

Excerpts from diary of  
Captain Peter Tattersall R.A.M.C.  
*Stalag 8-B*

To whom it may concern,

I am doing research on a diary kept by my father while he was a Prisoner of War in Germany in 1945. In the diary he mentions several United States Army personnel with whom he came in contact in his role as a doctor with the British Royal Army Medical Corps.

I would be interested in finding out if the U.S. personnel mentioned survived the war and if any are still alive. Unfortunately information is minimal and in many cases I only have a last name. I assume all of them would have been listed as Prisoners of War or as Missing in Action in your records. The names and dates mentioned are:

- 1) 14th March 1945 .....Koons, treated for diphtheria.
- 2) 14th March 1945 .....Goodlin, treated for diphtheria.
- 3) 3rd April 1945 Bill Chesters, Medical Orderly.
- 4) 3rd April 1945 .....Radford, Medical Orderly.
- 5) 9th April 1945 .....Hudjek, dies.

Any information you can provide would be greatly appreciated, or if you cannot provide information could you please direct me to other sources.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours truly,  
Michael Tattersall

23rd January 1945. Lamsdorf, Silesia. Stalag VIII B

Notified 0600 hrs by Col Crawford[1] RAMC[2] would proceed on march with Blocks VI + IX to replace Maj Woolley who pleaded sick.

Party I - Bks[3] X + XI - Capt Clare - Dept. 1000 hrs.

Party II - Bks VII + VIII - Maj MacLardy - Dept. 1130 hrs.

Party III - Bks VI + IX - Self - Dept. 1230 hrs.

Kit packed on sledge made from scrap wood. Rucksack (converted from kit bag). Haversack. Kit:- In packs, one shirt, pants, vest, towel, handkerchiefs (5), socks (5), Toilet articles, knife, fork, spoon, tin cup (butter tin), Sleeping bag, Blanket (1). Wearing Shirt, pants, vest, pyjama trousers, Pullover, Battle-dress, Greatcoat, gloves + mittens, Scarf, Balaclava, Puttees. 4 bars Chocolate. (2 N.Z.[4] Gift from Bill Foreman[5]). 4 oz Tea. Many decided that the prospect of a march was not pleasant + pleaded sick + were returned at the gate.

Party III left Stalag[6] gates at circa 1130 hrs. Issued at gate with Parcel (i) Xmas. Cigarettes 50.  
Tin Tobacco (i).  
½ German loaf.

ca. ½ tin Margarine.

Medical Kit:- Morphine, Sulphaguanidine[7], Elastoplast, Bandages, Suppositories, Aspirin, Dovers[8], Sulphonamide[9] Block VI Medical Inspection room staff failed to turn up at the gate + thus start was made without the necessary orderlies as previously arranged. Thus shortage of medical supplies.

Long wait until we got moving at circa 1230 hrs via Lamsdorf village. Many refugees in horse drawn columns from Oppeln[10]. Very slow going. Signs of battle to the N + E - Oppeln? Thick snow, cold with very difficult pulling on main Oppeln-Neisse[11] road. Abandoning of surplus kit commenced. Help by attaching sledge to horsedrawn waggon refugees for 4 kilos or so. Bore right (i.e. to west) off Oppeln-Neisse road. Column very drawn out + many men fatigued. Arrived at Friedewalde[12] after passing level crossing + pulling through thick 9 inch snow for 2 kilos. Other parties bedded down in barns + not seen. Arrived 2030 hrs. Halts on the way - 3 - Each circa 10 mins to enable stragglers to close up. One or two (elderly men) collapsed + were placed on waggons. Passed by bus full of sitting German wounded. Accommodation for night - large wooden barn, very draughty, straw. Overcrowded, 50 men slept outside in the snow, 10° frost. No cooking or hygiene. Gunfire clear all day + night. Cold water provided. Blowers[13] + fires for 1 hr after arrival so some men managed hot drinks.

Supper. 1 slice bread + ½ tin frozen Heinz beans. Water.

Slept- ? 3-4 hrs - sitting up in blankets. Men were cheerful - but very cold. No sick parades. no men reported sick. Distance 23 kilos.

5th February 1945. Stalag VIII A, Görlitz-Moys, Silesia

Reveille 0715 hrs.

Breakfast - Haferflocken. Tea. Bread + Honey (Treacle).  
Sick parade 1015-1100 hrs.

Issue - Good pea soup [for men]. Bread ¼ loaf.

[Met the Graf and] saw one or two rooms of Schloss. Dept 1230 hrs No 2. 15 sick on waggons. Easy marching muddy roads through Schönbronn to Görlitz-Moys. Arr 1630 hrs.

Distance 16 kilos.

Large mixed camp. Very muddy and crowded. Conditions very bad. Men - majority on damp stone floor. No Red X food. S.B.M.O.[14]Major Bramlow-Downing[15].Quarters - Room for Mac, Wes[16] + Self in Revin barrack. Usual beds + wood wool mattresses. Capt Gibbons[17] R.A.M.C. - here unable to reach Lamsdorf on return from repat.[18] train. Capt Stallard - looking all-in, having arrived Sat 3rd Feb. Bucket bath in room. Changed clothing, shirt etc first time for 14 days. Good meal with Soup. Rice, meat. Toast. Dried Bananas. Tea. [Total Min 282 Max 287.]

9th February 1945. Stalag VIII A, Görlitz-Moys, Silesia.

[Gibby and Wes Clare for Lazaret. Took over Gibbons' ward 22B and A. i.e. 150 beds.] + adjacent annexe, about 90 patients. Chiefly Exhaustion, Debility, Influenza, Diarrhea + Pneumonias +. U.S.A. troops very bad condition. Very thin, anaemic + emaciated + No resistance. (22B + taken over from Capt Gibbons)[19]

15th February 1945. Kropnitz, Germany.

Reveille 06:00. Tea, porridge and bread for breakfast. Outside camp gates at 08:30. Cold and driving rain, very wet and muddy. Issued ½ loaf and 1/10 tin meat for two days. Marchers split into 3 groups.

Group 1 Stalag VIIIA                      circa 1000

Group 2 Stalag 344                        circa 1000

Group 3 Stalag 344                        circa 500 plus 250 French, 250 Slovaks

Moved off at 10:00 with group 3 very slow going. No pack wagon so carried rucksack and haversack. McManus[20], Tom and Cpl. Burman with wagon. Many stops due to air raid alarms. Saw many U.S.A. bombers flying from East, bombing Dresden? Paper strips of radar "foxer" foil. Waited 1 ½ hours while passed by a Hungarian Division. Billets in barn, straw. German troops billeted nearby. Pleasant English speaking host. No water for men due to stolen loaf. Distance 24 kilometers.

23rd February 1945. Döbeln, Germany

Reveille 06:00. German tea, cold and raining. Feeling rotten, fetched from sick quarters by guard and forced to catch up with party. Drink of cider in Gasthaus. Took 1½ grams of M&B 693 which made me feel even worse, headache, foul pus on left tonsil, dysphagia, anorexia, temperature 102°. Vague recollection of day's journey and that I hung on to side of refugee horse wagon for circa 10 kilos until picked up by Monsieur Neville[21] (Swiss Red Cross) in his car, addressed as "Good morning Captain Tattersall." Passed column in car, parked, report given on march, home address, details and destination etc. Stalag 9C. Rejoined column and marched 22 kilos to Döbeln. Billets in sawmill boiler room. Bedded down straight away, unable to do sick parade. Feeling lousy. Boards on cement floor, nothing to eat or drink except thin barley soup. George did dressing parade.

4th March 1945, Steudnitz, Germany.

Announced rest day, slept till 09:00. Feeling lousy, unable to swallow still and febrile T 101°. Up to visit sick in billets surrounding gasthaus. 40 American sick from previous column lying many moribund in farm at Stendnitz, 3 already dead, 2 more dying, chiefly pneumonia, dysentery and starvation. During afternoon all parties given ½ hour to pack and be on road to cement factory near Stendnitz. Sick all crowded in cold factory room on straw. Self half way up wall on alcove on straw. Many of party slept outside in quarry. 2 pneumonias arrived by wagon from their good billet, all other sick must march to factory. No food issue, obtained coffee and potatoes. Americans removed in 2 lorries for Bad Sulza,

total of 5 died in village during their last 3 days here. Unpleasant Gauleiter[22] throwing weight around, talk of mass executions as reprisal for Dresden.

11th March 1945. Schönstadt

Attempt to leave 62 sick in Siebleben with German revier[23] - failed. Arguments by 2 German Feldwebel[24] over wagons. Sick eventually loaded on to 3 wagons & brought along with column. Passed through Gotha. Bought some charcoal & Tannalbin[25] (40 Tabs). Along road to Lanensalza[26] - attempt to visit German Reserve Lazarett to obtain equipment. Result - asked for Ausweiss![27] 3 Pneumonias, 2 pleurisy - Others sheer exhaustion - long marches & poor food - Dysentery. Arrived at village Schönstadt. Distance 28 kilos. Billet - small room -straw, warm, cadging host - but gave potatoes & hot water.

Attended severe sick in billet 69. 33 for transport. Bad pneumonia doing fairly well with Sulphapyridine[28]. VERY difficult to arrange enough drinks. Soup arranged. Bed down 10:00 hrs. Issue -3 bread. Sausage. Dying American found in village. To be taken with us following day if still alive.

20th March 1945. Worbis, Germany.

Called at 0700 hrs by G Feldwebel to visit Winzigerode - USA column 45 mins walk with Cpl Bierman to village. Found one man dead, G.S.W.[29] lung, through + through, + 2 wounded.

G.S.W. shoulder, + G.S.W. L Thigh. Shot while stealing. 3 others killed while escaping. Back to Worbis at 1200 hrs. Conference with Hptmn B re new orders - Frequent changes + eventually circa 450 men marched off by R.S.M. Muir to Döderstadt + ? Arbeits Kdo. Rest of day until 1900 hrs spent sorting out sick in Monica. 10 severe to be removed to Döderstadt + from there by train to Laz. Circa 40 sick only to remain in sick billet if possible. Fit men to fill up billets in village evacuated by privates.

Lunch — soup

Supper — Bread + cheese

Issue — 300 g Bread 60 g Margarine

12th April 1945. Ditzfurt, Germany.

FREE. U.S.A. troops arrived at 0730 hrs.[30]

They moved on within the hour, leaving us alone. Further support groups through during day. All weapons collected. 4 severe sick removed by ambulance. Armoured div moved in during night, staying only 1 hr.

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[1] Colonel D.A.McM. Crawford. Senior British Medical Officer at Lamsdorf.

- [2] Royal Army Medical Corp
- [3] Block
- [4] New Zealand
- [5] Captain H.M. Foreman, New Zealand. In 1947 became godfather to Michael Tattersall.
- [6] Stalag (Stamm Lager) = base prisoner of war camp
- [7] Sulphaguanidine: this non-absorbable sulphonamide was developed in the 1930's and was used in the treatment of diarrhoea.
- [8] Dover's Powder, a powder of ipecac and opium compounded with sulphate of potash. It is an externally applied pain reliever which promotes perspiration.  
<http://cancerweb.ncl.ac.uk/omd/>
- [9] Sulphonamides interfere with the synthesis of nucleic acids and were, in the 1930's and 40's, commonly used in the treatment of arthritis, joint inflammation, and ulcerative colitis.
- [10] Now Opole, Poland.
- [11] Now Nysa, Poland.
- [12] Now Skoroszyce, Poland.
- [13] Cooking equipment made by POWs out of old milk cans
- [14] Senior British Medical Officer
- [15] Major B. Bromilow-Downing, South Africa. Senior British Medical Officer at Stalag 8A Görlitz-Moys.
- [16] Capt Wesley Clare
- [17] Captain T.C.N. Gibbens, Royal Army Medical Corps.
- [18] repatriation
- [19] Capt. Gibbens February 9th 1945 .... "At 6.00 pm had meeting of Barrack Commanders, with McLardy and Downing. McLardy and I are to go with 3,000 tomorrow, and Tattersall with 2,000 the next day. I said I was willing to go as Stallard, particularly, and Wes Clayer are pretty tired."
- [20] Rev. (Captain) F.J. McManus, South Africa, Stalag 344.
- [21] Borrie p.181 also mentions a Dr. Neville as being with the Protecting Power i.e. not with the Red Cross.
- [22] Gauleiter. Nazi official, head of local district.
- [23] Infirmary.
- [24] Sergeant.
- [25] Tanninalbuminat, used to treat diarrhoea.
- [26] Bad Langensalza.
- [27] Pass.
- [28] Sulphur based drug used to inhibit growth of bacteria.
- [29] Gun shot wound
- [30] Liberated by American troops. The POWs kept back down off the main street in their billets as they saw American soldiers running down the street, but eventually they came out and approached the relieving troops. These chaps were very wary and trigger-happy, so it was with some apprehension that the POWs who first appeared were escorted by these rather excited and suspicious soldiers back at gun point to the leading tanks and American officers (for a bacon and egg pancake + jam breakfast in a tank!). The POWs returned to their billets pending instructions, and that evening P.E.R.T. and Bill Chesters invited Hauptmann Baumgardt and Lt Mandel to a fine supper which they had cooked by a farmer's wife. This feast was in full swing when the door burst open and in came a couple of very hostile U.S. soldiers with sub-machine guns. They were greatly incensed at seeing the two German officers in the party, and an officer had to be fetched before they could finish their meal. Eventually P.E.R.T. gave an undertaking that he would be personally responsible for the safe delivery of the Germans to the Prisoners' Cage next morning, and the party was allowed to proceed. There was a strict non-fraternisation rule in force at the time.



Stalag VIII-A fence



Stalag VIII-A Gorkitz



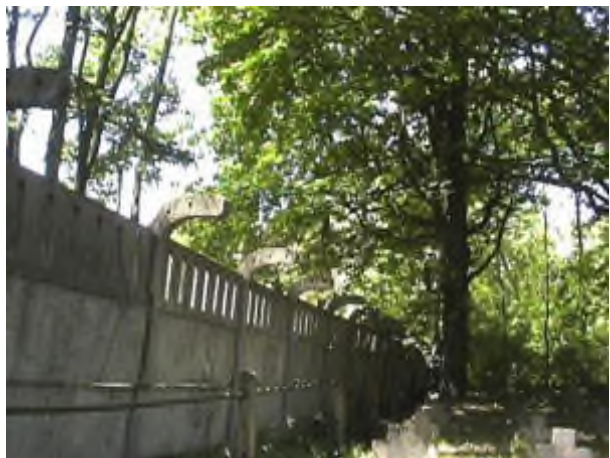
Memorial at Stalag VIII-A



Memorial at Stalag VIII-A



Stalag VIII-A Headquarters



Stalag VIII-B perimeter fence



Stalag VIII-B POW Cemetery



Stalag VIII-F Russian Compound

Courtesy of Michael Tattersall, son of Dr. Captain Peter Tattersall R.A.M.C.

**INDIANA**  
**MILITARY**  
*Organization*

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