

Richard Hartman
590th Field Artillery BN
106th Infantry Division

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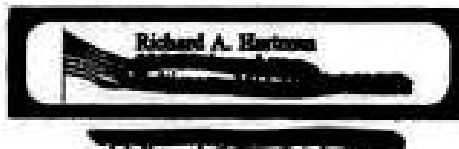
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Four days into the Battle of the Bulge, in December 1944, Richard Hartman and his unit were forced to surrender to the Germans. He spent a miserable Christmas Eve confined to a crowded boxcar on his way to a stalag. He and his fellow prisoners would cheer when they saw familiar planes overhead or heard a report on the camp's concealed short-wave radio of an Allied advance. They also dealt out swift punishment to anyone who committed the great sin of stealing. Nearly five months after being taken prisoner, Hartman was liberated, wearing exactly the same clothes he was wearing on the day of his capture.

Copied verbatim, about 1990, from
cryptic notes made in small prayer book
and on small scraps of paper (now badly
disintegrated) during my internment in Germany
12/44 - 5/45.

Richard Hartman
3/26/01



Dairy - from States to Europe - 1944-45

Left Camp Atterbury, Oct. 9, 1944, arrived Myles Standish, Oct. 10, 1944. Two weeks in area #1 and two weeks in area #5. Boston four times; Providence twice Newark five times. Last time Nov. 7, 1944. Boarded Wakefield in Boston at 1000 Nov. 10, 1944. Coffee + doughnuts and band at port. Sailed at 1600. "E" deck. ate twice a day. Sick first day + missed one meal. Arrived at Liverpool 1600 Nov. 17. Boarded train at port at 200 R.C. coffee + doughnuts. Reached Gloucester at 0400 Nov. 18. Had eggs, then slept til late. Food poor first few days but good on Thanksgiving Day. Big turkey dinner. R.C. mobile came out. In Gloucester four times. ate R.C. incl. Pub & better + W.A.P.'s. Left Gloucester little loaded, 1530 in motor convoy on Nov. 30. Drove 112 miles to Weymouth. Slept there + ate "c" ration. Nov. 31 drove 5 miles to Plymouth. R.C. coffee + d'nuts. Boarded L.S.T. at 57100. Sailed Dec. 1st. Anchored at La Havre. Lost two anchors. Returned to Plymouth. Back to France. Two days to sail up Seine. Off at Rouen on Dec. 8, 1944. While in N.S.P. - movie once, chess three times a day + good, army-navy game. 7 from Rouen drove from 1200 Dec. 8 to till 1000 Dec. 9th. Passed through Limesy, Yerville. Stayed till Dec. 11 in Ardennes forest near St. Vith, Bel. Drove from Rouen to St. Vith. Saw ruins of France + Belgium + entered Germany on Dec. 10. Outfit took over sub. P. is. position on Siegfried line on Dec. 11. Lived in apartment. Good food + little activity.

Dec. 19 - Dawn found Am. trapped in valley near Schönbey. Saw O.L. for guns. 0900 at "B" City. when 88's opened. Dug in. Am. surrendered at 1000. Section intact. Jerry marched us to Bleck. Searched. Barn all day. Open courtyard all night. No food all day. Refined vehicles from all units seen.

Dec. 20. - Cold. Two or three thousand P.W.'s stretched on foot to rear about 0200. Low depth of Siegfried line. Tough! All snow.

- Dec. 20 - Latched sugar beets from field. Passed through Hoth & Priim, both in ruins. Marched till 2100, 35 miles to Herolstein. No food again. Slept in open court yard again, in rain. Many frozen. Jerry loots all the way.
- Dec. 21 - Fed at 1100. 2 bags of hardtack per man. Can of cheese per seven. We sang as they marched us through streets to station. Loaded 65 men to a box-car at 1400. Packed in with no food, no water. Left yard at 1600. Too crowded for all to sit.
- Dec. 22 - no food, no water. Locked in all day.
- Dec. 23 - Hiding at Limburg. Out of car for a few minutes. Given tea, sorghum, margarine & 1/5 loaf of bread. R.A.F. bombed yards. Panic amongst cars. Got out. 7 eng. & I ran & fell at each point. Near burst shawled us with dirt & rocks. Safety in cave. 67 O's in. 811's killed & 7 men from train (Warmuth & Wright) returned to cars & prayed.
- Dec. 24 - no food or water. Locked in all day. Sang carols and prayed.
- Dec. 25 - Xmas. 7 eng. & Dean gave out smokes. Tea, sorghum, marg. & 1/5 loaf in P.M. no water, not let out all day. Carols & prayers. Present of home til it hurt.
- Dec. 26 - Got out, hot water. Still Limburg. Men's nerve getting bad. No food.
- Dec. 27 - Given R.C. parcel. 5 1/2 men to a parcel. Left Limburg.
- Dec. 28 - Made cocoa & hot masks. a little for each man soap at Frankfort. Not let off car.

- Dec. 29 - Stole ~~the~~ coal at Leipzig. Parcel about gone. Reached Stalag IV B. at 1400. Had tea. Stood in cells to be deloused & searched til 0430 on Dec 30. Feet froze. English gave hot tea & cracker & bed on floor. Feet froze.
- Dec. 30 - British o.k. roll call 0730. Four hot brews daily. 2 Jerry, 2 English. Tea 0730, 1230, 1630, 1930. Soup at 1030. $\frac{1}{2}$ loaf, jam, marg., potatoes, each day. Barracks cold. Slept on floor.
- Dec. 31 - R.C. parcel per. two men. Knock & split. Baked cake for Eve. Shout in barracks. Blackout for an hour. Drink of raisin wine at midnight.
- Jan. 1-4 - Church twice. Same daily routine. Wrote first letter. Red triangle painted on leg & back.
- Jan. 5 - Deloused. Moved out of barracks.
- Jan. 6 - Box-car to go to American camp. 50 men to car. Stone and fuel.
- Jan. 7 - Arrived III B. Furstenberg at 1400. Searched. Tea. Sleep with Bennett.
- Jan. 8 - Got Dixie, soup; Jerry return.
- Jan. 9 - Deloused. Soap, towel, underpants. New barracks 7 sq. + I together. Six slats per man. Wood shavings for bed.
- Jan. 10-30 - R.C. parcel per. week per. two men. Roll call 0730. Two teas, cup soup, $\frac{1}{2}$ loaf, jam, marg., dairy. Potatoes twice a week. Cooking good meals. Fish salmon. Bought flour, bread. Made pancakes. Books, toilet articles, shirts. Sick call post. Church on Tuesday. Letters to home. War rumors. Jerry sick. Air raids nights. Stalags and steam puddings. Hung out of bread. $\frac{1}{2}$ interest in blame Frank Stebbins, newspaper (radio) Joe Hasperich too men.

Jan. 31 - Russians advancing. 1530 ordered to evacuate. Left at 1830. Wore all clothes & took all food. Rain for first time. Streets all ice. Many fall. Walked all night. ate "P" bar, and bread.

Feb. 1 - Still walking, cold potato & salmon. 7 egg. Just luck. Feet wet & frozen. Rest at 1830. Burn so covered couldn't sit. Johnson shot.

Feb. 2 - Walked 1730 to 2030. Saw all gone. Stop in house. No food from Jerry. Bread from boy.

Feb. 3 - 15 kil. more. Evacuees still clog all roads. Sleep in barn. 1/5 loaf bread.

Feb. 4 - 15 kil. Kälbe. Barn again. 1/5 loaf.

Feb. 5 - 15 kil. 1/4 loaf & cheese. Sleep in training camp. 2300 song

Feb. 6 - 15 kil. Air raid. Road blocked. Troops. 1/5 loaf. Garage

Feb. 7 - III A. Luckenwalde. 7 tents. 400 men to a tent. Many sick. No care. Too crowded. 7 egg & d together still. Parcels given to Jerry.

Feb. 8-21 - No pep. all cold. Undernourished. Many sick. most lame. No supplies, no parcels. Geneva representative promised aid. None to date. 1/2 cup tea & soup. 1/20 1/5 loaf. 1/200 sugar & marg. 3 or 4 times a week. Air raid nightly. Berlin 37 miles away. Ready to evacuate at any time. Tent roving & stations. Letter formed. Meet first time

Feb. 22 - Day & night raid. Cabbage soup. Meat & 1/5 loaf bread. Only tea left from parcel.

Feb. 23 - Warm, snowed. Day & night raid. ? ?

Feb. 24 - Rain, cold. Chew detail. Saw meat soup. 1/5 loaf, marg. Night raid.

Feb. 25 - Early chow. 8 ood pea soup & meat. 1/4 loaf. Sugar & marg.
no meal. Chaplain Blannan, Poston, forgot wine. Bed rascally
and I got one. Rain, wind. Night raid. Red header each
night.? better spirits. appreciative of little
things taken for granted. Kate & Gene & Sunday nights.

Feb. 26. - Rain, windy. Late chow. - air raid.

Feb. 27 - Washed body, few clothes. Touch of H. S. 1/6 loaf.
Day & night raid.

Feb. 28 - Fast month. Extra bread again & salt Buy Fry.
about out of cigarettes. 1/6 loaf, cabbage soup. Luftwaffe
up enforced. Over 200 fighters up at once. Most I've ever
seen. Things must be brewing. Night raid. Men selling
anything for cigarettes.

Mar. 1 - In like a lion. terrific wind. Tent ripping. Battled
all night to keep it up. Day & night raid. Hoepner
takes parcel from French in name of U.S.

Mar. 2 - Wind still here. Our tent & two others half down &
badly ripped. To crowded & cold to move. Day & night
raid.

Mar. 3 - Wind down; better cold. Tent not fixed. Expect
no aid from Jerry as men have been stealing pieces
of canvas. More sick taken out. Max ~~to~~
Schmeling visited area but I didn't bother to see
him. Aford of dysentery. Day & night raid. More
parcels enroute.

Mar. 4 Snow. Mass & fulfilled Easter duty. First
communion of year. Dysentery worse. Two more
men carried out. Hoepner says to issue parcels
4 to a box. Washed & shaved. Day & night raid.

Mar. 5 - Delayed & first shower since we've been outdoors.
took 2 1/2 hours. Still have cramps. First

Mar 5 parcels arrived. Thursday, Holm, Ferry & I keeping it intact until Thursday. Ferry & I will then take whole parcel. Day & I night raid. Could see night one, which lasted two hours.

Mar 6 - Snow & gentry.? Letter frames for two weeks. D hit & crowd worse. Hope wool & blowers hold out. Night raid. Eating only burnt toast.

Mar 7 - D gentry! Night raid.

Mar 8 - Full parcel per man! Thousands of boys here. Hit four man parcel. Weak & thinner than anytime in life. Out of toilet paper. Moved to new tent. All happy, many sick from eating too much. Night raid. Talking all night.

Mar 9 - Eating good. Feel better. D gentry about gone. Night raid.

Mar 10 - Two full years in Army today. Four months overseas. Told of full parcel again Monday. Monday indigestion bad last night. Sick from eating too much. Night raid. again.

Mar 11 - Feel better. Mass. Communion. Morale up. Raids.

Mar 12 - new parcel. Had food left from last box, so traded for cocoa & biscuits. D gentry ok. Talk all night long.

Mar 13 - Eating. Up at six. Breakfast before roll call. Raids.

Mar 14 - Best day inside Germany. Washed. over at sack. Shirt too, feel great. Raids.

Mar 15 - Idles of March. 1000 of our boys flew over head today. Almost cried when I saw them. Wash. more washing done. Tents fixed up like home now. Soft calls out. Teams to be formed. Jerry himself rationed on boat & potatoes. He must be hunting. No trade rule has looking for butter & asking us for food.

- Mar. 17 - Two years since I walked down Bellvue Ave + turned + waved for last time. Day + night rail. Have and fork + spoon.
- Mar. 18 - Cool, clear. Church this P.M. Parade today because of _____ X-ray _____. Two raids? Before noon. Food dice workers. Labeled recipes are forgotten. C _____ again. Trading _____ off. Gambling starting. _____?
- Mar. 19 Routine raids.
- Mar. 20 Plenty of Lice. Man next to me has gone crazy. V 8⁷ mos
to _____
- Mar. 21 _____
_____ T.O. X-ray.
- Mar. 22 Warm, _____ to hospital. _____ Ribs around the clock.
- Mar. 23 Beautiful day. Confession, B _____. Men stripped to waist?
- Mar. 24 Warm. Pig stump? Stripped + washed in _____ can. _____ skin + bones. Lice all over me. Hair + clothes. Baby _____ + _____ of purple? Potatoes cut to 8 on loaf + 3 potatoes per man. Farts + fighters are heard _____ one shot down.

APR. 24. 30

men carrying back & they are, in a sense, worse than jing.

Tents are taking on appearance of a circus. Everything the boys can carry ~~are~~ being brought in from ~~the woods~~ ~~a~~ ~~vicinity~~. Four chest two rabbits, flour & spuds, my stool. Russians could have evacuated all things, Odesa but Colonel Sikes said "No". Thursday have elapsed now. Food getting low. Rice abundant was, in a sense, for my birthday. Fey tried to make it a day for me. I was short; Fey sent Gemma Pancake flour.

MAY. 1-4

- Moved to barracks, as service to. Go out on foraging parties. Russian guard goes with party & they search country for spuds, crows, pigs etc. Secured less food than jing did. Many are parting. Plenty taking off. 120,000 prisoners captured in this area. Liquidation proceeded for 12 days after our liberation. Russians all anxious to see Americans. Some Russians (oth. corp) from Stalingrad. Louis Aguel here but I couldn't get out to talk to him. Had note put in ~~his~~ ~~cas.~~ Plan to leave tomorrow.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

Personalkarte I: Personelle Angaben

Bezeichnung der Gefangenensektion

Kriegsgefangenen-Stammlager:

Page: **IVB 312309**

Name: **HARTMAN**
 Vorname: **RICHARD**
 Geburtstag und -ort: **26-4-22 MARYLAND**
 Religion: **RC**
 Vorname des Vaters: **WILKARD**
 Familienname der Mutter: **SPENCE**

Staatsangehörigen: **U S A**
 Dienstgrad: **S/SGT. (O/Twell)**
 Truppenteil: **ART** Komp. ufw.:
 Zivilberuf: **ACCOUNTANT** Berufs-Gr.:
 Matrikel Nr. (Stamm- oder Gefangenennr.): **33563101**
 Gefangennahme (Ort und Datum): **GERMANY 19 42**
 Ob gesund, krank, ob wunden eingeliefert:

205870

Des Kriegsgefangenen

Bild

Nähere Personalbeschreibung



Größe	Hautfarbe	Sonderes Kennzeichen:
5' 8 1/2	Brown Angeha. Hazel	
Fingerabdruck des rechten! Zeigefingers		Name und Anschrift der zu benachrichtigenden Person in der Heimat des Kriegsgefangenen
		MOTHER
		382 PARKER ST. NEWARK NJ U.S.A.

Stalag IV-B file card. Recovered when Germans fled as Russians were approaching.