on a piece of paper. He had the correspondent promise to have our liberation printed in his paper. The man kept his word. The New York papers re-printed the item and, as we had hoped, the news reached our families long before they could hear through official channels.

1 May 45

Stayed in bed. G.I. bread came in today looking like angel cake. I could eat that. Snow.

2 May 45

Snow. Sick. Ben got a letter off for us.

3 May 45

Sick.

4 May 45

Wrote a V-mail. I have jaundice (Hepatitis).

5 May 45

Feeling better, Wrote another letter. Got a pair of shoes.

6 May 45

We had been under American control since 29 April, but nothing had changed. We were still in the prison camp and not getting much food. We did not realize our liberators were not equipped to handle us. Our patience wore out and we created a mild riot. We were told to get ready for a move.

7 May 45

Mildly deloused. Still sick.

8 May 45

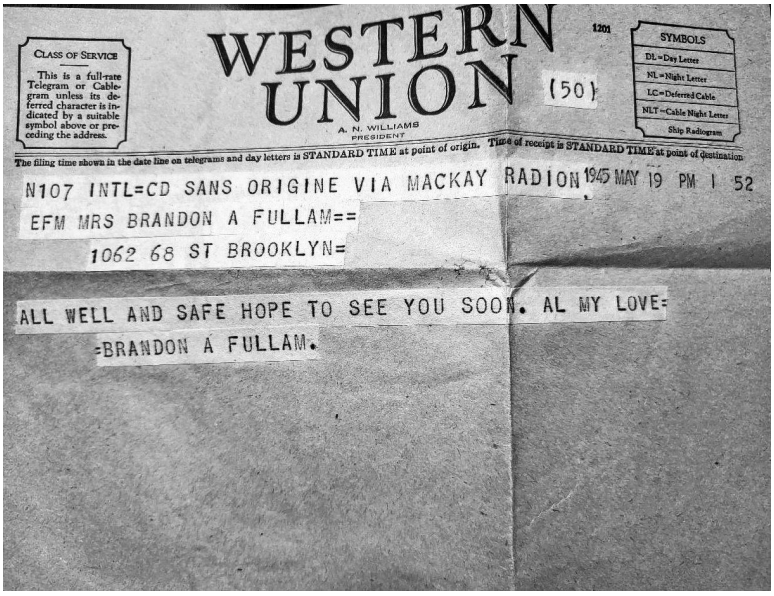
At 0430 we finally left the Moosburg camp by army truck. At 0630 we arrived at a little airfield near Englestadt. Ben and I dozed in a bomb crater for hours and hours, but the planes were delayed. We left the field and came across a German car, a 1941 Eire. We did not understand this because "eire" in German means egg. We liberated it and drove to a home in Manching, where we stayed the night. In the morning we drove to the airfield and abandoned the car.

9 May 45

The C47s finally flew in and we took off at 1735, arriving in Reims, France, at 1945. Trucks took us to a camp where I went off to the 178 General Hospital. Here I basked in another world with plenty of good food, candy, showers, and a real bed with sheets, although it took a few days to get used to these.

19 May 45

Got a telegram off.



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WESTERN UNION (50)

1201

A. N. WILLIAMS PRESIDENT

SYMBOLS
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Ship Radiogram

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

N107 INTL=CD SANS ORIGINE VIA MACKAY RADION 1945 MAY 19 PM 1 52

EFM MRS BRANDON A FULLAM==
1062 68 ST BROOKLYN=

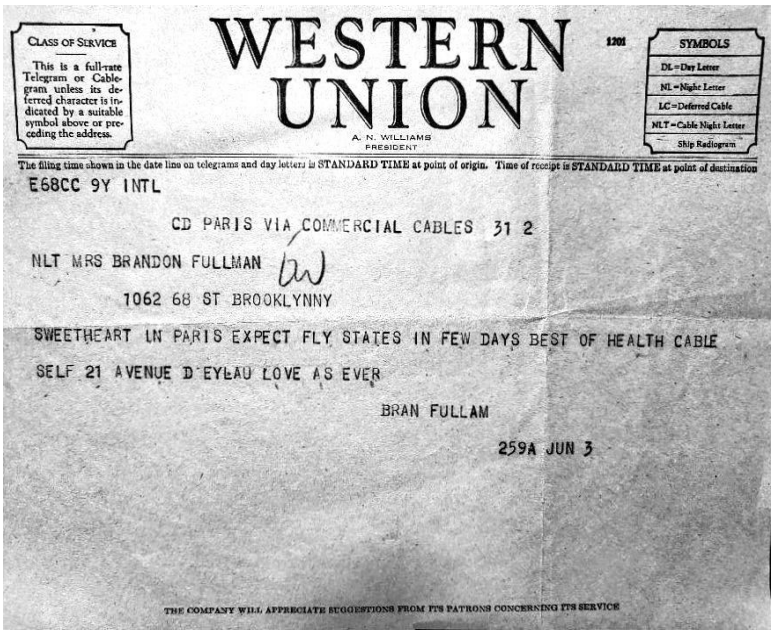
ALL WELL AND SAFE HOPE TO SEE YOU SOON. AL MY LOVE=
=BRANDON A FULLAM.

Except for the eagerness to go home, the days now fell into a pleasant routine. I could leave the hospital almost at will to take in the sights. I was scheduled to be transferred to a hospital in Paris. After various delays

and papers being lost, this was accomplished on 1 Jun 45.

3 Jun 45

Sent telegram.



CLASS OF SERVICE
This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.

WESTERN UNION

A. N. WILLIAMS
PRESIDENT

1201

SYMBOLS
DL=Day Letter
NL=Night Letter
LC=Deferred Cable
NLT=Cable Night Letter
Ship Radiogram

The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination

E68CC 9Y INTL

CD PARIS VIA COMMERCIAL CABLES 31 2

NLT MRS BRANDON FULLMAN

1062 68 ST BROOKLYNNY

SWEETHEART IN PARIS EXPECT FLY STATES IN FEW DAYS BEST OF HEALTH CABLE SELF 21 AVENUE D'EYLAU LOVE AS EVER

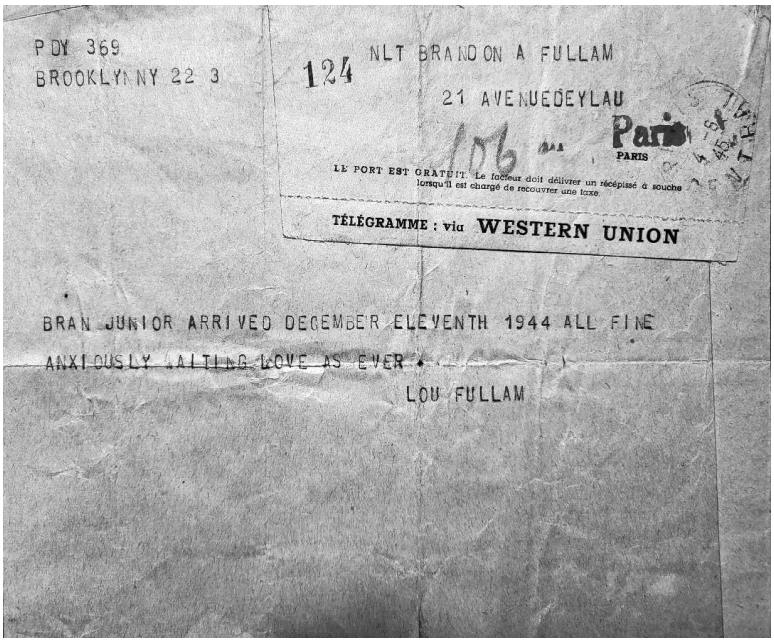
BRAN FULLAM

259A JUN 3

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

5 Jun 45

In Paris on 5 June I had a cable telling me that the baby was a boy, Bran Jr., born 11 Dec 44.



PDY 369
BROOKLYN NY 22 3

124 NLT BRANDON A FULLAM

21 AVENUEDEYLAU

106 mots

Paris
PARIS

LE PORT EST GRATUIT. Le facteur doit délivrer un récépissé à souche lorsqu'il est chargé de recouvrer une taxe.

TÉLÉGRAMME : via WESTERN UNION

BRAN JUNIOR ARRIVED DECEMBER ELEVENTH 1944 ALL FINE
ANXIOUSLY AWAITING LOVE AS EVER .
LOU FULLAM

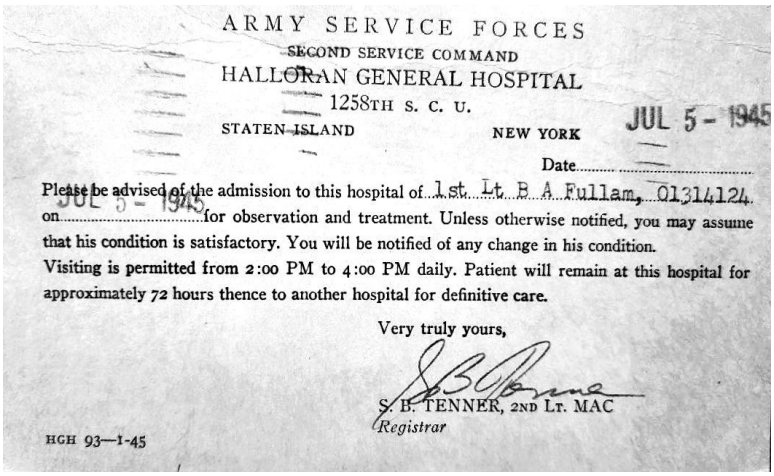
From Paris I was sent to a hospital in Cherbourg, arriving on 17 June.

26 Jun 45

I boarded the SS George Washington, a hospital ship. We sailed at 2200 that night. Early in the morning the ship put in at Southampton, England, for water. At 1400 we started the last leg of the journey.

5 Jul 45

With blimps overhead and bands playing, the ship docked at pier 15 in Staten Island on 5 July 45 at 1700.



ARMY SERVICE FORCES
SECOND SERVICE COMMAND
HALLORAN GENERAL HOSPITAL
1258TH S. C. U.
STATEN ISLAND NEW YORK

JUL 5 - 1945

Date .....

Please be advised of the admission to this hospital of 1st Lt B A Fullam, 01314124
on JUL 5 - 1945 for observation and treatment. Unless otherwise notified, you may assume that his condition is satisfactory. You will be notified of any change in his condition.
Visiting is permitted from 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM daily. Patient will remain at this hospital for approximately 72 hours thence to another hospital for definitive care.

Very truly yours,

S. B. TENNER, 2ND LT. MAC
Registrar

HGH 93—1-45

About 2300 that night I was home on an over-night pass.

WAITING FOR DADDY

Mrs. Lucille Fullam of 1062 68th St., Brooklyn, smiles happily at her son, Brandon, Jr., four months, shown appraising photo of his father, Lt. Brandon A. Fullam, whom he has yet to meet. Yesterday came the welcome news that Lt. Fullam, who doesn't know about Junior, had been freed from a Nazi prison camp after being listed as missing since last January.

FREE 110,000 AT MOSSBURG

Third Army Liberates Largest Prison Camp in Reich

WITH THE UNITED STATES THIRD ARMY, in Germany, April 30 (AP)—The United States Fourteenth Armored Division liberated 110,000 Allied prisoners of war at Stalag 7A at Mossburg, instead of the 27,000 previously reported. This was Germany's biggest prisoner of war camp.

The roster included the names of 11,000 Americans. There also were Britons, South Africans, New Zealanders, Australians, Poles, Russians, Frenchmen and Yugoslavs, and some war correspondents. The first accounts gave no names.

The Mossburg camp was taken by the Fourteenth Armored Division's Forty-seventh Tank Battalion, which found nineteen of its own troops there.

A vast poison gas depot with 95,000 poison gas bombs was captured along with the depot officers and personnel near Niederleindorf, thirteen miles south of Regensburg.

N.Y.T. 5/1/45

BALTIMORE, April 30 (AP)—A dispatch to The Baltimore Sunpapers named the following men from the New York area as among those liberated at Moosburg: Lieut. Ben Flessig of 2247 East Twenty-first Street, Brooklyn; Lieut. Joseph D. Greco of 22-21 Twenty-fourth Street, Astoria, Queens; Lieut. Brandon A. Fullam of 1062 Sixty-eighth Street, Brooklyn; Capt. Warren H. Stutler of 162 West Fifty-fourth Street, New York, and Lieut. W. V. Maxmeyer of 140 Vermilyea Avenue, New York.

New York Men Freed From Nazi Prison

The following New York men have been liberated from the Moosburg prison camp in Germany, it was announced today:

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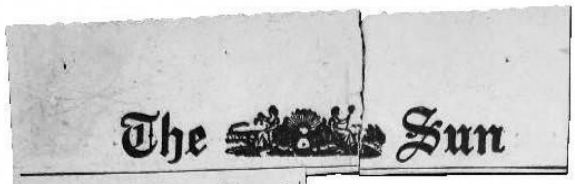
'Can't Believe It,' Says Mother of GI Freed at Moosburg

"I can't believe it," Mrs. Tillie Fleissig of 2247 E. 21st St. ex-



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MAY - 1

LIBERATED PRISONERS —ARMY

Freed From German Prison Camps

New York and Near-by Counties

BANKS, 2d Lt. WILLIAM P.; Joseph H. Banks, 2557 Marion Ave., New York.

BANNER, S/Sgt. ALEXANDER; Joseph Banner, 548 Beach 67th St., Arverne.

BAUERSCHMIDT, S/Sgt. FREDERICK J., Jr.; Fred J. Bauerschmidt, Baldwin.

BEBIS, T/5 PETER; Mrs. Christine Bebis, 408 W. 36th St., New York.

BIGBIE, 2d Lt. CHARLES T.; Mrs. Irma L. Bigbie, 72-57 Yellowstone Blvd., Forest Hills.

BISHOP, S/Sgt. JACK C.; Mrs. Ellen Bishop, Bellport.

BRUNELL, 2d Lt. RICHARD C.; Mrs. Carolyn C. Brunell, New Rochelle.

CANCELLIERI, Pvt. FRANK; Mrs. Rose Cancellieri, 43-53 Bowne St., Flushing.

CHALMERS, 1st Lt. JOHN J.; Mrs. Muriel A. Chalmers, Lynbrook.

DILLON, Cpl. JOSEPH T.; Mrs. Mary T. Dillon, 212 E. 70th St., New York.

FLEISSIG, 2d Lt. BENN; Mrs. Tillie Fleissig, c/o Harry Fleissig, Metropolitan Life Insurance Co., 138 Pennsylvania Ave., Brooklyn.

FULLAM, 1st Lt. BRANDON A; Mrs. Lucille G. Fullam, 1062 68th St., Brooklyn.

FUTOMA, S/Sgt. RAYMOND H.; Walter Futoma, 25-68 45th St. Astoria.

GOWARD, T/Sgt. JOSEPH G.; Mrs. Sophie Goward, 24-03 201st St., Bayside.

GREENBERG, 1st Lt. HERBERT; Samuel P. Greenberg, 270 Seaman Ave., New York.

GREENSTEIN, Pvt. MIRWIN; Elias Rauch, 515 Park Ave., New York.

GYORY, 1st Lt. FRANK K.; Nicholas B. Gyory, 24-47 32d St., Astoria.

HOLSKE, 2d Lt. CLIFFORD F., Jr.; Mrs. Elizabeth K. Holske, c/o Robl Muller, 422 E

Postscript

Dad was honorably discharged from the Army on 16 Jan 46, and, like most civilian soldiers, was anxious to return home and resume the life that had been interrupted by the war. Mom, Dad, and I lived in my grandmother's house on 68th Street in Brooklyn until 1947, when we moved to a place of our own, an attached brick house located on 197th Street in Hollis, Queens.

Dad had already started working as a salesman for the footwear division of the U.S. Rubber Co. (name changed to Uniroyal in 1966) before we moved to Queens. The move involved a daily commute for Dad, whose territory was in Flatbush, Brooklyn, but the house was spacious enough for the three of us as well as my brothers Robert, Thomas, and Gregory, who made their appearance over the next eight years.

Dad, me, Robert, Thomas ca. 1955

In the summer of 1959, we moved from Queens to a nice house in Floral Park, a block away from Stewart Manor, in Nassau County on Long Island. I think at some point Dad arranged to switch his sales territory from Brooklyn to Queens, cutting his commuting time in half. Dad also loved to read, and enjoyed writing too. For several years during our residence in Floral Park, he was president of the Long Island Poetry Association.

Dad retired from Uniroyal in the late 1960s, and he and Mom began making plans for an eventual move to New Mexico. They had vacationed several times out in the "Land of Enchantment" and Dad had purchased some property there. They moved to NM permanently in 1972 and had a house built on a corner lot with a view of the Rio Grande Valley and the Sandia Mountains beyond. Dad took a job there for a while with Case Construction Equipment selling tractors, back-hoes, and other equipment, which provided him with the opportunity to see some of the remote ranches and sparsely inhabited locales of New Mexico. His sales territory was the entire northern half of the state, an area comprising more than 60,000 square miles.

In the meantime, I had married my wife Ann on December 23, 1967, and we flew out to New Mexico for visits during the summer. We had many, many good times out there, Dad often driving us all to see the interesting sites around the state. Some of the most enjoyable were the day trips up into the Sandia Mountains, where the air was always cool, even in the middle of summer. Dad would set up camp near a clear running stream while we were off exploring. By the time

we got back he and Mom would have the Coleman stove going with a pot full of the most delicious hot dogs and sauerkraut.

When they moved out to New Mexico in '72, Dad said he doubted that he would ever return to New York, but that all changed after the birth of our daughter, Alexis, on October 27, 1975. From that point on Mom and Dad made the trip to our house on Long Island every Christmas.

In 1988 they sold the New Mexico house and bought a condo nearby with a good view of Dad's beloved Sandia Mountains. We visited many times. Dad got sick in 1992. He was hoping to make it back to New York for his granddaughter's high school graduation in June of the following year, but he died on May 3, 1993. He was buried with full military honors in the National Cemetery at Santa Fe. Mom died on May 16, 2001, and is buried beside him.

Brandon A. Fullam, Jr.


BRANDON A
FULLAM
CAPT
US ARMY
WORLD WAR II
DEC 27 1916
MAY 3 1993


9 2120
LUCILLE G
FULLAM
HIS WIFE
DEC 10 1919
MAY 16 2001

Appendix A

Entire Route of the Column of P.O.W.s
Through Germany and Poland
21 Dec 44–20 Apr 45

Appendix B

Towns passed as P.O.W.s in Germany and Poland

From my father's journal:

As a rule we traveled secondary roads. Many of the smaller towns appear on more detailed maps.

The names of villages and towns vary according to whether a German, Polish, or English map is used, as Warsaw – Warachau. The German Swinemunde on the Baltic Sea is Swinoujacie in Polish.

Altogether on these marches we walked over 1,000km, or 600 miles.

Towns passed on the first march 21-30 Dec 44 (110mi)

Prum
Garolstein
Boos
Kelberg
Noyem
Coblenz
Montabaur
Wirges

Prum is about 55km nw of Trier and 10kn from the Luxembourg border.

The first box-car trip, 30-31 Dec 44, took us from Wirges, near Coblenz and Limburg, to Stalag IV-B, near Muhlberg. Muhlberg is 50kn nw of Dresden, 50kn ne of Leipzig, and 110km due south of Berlin.

We were locked in Box-cars for the entire trip. It was impossible to see anything which would give us an idea of what route the train took.

The second box-car trip, 9-11 Jan 45, went from Stalag IV-B to Oflag 64 near Gnesen, Poland. Gnesen is 45km ne of Posen. Again we were unable to make out the route.

Towns on the second march, 21 Jan – 6 Mar 45, from Oflag 64 to Parchim, Germany. (347mi)

21 Jan Wirsits, Exin
22 Jan Bromberg Canal, Eichfield
23 Jan Charlottenburg
24 Jan Lobsens
25 Jan Flatow
26 Jan Same
27 Jan Lukow, Justrow
28 Jan Zuppenow
29 Jan Redenik
30 Jan Machelin
31 Jan Templeburg
1 Feb Heinrichdorf
2 Feb Falkenburg, Zuhlshagen
3 Feb Same
4 Feb Dramburg, Ginow
5 Feb Wangerin, Leitzite
6 Feb Regenwalde
7 Feb Plathe, Lebbin
8 Feb Greifenburg, Stuchow
9 Feb Stresow
10 Feb Fritzow, Deivenow on the island of Wolin
11 Feb Heidebuile, Kolgow, Nuendorf
12 Feb Swinemunde

13 Feb Ferry to Usedom Island, Garz
14 Feb Zirchow, Stolpe
15 Feb Same
16 Feb Usedom, Pinnow, Bridge to mainland, Morrow
17 Feb Gutzkow
18 Feb Same
19 Feb Breechen, Jarmen
20 Feb Demmin, Devin
21 Feb Same
22 Feb Dorgain, Neukalen
23 Feb Malchen
24 Feb Kirch, Grubenhagen, Vollratharuhe
25 Feb Karow, Plauerhagen
26 Feb Same
27 Feb Lubz, Lutheran
28 Feb Siggelkow
1-5 Mar Same
6 Mar Parchim

Route of the third box-car trip, 6 – 8 Mar 45, from Parchim to Oflag XIII-B near Hammelburg

Ludwigslust
Wittenberge
Magdenburg
Halle
Mersenburg
Maumburg
Weimer
Bad Kissengen
Schweinfurt
Hammelburg

Hammelburg is 70km due east of Frankfurt On The Main

Towns on break from Oflag XIII-B, 27 – 31 Mar 45

Dossdorf
Seifridburg
Aschenroith
Obereschenback
Hammelburg

Route of fourth box-car trip, 31 Mar – 1 Apr 45 from Hammelburg to Nuremburg, and by foot to Oflag XIII-D

Bamburg
Forcheim
Erlangen
Nuremburg

Towns on third march, 4 Apr – 20 Apr 45, from Oflag XIII-D to Stalag VII-A near Moosburg

4 Apr Ochenbruck, Feucht, Pfeiferhutte
5 Apr Oberferreided, Post, Bauer, Polling, Neumarket
6-7Apr Sengenthal, Atgreibel, Plankstettin, Dasseltahl, Beilingries, Paulushofen, Amtmannsdorf
8 Apr Pondorf, Scham, Haupten, Sandersdorf
9 Apr Mindelstettin, Forcheim Marching, Neustadt, Mauern
10 Apr Muhlhausen, Siegenburg, Oberumelsdorf
11 Apr Same
12 Apr Same
13 Apr Weilergaven
14 Apr Same
15 Apr Same

16 Apr Ludmannsdorf, Pfeffenhausen, Holzhausen
17 Apr Unterapiegelreit, Obersussback, Toobermunchen, Neidermunchen
18 Apr Gammelsdorf
19 Apr Reihesdorf
20 Apr Durnseibolesdorf, Moosburg

Moosburg is 40km NE of Munich (Munchen) and 15km SW of Landshut

Appendix C

The following is a list of P.O.W.s contained in my father's notepads, some written by the P.O.W.s themselves, along with their full home addresses and phone numbers. I believe most of these were recorded in early January '45 at Stalag VIII-B. Their names, home towns, and states of residence are transcribed below. I was able to identify the units for most of these men from another source,[25] and, where possible, I have grouped them by unit. The majority of these P.O.W.s were part of my father's regiment, the 422nd, two were from the 423rd, and two from the 106th Recon Cavalry. I was not able to identify the units for the last group of P.O.W.s.

Note: The rank designations of the P.O.W.s were only occasionally mentioned in the notepads.

422nd Regiment

Arnold P Kek[l]m Princeton, WI
Fitzgerald E Davis Raleigh, NC
Paul V. Lowell Jamaica Plains, Boston, MA
Neil P. Stewart Brookings, SD
Ben Fleissig Brooklyn, NY
Harold L. Gibson Atlanta, KS
Donald G. Hartley Bingham Lake, MN
Henry L. Fisher Holyoke, MA
Harry G. Meeleus Oshkosh, WI
Julius R. Chitwood Jr, Magazine, AZ
Col. William C Scales Sweetwater, TX
(Chaplain) Paul W. Cavanaugh Oak Park, IL
Montague H. Jacobs Kingstree, SC
John R. Druchenmuller Toledo, OH
Jos. Mather Pasadena, CA
Norman Hilditch New Bedford, MA

William Gardiner Washington, DC
2nd Lt. Earl W. Bennethum (no contact info)
Robert M. O' Neil Santa Monica, CA
Robert M. Frash So. Bend, IN
John C. Hollinger Chester, VA or Gettysburg, PA
Capt. John J. Mohne Akron, OH
Major. W. P. Moon Jr. Lynchburg, VA
Capt. Allan Dunbar Philadelphia, PA
Capt. Alexander P. Brown Aurora, IL
Robert E. Davis Western Springs, IL
Lt. Col. Joseph C. Matthews Raleigh, NC
Col. George L. Descheneaux Portland, ME

423rd Regiment

Maxie S. Crews Laurens, SC
William K. Burgessee Norfolk, VA

106th Recon Cav

Ed McGee Brooklyn NY
Myron Johnstone Chicago, IL

Unknown Units

James L. Clingan Kingman, IN
Sheridan T. Dowling Jr. Harrison, NY
Matt Reid Providence, RI
Max Medema Los Angeles, CA
James Lynn Kansas City, KS
Cesar L. Rivera Hackensack, NJ
William P. Kielmeyer Columbus, OH
Tom Forbes Long Island City, NY
M. W. Hansot Englewood, NJ
1st Lt. William C. Colkenheiner (sp?) no contact info
Vic Danylic Wayne Ave, NYC, NY
Teddy Roggen Houston, TX

Leonard W. Spence Snyder, X
1st Lt. Woodrow W. Lennon Wilmington, NC
Maj. Ray O. Irvin Snyder, Texas
Charlie Nietman Bellaire L.I., NY
Harrison S. Whitman Scranton, PA or 84th St. NYC,
NY Hugh G. Hogan Oswego, NY
Stephen J. Bineo E. 86th St, NYC, NY
T/Sgt Francis R. Keegan Rapid City, SD
Charles T. Bigbie Roosevelt, L.I. NY

Appendix D

Mustered Out

The hour had come,
The time was met,
His last salute
He gave and yet
No drums did roll,
No bugles peal
Though he had braved
War's bursting steel.
No drums, you say?
And wonder why?
Their sound could blare
Across the sky.
And when the last
Note dird away
He'd hide a smile
And softly say,
"Eternally –
To feel – to be –
Part of this land,
And it of me –
Of glory, here's
Epitome."

HEADQUARTERS
ARMY GROUND FORCES
OFFICE OF THE COMMANDING GENERAL
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

26 February 1946

Captain Brandon A. Fullam
1062 68th Street
Brooklyn, New York

Dear Captain Fullam:

As you go back to civilian life, I want to send with you my deep personal thanks for the devoted service which you have given your country during the war years.

The pride which must always be yours in the achievements and associations which you have made in the Army is shared by Army Ground Forces and by your countrymen.

As we view the great responsibilities ahead, it is cause for proud confidence that we shall have the deepened wisdom of our ex-soldiers to guide our Nation.

Sincerely,

JACOB L. DEVERS
General, USA
Commanding

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO ALL WHO SHALL SEE THESE PRESENTS, GREETING: THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AUTHORIZED BY EXECUTIVE ORDER, 24 AUGUST 1962 HAS AWARDED

THE BRONZE STAR MEDAL

TO CAPTAIN BRANDON A. FULLAM, UNITED STATES ARMY

FOR meritorious achievement in ground combat against the armed enemy during World War II in the European African Middle Eastern Theater of Operations.

GIVEN UNDER MY HAND IN THE CITY OF WASHINGTON
THIS 1st DAY OF February 1991

THE ADJUTANT GENERAL

SECRETARY OF THE ARMY

THE

PRESIDENT

OF

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To all who shall see these presents, greeting:

Know Ye, that reposing special trust and confidence in the patriotism, valor, fidelity and abilities of Brandon Augustin Fullam, *I do appoint him, temporarily,* Captain, in

The Army of the United States

such appointment to date from the eighth *day of* January, *nineteen hundred and* forty-six. *He is therefore carefully and diligently to discharge the duty of the office to which he is appointed by doing and performing all manner of things thereunto belonging.*

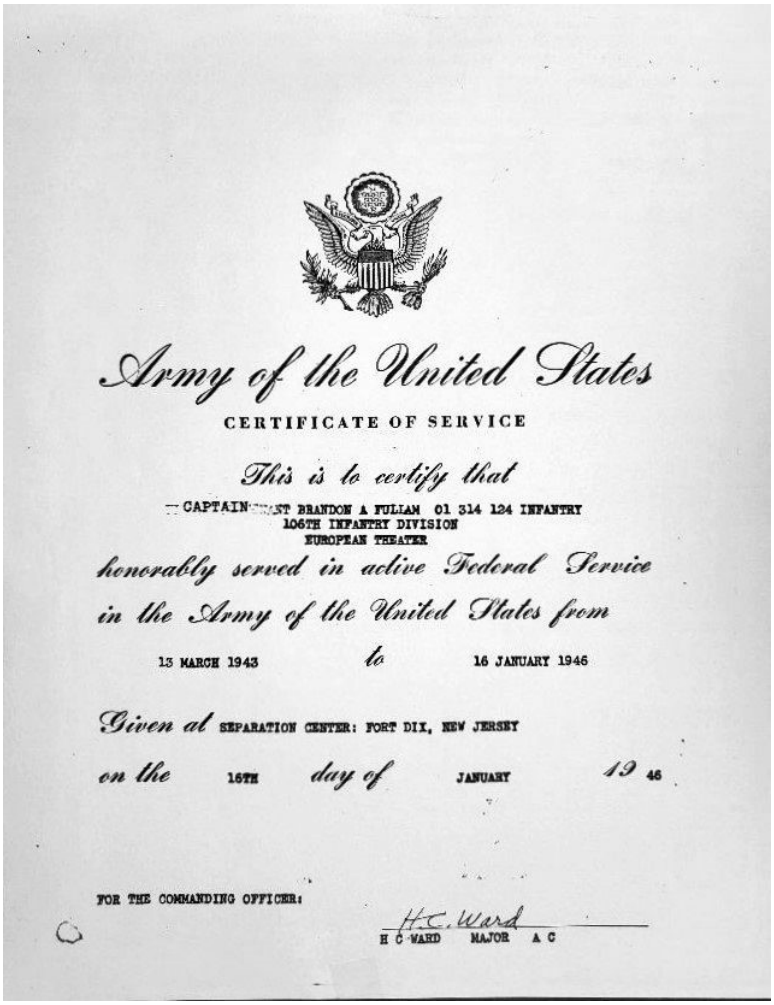
And I do strictly charge and require all Officers and Soldiers under his command when he shall be employed on active duty, to be obedient to his orders as an officer of his grade and position. And he is to observe and follow such orders and directions from time to time, as he shall receive from me, or the future President of the United States of America, or the General or other Superior Officers set over him, according to the rules and discipline of War.

This commission to continue in force during the pleasure of the President of the United States for the time being, and for the duration of the present emergency and for six months thereafter, unless sooner terminated.

Done at the City of Washington, this fourteenth *day of* June, *in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and* forty-seven, *and of the Independence of the United States of America the one hundred and* seventy-first.

By the President:

Major General,
The Adjutant General.



Army of the United States

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is to certify that

CAPTAIN ST BRANDON A FULIAN 01 314 124 INFANTRY
106TH INFANTRY DIVISION
EUROPEAN THEATER

honorably served in active Federal Service in the Army of the United States from

13 MARCH 1943 *to* 16 JANUARY 1946

Given at SEPARATION CENTER: FORT DIX, NEW JERSEY

on the 16TH *day of* JANUARY *19* 46

FOR THE COMMANDING OFFICER:

H.C. Ward

H C WARD MAJOR A C

PRISONER OF WAR MEDAL

The Prisoner of War Medal was authorized by Congress for any person who served honorably as a prisoner of war after April 5, 1917. It is estimated that 142,000 United States service members were held as prisoners in World War I, World War II, the Korean War and in Vietnam. The medal recognizes the special service prisoners of war gave to their country, and the suffering and anguish they endured while incarcerated.

The United States Army's Institute of Heraldry was tasked to design the medal. Designs were solicited from the military services, veterans' organizations and private citizens, and over 300 proposals were submitted. A Joint Service Panel reviewed all of the proposals and selected the design submitted by Mr. Jay C. Morris, a civilian employee of the Department of the Army.

On the front of the medal is an eagle, symbol of the United States and the American spirit. Although surrounded by barbed wire and bayonet points, it stands with pride and dignity, continually on the alert for the opportunity to obtain freedom, symbolizing the hope that upholds the spirit of the prisoner of war. On the reverse, below the words "Awarded to," is space where the recipient or next of kin may engrave the prisoner of war's name. Below it is an inscription naming the purpose of the award, "For honorable service while a prisoner of war." The shield is from the coat of arms of the United States of America.

The public law authorizing the Prisoner of War Medal specifies that the medal shall be accorded a position of precedence in relation to other awards and decorations, immediately following decorations awarded for individual heroism, meritorious achievement or service, and before any other service medal, campaign medal or service ribbon authorized to be displayed.

[Dad brought home an assortment of ribbons and awards from the war, among them eight medals including the Bronze Star, the Purple Heart, and the Prisoner of War Medal. He kept them all unceremoniously in an old box in the attic, and as a kid I used to love looking through them. A few years ago I finally mounted them in a nice display case, which now hangs in my office room.]


BRANDON A FULLAM
675 NEW YORK AVE
BROOKLYN N Y

Endnotes

[1] Cole, Hugh M. *The Ardennes: Battle of the Bulge* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army,1965) Chapters 7, pp. 137-8.

[2] Beevor, Antony. *Ardennes 1944* (New York, Viking Press, 2015) p. 81.

[3] "The Story of the 106th Infantry Division." *Regimental Histories* 215 (United States Army, 1945) @https://digicom.bpl.lib.me.us/ww_reg_his/215

[4] "The 106th Infantry Division" https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/106th_Infantry_Division_(United_States)

[5] Cole. *The Ardennes,* pp. 165-6.

[6] Ibid. p. 141.

[7] FM 7-40 *Infantry Field Manual, Rifle Regiment*, 1942 : United States. War Department, note p.163

[8] Cole. *The Ardennes,* p. 151

[9] Walker, 2nd Lt Lewis R. "Company H, 422d Infantry" from the Indiana Military Organization. @ www.indianamilitary.org/106ID/Diaries/None-POW/Walker-Lewis%20422/Walker-Lewis.htm

[10] "Col. George L. Descheneaux," from the Indiana Military Organization site @ www.indianamilitary.org/German%20PW%20Camps/Prisoner%20of%20War/PW%20Camps/Stalag%20XII-A%20Limburg/George%20Descheneaux/George%20Descheneaux.htm

[11] Main gate Stalag IV-B. Wikimedia Commons @ https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Eingang_StaLag_IVB.JPG

[12] Watchtower Stalag IV-B. Wikimedia Commons @ https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Watchtower_in_StaLag_IVB.JPG

[13] "History, Camp Hospitals," Auschwitz-Birkenau State Museum @ https://www.auschwitz.org/en/history/

[14] Beevor, *Ardennes 1944*, pp. 137, 146-7; also "Malmady Massacre" @https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malmedy_massacre

[15] Beevor, pp. 363-4; also "Dachau Trials" @https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dachau_trials

[16] Photo from the National Archives and Records Administration

[17] Driscoll, Becky "Oflag 64 Remembered" (2009). @https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oflag_64#cite_note-2

[18] Oflag 64 "Aftermath" @https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oflag_64#cite_ref-2

[19] indianamilitary.org; Stalag 13-B Hammelburg http://indianamilitary.org/German PW Camps/Prisoner of War/PW Camps

[20] Oflag XIII-B @https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oflag_XIII-B

[21] See "Task Force Baum" @ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Task_Force_Baum; also "Raid Gone Wrong: Patton's Regret" *America in WWII* Magazine, August, 2011, pp. 36-43.

[22] Image @ https://alchetron.com/Stalag-VII-A

[23] Image @ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stalag_VII-A

[24] From the USAF Academy Library Special Collections.

[25] 106th Infantry Division Roster
@https://106thinfdivassn.org/roster106/rostera.html