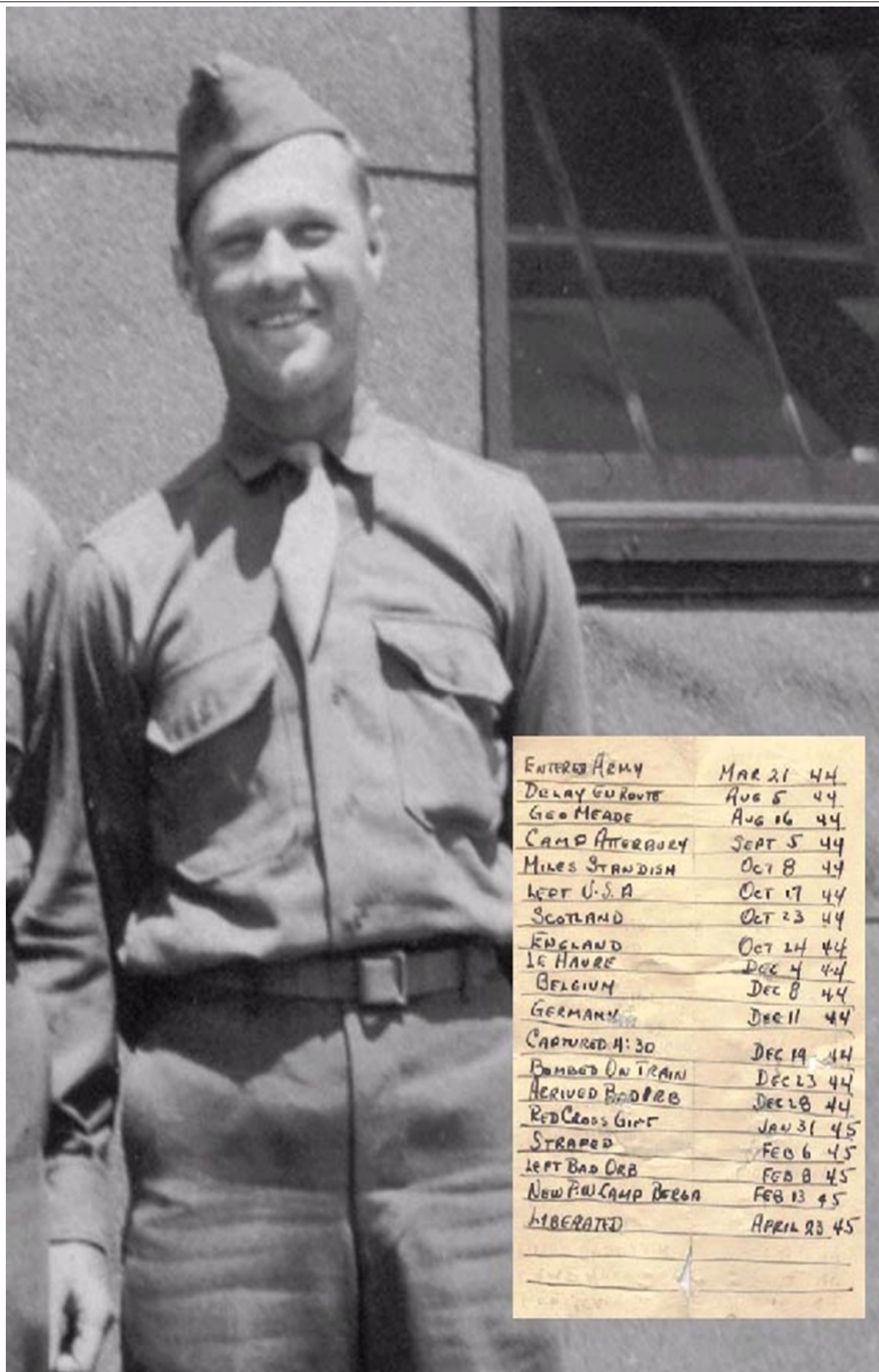


Anthony J. Urban, Jr.
423rd Regt, Company I
106th Infantry Division
Stalag 9-B



ENTERED ARMY	MAR 21 44
DELAY ON ROUTE	AUG 5 44
GEO MEADE	AUG 16 44
CAMP ATTERBURY	SEPT 5 44
MILES STANDISH	OCT 8 44
LEFT U.S.A	OCT 17 44
SCOTLAND	OCT 23 44
ENGLAND	OCT 24 44
LE HAURE	DEC 4 44
BELGIUM	DEC 8 44
GERMANY	DEC 11 44
CAPTURED 4:30	DEC 19 44
BOMBED ON TRAIN	DEC 23 44
ARRIVED BADDER	DEC 28 44
RED CROSS GIRL	JAN 31 45
STRAPPED	FEB 6 45
LEFT BAD ORB	FEB 8 45
NEW P.O. CAMP BEEBA	FEB 13 45
LIBERATED	APRIL 23 45

Entered Army	03/21/1944
Delay enroute	08/05/1944
Geo. Meade	08/16/1944
Camp Atterbury	09/05/1944
Miles Standish	10/08/1944
Left U.S.A	10/17/1944
Scotland	10/23/1944
England	10/24/1944
Le Havre	12/04/1944
Belgium	12/08/1944
Germany	12/11/1944
Captured at 4:30	12/19/1944
Bombed on train	12/23/1944
Arrived Bad Orb (Stalag IX-B)	12/28/1944
Red Cross Gift	01/31/1945
Strafed	02/06/1945
Left Bad Orb	02/08/1945
New PW Camp - Berga	02/13/1945
Liberated	04/23/1945

Wounded in Action - April 23, 1945 - . POW Status - Captured at 4:30 December 19, 1944. Arrived at Bad Orb (Stalag IX-B) December 28, 1944. Left Bad Orb February 8, 1945. Arrived Berga February 13, 1945. Liberated April 23, 1945. Awards - Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Prisoner of War Medal, EAME Theater Service Medal with 2 Bronze Stars, World War II Victory Medal, Good Conduct Medal. Born - May 9, 1916, Died - May 25, 1956. Notes - Anthony Urban was a motorcycle Patrolman for the City of Pittsburgh, PA Police Department. He was married and the father of 4 children, 3 sons and one daughter. He died at the age of 40 years in 1956 as the result of the injuries he received while a POW.

My father, Anthony J. Urban Jr., was born in Pittsburgh, PA on May 9, 1916, to Lithuanian immigrants. He married in 1939, and like most men of the period, joined the Army during WWII, enlisting on March 21, 1944, leaving behind a wife and two small children, one of them being just 2 months old. At the time of his enlistment he was serving the City of Pittsburgh as a police officer, where he walked a beat on the North Side of the city.

My father's stateside training took him initially to Fort George Meade for Basic Training, and then to Camp Atterbury for Infantry training, where he was assigned to the **106th Infantry Division**. His last stop in the US was at Camp Miles Standish to await transport to Europe. His group shipped out on October 17, 1944.

After 6 days at sea they reached Scotland on October 23, 1944, then another day at sea arriving in England on October 24. After several weeks of staging in England, he was transported to Le Havre via the English Channel arriving in France on December 4, 1944. The 106th then moved on to Belgium and on to Germany reaching there December 11, 1944.

During the Ardennes Offensive the 423rd Infantry Regiment, of which my father was a member, was encircled and cut off from the remainder of the Division by a junction of enemy forces, resulting in the capture of my father by the Germans at 4:30 on December 19, 1944. The small diary kept by my father indicates that while being transported by train to **Stalag IX-B (Bad Orb)**, they were bombed, by forces unknown to him at the time, on December 23, 1944. He arrived at Stalag IX-B (Bad Orb) on December 28, 1944. My father's diary also indicated that he received a Red Cross gift on January 31, 1945, and that his camp was strafed on February 6, 1945.

The most troubling entry in his diary tells of how he, and 349 other American POW's, were labeled for "special treatment". This "special treatment" meant being packed into boxcars and shipped to **Berga**. The train trip took five days and they arrived at Berga on February 13, 1945.

Berga an der Elster (Berga), was a slave labor camp where my father and the other 349 U.S. soldiers were beaten, starved, and forced to work in tunnels for the German government. The soldiers were singled out for "looking like Jews" or "sounding like Jews," or dubbed as undesirables, according to survivors. The POW's were forced to dig tunnels for an underground ammunition factory. This was in contravention of the provisions of the Third Geneva Convention. Many of the POWS died as a result of malnutrition, sickness and beatings.

As Berga was about to be liberated, the Germans forced the remaining US POW's on a forced march. More than 100 soldiers perished at the camp or on this forced death march. My father received wounds as he was being liberated on April 23, 1945, in Cham, Bavaria.

Upon his return to our family and the United States, my father was sick all of the time. His chronic illness was the result of his treatment and suffering while a POW. My father died on May 25, 1956, less than two weeks after his 40th birthday, leaving his grieving widow and four small children.

My father's story only recently came to light with the discovery of the diary that he maintained while in the Army. Many thanks to Mr. Charles Guggenheim, now deceased, for uncovering the mystery of Berga and its secret history through his research and documentary film entitled "Berga: Soldiers of Another War".

May God Bless America!

Source: Email from son, Edward Urban, 07/2009, 10/2009



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