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424/A

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Stalag 12-A

As I look back now, to the years of 1944 - 1945, it seems like a nightmare in my life. It seems like someone - somewhere wanted to show me what suffering a human being can endure in ones life time.

Lord Have Mercy

Only I and my brother-in-law Sylvester Krupinski, who was also a P.O.W., know what suffering we went through under the Nazis of Germany

The Three Miracles

During the "Battle of the Bulge" in the Ardennes in Germany, I was wounded in the right leg. We had taken the towns of Winterspelt and Lommerweiler, and our platoon was dug in foxholes waiting for the Germans to counter attack our position. After three days and nights of fighting, the Germans overran our positions and killed all but eleven men of Company A. Our orders were to hold the Germans at all cost, so the the 2nd and 3rd Battalions could withdraw to the other side of the Our River. We did the best we could until we ran out of ammo! It was so cold and snow was so deep. The white snow turned to red with the blood of my comrades of the 424th Regiment.

The eleven men fought hard to hold the road leading to St. Vith. Our B.A.R. man Kenneth Baker - a boy from New York -Knocked out the first Tiger Tank that came into Winterspelt. This delayed the Germans for awhile! But as fate would have it, the Germans picked him off soon afterwards. God have mercy on his soul.

On the 19th of December the Germans had us cut off and surrounded: no food, no ammo, no warm clothes, and no replacements. Some of the boys in their foxholes were shot outright by these Nazi soldiers. They showed no mercy, but for some reason a few of us were hauled out and taken to their command post. There we were, stripped of our sulfa powder and interrogated by the German Panzer Commander. I could not believe my eyes - almost all these soldiers were not over sixteen years old. Some looked like they could be thirteen or fourteen.

After being threatened with our lives - because all we could tell them was name, rank, and serial number - they roughed us up and locked us up near a pillbox. The next morning we were herded with some other P.O.W.s and told to march. We arrived at a rail station toward nightfall and pushed into box cars, half the size of boxcars in the States. Sixty men were put in each car, just like cattle. There was no room to stretch your legs, no food, and snow for water. We were padlocked in; there was no way to escape. We were told by the Nazi in charge that this train would take us to a concentration camp in Germany.

After two days and nights, the train stopped. We were ordered out and told to line up and count off. The signs on the building read: "Limburg Germany". We were told that we were headed toward a concentration camp. By this time I was very hungry. I had my last meal December 15th in Lommerweiler. The Nazi's were not feeding us at all. I was eating snowballs while I marched along. Along the way the German people jeered and called us "American Swine" and "Killers", as well as other names. I had no medical attention for my frozen feet and my leg wound. I hurt badly, and all I could do was pray. Finally I arrived at Stalag 12-A. It was enclosed by barbed-wire, and manned by German guards and police dogs.

1st Miracle

The first of my miracles happened while being marched from one prison camp to another. Mind you, it was awful cold during December 1944 and the snow was ass deep all over Germany! In our group of prisoners there were Canadians, British and Americans. After being forced to march for days, the German guards decided to give us a rest in an old barn in a small town. The barn was pretty good size so the guards shoved 180 of us into it. We all looked terrible - unshaved - clothes torn - no food...my God we needed food! During this forced march I again was eating snowballs - my stomach growled at all times.

Most of the fellows were sick. Some were badly wounded at the "Bulge" and still no medical attention of any kind. My leg hurt so - it was swollen real bad, and the blood that had run into my combat shoes was frozen stiff. It was a mess! Late at night I asked the men sitting close to the door to ask the guard if any of the town people wanted to swap some bread for the goulashes that I wore over my combat boots. After about an hour or so the guard motioned to me to come to the door. Once I got to the door the guard pointed to an old man standing there with a loaf of black bread. He stared at my goulashes. Then I removed them and the exchange took place - a loaf of bread for my rubber goulashes!!!

I then took the bread and I broke it into many little pieces and stuffed it inside my shirt. Then I headed back to my corner in the barn. During the night I munched a little piece of bread at a time -I munched it like a wild animal -so hungry! I was afraid to go to sleep - afraid someone would steal it from me.

Now remember, I gave up my rubber goulashes and the rest of my buddies would not part with theirs! It was so cold and I knew that was their reason for not parting with theirs.

As God is my witness, it seemed to me I was told to exchange mine for bread to keep me alive during this period of my life. The next morning the guards ordered us outside and lined us up. The guard in charge ordered every man to remove his goulashes and put them all in one big pile! Then the people in town came forward and the guards gave each person a pair - then they all headed towards their homes. My buddies could not believe that this was happening to them - stripped of something that gave their feet warmth in this bad weather.

You see, I had no goulashes but inside my shirt I had life sustaining food to nourish my hungry body. As we were again being forced to march to God knows where, I munched a piece of bread thanking God above that someone, somewhere told me to make the swap to feed the hungry body of mine!!! To me this was a miracle.

Sometime in February of 1945 we were again forced to march toward another Stalag in a snow storm that was really bad. The Russians made a big push inside Germany so we were being marched toward the western part of Germany. It was so cold, I shook all over as I marched along. My leg was really in bad shape and this cold weather wasn't doing it any good. On each force march some of my P.O.W. buddies die right along side the roads and in the fields we cross. When they fall, the German guards just laugh it off!! They left the bodies lying in the deep snow. They were pure rotten. Tears came to my eyes as I marched along. I can't believe that human beings can treat one another this way. My God, my God, why?

About the fourth day we were coming into a good size town and the German people here jeered us and called us all kind of names. We looked like hell, I must admit. The weather was really bad and I was so cold yet I must go on. My legs both hurt so bad and I just must suffer with them. I was hungry - I was cold - I was sick - I hurt. I was ready to call it quits. I had lost some weight. I was passing blood already through my rectum. Each forced march only make my condition

worse. I didn't know how a man could suffer and still survive these horrible marches. I know now how the Lord suffered carrying his cross to be crucified. At that moment in my life I made up my mind I was going to die that very night. I hurt so bad - lots of pain - my mind was made up. This was to be my last forced march.

God forgive me, I just couldn't believe a human being could suffer so much. Late at night we were told to take a rest - we all sit in the deep snow - Do tired! After about twenty minutes, we were ordered to march again. I made up my mind right there I was through marching as a P.O.W. I was going out of life - laying in the deep snow. God forgive me - I am so tired and hungry and hurt so badly!

The German guard shoved his gun and bayonet at me and ordered me up to march - but not me- I just laid there and was through with this suffering in life. The guard turned the butt of his rifle into my side and said "die swine" and took off with the column of P.O.W.'s. So cold! So cold!

After a few seconds I sat up and suddenly in the white snow in front of me appeared the face of Jesus Christ! He seemed to be saying to me, "I suffered while carrying my cross, you also can suffer through these marches. You shall suffer much more but you shall live through this holocaust". With this the image disappeared. It seemed I gained strength and forgot my hunger. I got up and started to march to catch up with the rest. I finally got to the rear of the column and I started to say the "Our Father" and the "Hail Mary" as I marched along. Even though my body ached - I was hungry - it made no difference to me. My soul was warm and I believed this was meant to be. I loved all and I was being loved by someone very, very close to me. This had to be my lovely wife Margaret and my family back home, but most of all by the face in the snow!

Sometime in March we were on a forced march again. The Americans and the British had made a big drive into the heart of Germany, so we were being moved again. Before we leave the stalag we were issued a small piece of horse meat and a quarter loaf of bread, and told this must last for a few days at least. My clothes were starting to sag on my body - I had lost a lot of weight and still passing blood. It wasn't a very good way to end up, but it may happen yet. My legs were worse now and the right one is in real bad shape. I doctored it the best I could, but I had nothing to put on it. The third day of the march, with snow ass deep, we ended up in a town and were billeted in a big barn overnight. We were a sad sight: haggard, tired, and unshaved. What a sad bunch of P.O.W.s. Some of the Canadian P.O.W.s had been prisoners for a few years and they kept saying that the war shall end soon and the allies shall win. It did keep our morale up at times!

Some of the boys were like living skeletons - believe me - some didn't weigh one hundred pounds. Honestly speaking, I couldn't believe the Germans were treating us like this. At this time in life again I wished I had been killed in the Ardennes at the Bulge! I felt I would never come out alive. I had already been in three concentration camps. The end must be near for me.

The next day we marched again and at noon hour we were crossing a German air field. In the distance we see many airplanes but, due to the lack of gasoline they were not in the air. Crossing this air strip - we were a long column of hungry men - I was in the middle of the column and daydreaming of my dearest wife and home. As I looked around I saw a small farm house at the end of the air strip. Inside a picket fence there was a man milking a goat. I kept watching him as I marched along. He had a big P.O.W. sign painted on his jacket; a political

prisoner, I figure. He had blue and white stripes on his uniform. As we marched by, he noticed our column and he came toward us with the goat milk in his hands. He held a small bottle forward and many hands reached out for it...we were all thirsty and hungry. We all reached out together. We were all begging this man for that goat milk. But at once he caught my eye and I looked into his and he slowly came forward. His hands touched mine and he handed me that bottle of milk...me above all others!!! I took a small drink, then passed it among the rest until it is empty. I then handed it back to the P.O.W. from the farm house. He looked me in the eye and smiled, and I returned the smile then waved good-bye.

This may sound crazy but of all the men in the column that reached for the bottle - why, but why did he give it to me? Who guided him to reach over everyone else to make sure I would get it first? It was a gift from him to me - but who made sure I got the first drink? A miracle, I'm sure.

I feel in my heart that I believed so much in Jesus that he was watching over me at all times. Later on, crossing the Oder River in Pomerania, we ended up in Stalag 2-D, the worst concentration camp of them all. In this Stalag I suffered with the rest of my buddies. Here I helped bury many of them. Suffering - hunger -and all else was taking place in this hell-hole.

I hoped with all my heart the Good Lord will let me survive this nightmare in Germany, Just to see my lovely wife at least one more time - and my family - oh, how I missed them all!

A 1944 Christmas

As my wife and I enjoy each Christmas, I have memories of my childhood. I spent my younger days in Glen Alum, West Virginia and we had such wonderful times cutting our own tree and decorating it, then singing Christmas songs in Hungarian and English! Then many more Christmases in old Delray, a small southeast area of Detroit. Christmas with my folks, brothers and sisters and many friends. We always went to midnight Mass to hear about the birth of Christ.

The one Christmas I so vividly remember, I spent in **Stalag 12-A** outside of Limburg, Germany: A Prisoner of War Camp, surrounded by barbed wire fences and patrolled by big German shepherd dogs! It was 1944 - "The Battle of the Bulge" - I was taken prisoner with ten other buddies of mine after defending the town of Winterspelt in the coldest winter in Germany. There were many P.O.W.s in this camp: Canadians, French, English, Americans, Poles, and Russians. Some of us still were suffering from battle wounds, and all suffered starvation, dysentery plus malnutrition. As prisoners, we had very little clothing and very little medical attention. Some of my comrades were beaten by the Nazi guards. One boy from Indiana was shot before our eyes - in cold blood!

Being a prisoner at Christmas in 1944 was a sad day in my life. Just to see all the suffering going on in this camp - it was a low point for all of us in Stalag 12-A. Being the 25th of December we all decided in our billet to have Christmas. We took a piece of cardboard, and with a small pen knife of mine we cut out the shape of a Christmas tree. Out of worn blankets and some tin cans we made decorations for the tree. Then we punched holes in the cardboard and put straw from the floor to take the place of tinsel.

We all joined hands together in a big circle and started to sing Christmas carols. While we sang our eyes filled with tears and we all hugged one another, thanking God that we were alive. Outside the camp and beyond, our enemy just listened to the songs being sung by the men in our billet!

At noon, the guards brought in some grass barley soup instead of rutabaga, and each man received two spuds plus two slices of bread instead of one. Even though many were suffering, our spirits on this day were high. We all wished each other a very Merry Christmas. It was a Christmas that I shall never forget.

I have been married to my dearest wife for more than thirty nine years and have raised seven beautiful children, and at each Christmas time I say to myself thank God for bringing me home. We have so much to be thankful for in this beautiful country of ours!!! The Christmas of 1944 is a faded memory now!

My Kriegie No. at Stalag 12-A: 081619

"The Meeting"

Being a P.O.W. at Stalag 12-A was a nightmare! Our meals each day consisted of one small cup of rutabaga soup and a slice of black bread. We all looked like hell - sick - unshaved - no medical attention - slowly starving, that's for sure. My leg gave me all kinds of problems, but there were buddies of mine worse off than me. I made up my mind to help those the best I could. Each day I would visit those that were laid up in the building that held the really sick. I would cheer them up and when I stole a little extra food I would share it with them.

Every third day the Germans issued each P.O.W. three Turkish cigarettes. Not smoking, I used mine to exchange these for bread or soup. I wanted to live. A few of us were picked to help bury our dead (each day someone passed on), and also to issue the daily rations. We made sure each man got his just share. Men are like animals when there is little food. The food at times really stunk bad but when one is starving you eat it.

On December 29, 1944, the German Commandant ordered everyone outside. It was cold and snow ass deep. We were lined up and he told us all that there where some more P.O.W.'s coming into camp that day - to save half of our soup and half of our bread. We are to share all with the incoming P.O.W.'s.

Around noon the big barbed wire gate opened to let the new arrivals enter the compound. The P.O.W.'s inside formed a line near the gate to welcome our comrades! There must have been at least two hundred men in the line coming inside. You can tell as they entered that they had been on a long forced march: they are haggard and really hurting. As they come marching inside I'm looking and crying - my heart aches so bad for these men. ..they had very little clothing covering their bodies.

Then all of a sudden I see a very thin tall soldier - badly beaten - I can't believe my eyes - it can't be but yet it can be - it is, it is!! My own brother-in-law - Sylvester Krupinski!! I shout - I cry - I holler: Chief..Chief..that was his nickname back home. He looked around to see who was calling him, Finally he saw me, he gave me a faint but sad smile and waved his arm. (I thought the Germans had killed him in the Battle of the Bulge). He was in another regiment, the 422nd Infantry while I was attached to the 424th Infantry.

Once inside, the big gate was shut and these prisoners were put inside a big canvas tent the Germans had us put up a few days before. All it consisted of was some straw on top of the snow inside. That night I crept over to see Chief. I had my extra portion of rutabaga soup and part of my bread. I gave it to him and he ate it like a starved animal. We hugged, we cried - he was in bad shape - me with my leg, him so thin. We talked of how the Germans hit our outfit and killed so many of our buddies In cold blood, He looked at my legs and he felt

sorry for me. We talked of home and food. They only fed us once a day but that there was an S.O.B. Corporal Hall that held back some of our bread and traded it for wrist watches, wedding bands, pens, and American money. I told Chief I already gave my wedding band to the S.O.B. for extra bread for myself a week ago. He gave me a loaf and a half for it, and I ate it up in no time. When you are hungry, you would sell your soul for extra food!

I told Chief it wasn't right what this Corporal Hall was doing but he was in cahoots with the German Commandant. I told Chief if he wanted to give me his wrist watch I could get Hall to give me a loaf or two for it. I looked up Hall in his billet and to and behold under his wooden bunk he had our extra rations of bread hidden. I told him my brother-in-law was starving and needed some bread. For the watch the S.O.B. gave me one and a half loaves to give to Chief. On the other end of his bunk in a box he had all kinds of pens and wedding bands and plenty of wrist watches. That stinking S.O.B. and that kraut sure had a nice set-up inside 12-A. The rotten bastards. I sure would like to kill them.

I took the bread over to the tent that Chief was in and told him to break it up in pieces and put it inside of his shirt and share it with no-one. I also told him the Nazis would move them out within two days to somewhere else and he would need every piece of the bread to eat on the way. I told him to eat it sparingly. The next day his group had our menu of rutabaga soup, some black bread, and some horse meat. They were going to be moved out to another concentration camp that afternoon.

I felt so happy knowing Chief did not get killed and that I also was alive. It made my day and I prayed that no matter where they take Chief, let the Good Lord let him live until we get liberated. Both of us. I cried as they lined them up to be forced marched out of **Stalag 12-A**. Chief and I hugged and said our good-bye with tears in our eyes - we shook hands - I wished him well. As he marched outward he turned back and gave me a wave with his hand and a small smile on his face.

It was a meeting of a lifetime. That night I laid down and prayed for his safe return. I went to sleep with a smile on my face. We were both alive!!!

Camp Lucky Strike France
"The Exchange"

This is a true story. It took place in France, 1945.

We were liberated by the Welsh light medium tank corp at Marlag near the seaport of Bremen, Germany. There were about 250 prisoners of war in the concentration camp. At this time, most of the men looked like living skeletons. Our meals consisted of one cup of rutabaga, and a slice of black bread. Malnutrition had started to show on each and everyone of us. The British Lories drove us out of the camp to a nearby air base and there we were hastily examined by a doctor. The next day we were loaded twenty five men to C-47 transport planes(flying boxcars). We were then flown to Numur, Belgium to a field hospital to be checked out and deloused by the hospital staff. We were fed a bowl of mush (oatmeal) and a slice of bread, then told to go to sleep.

Next day we are given the full treatment - our heads are shaved - arm pits - our private sector. Then we were led into a stall and deloused again and again with yellow powder. Being a P.O.W. five months I was loaded with lice! Once we were deloused we were given new clothes and checked out by the doctors. We were taken to the field hospital and given shots and treated

for our wounds and frozen feet. Some had frozen fingers or feet, or malnutrition - war wounds of all sorts!

We stayed there a few days at the hospital - being fed a little at a time to expand our stomach wall. Due to lack of food we could eat ourselves to death! The doctor told me that in my life time I could be bald, become sterile, lose my nails, and have trouble with my legs due to poor circulation.

We were flown to Brussels, Belgium for an examination - all P.O.W.s from different concentration camps. After two days we are loaded on a train and are told we are going to a place called "Camp Lucky Strike" in France. We traveled most of the day and towards evening we arrived at our destination. Everywhere you look soldiers and more soldiers. All being processed and checked out by doctors. We were in the same situation. Here we were fed and given new clothes again. American clothes. In Belgium we were issued British clothes. We were being given examination after examination by doctors. They wanted to make sure you were fit to make the trip back to the U.S.A.

The second day we were to take a urine test, to make sure no one had V.D. Each man was handed a small bottle to fill. Once done, each man had to wait his turn in line. While in line a boy from Wisconsin was ahead of me and a fellow from Kentucky was in back of me. The boy from Wisconsin told me he was clean and would be headed home. The boy from Kentucky told me he was worried because he had some bad women in France. He figured he was diseased and this would stop him from going home on the next boat.

And at this instant the boy from Kentucky swapped his bottle with the one on the ground. I never gave it much thought at the time., but the next day we were headed for LeHavre, France to board the ship "Marine Panther". The boy from Kentucky was in my group but the boy from Wisconsin had to wait for another urine test before he could head home! I really felt bad because I had seen the exchange take place, but it was too late to say anything about it. On arriving at the port of embarkation, we were loaded onto the ship, and were to pick up more sick and wounded in England before we headed home. As I daydream around the house, I still think about the exchange of the bottles and I grin to myself!

Empty Bread

While a P.O.W. of the Nazis during World War Two in Stalag 12-A outside Limburg, Germany, we had very little to eat. Our rations for a day consisted of one slice of black bread and one cup of rutabaga soup. However, every third day all the prisoners were issued three Turkish cigarettes by the Nazis. Since our food rations were very little, we used these cigarettes to swap with other P.O.W.s. The Russians that were in the next compound would swap their bread for a few of our cigarettes. Not being a smoker it gave me a little extra bread for my empty stomach. I swapped every chance I had.

One day a G.I. had a smart idea. He took the tobacco out of the wrapper and replaced it with straw to mess up the Russians. After a few days, the Russians wised up, so on the next exchange, to our surprise, the inside of the bread dough was gone! All we got in return for our butts were the outer crust of the bread. I had to laugh and cry at the same time. After this incident we were on our one slice of black bread again.

A Traitor Among Us

During my P.O.W stay in Stalag 12-A in December 1944, I found an American traitor among the prisoners! The Nazis knew everything that was said in our billet, and who said it. The Commandant of the concentration camp and Corporal Hall were in cahoots all the way.

It was Corporal Hall's job to issue each billet their daily ration of bread and soup. Each ten men in a billet had to share one loaf of bread, but the S.O.B. made fifteen men share the loaf. Doing this he held back at least 10 loaves of bread each day. This was the set up between him and the Commandant. They hoarded the extra bread under Hall's bed - the bread that was to keep us alive inside this camp.

Toward the end of December 1944 I was weak and awful hungry - little food and cold as heck. Our daily ration just kept us going. One day I asked a P.O.W. if I could swap something personal for some extra food. He told me about Hall and his hoard of bread. I made it by business to look him up. I entered this situation inside a small diary I kept in my longjohns. Late in the afternoon I met him outside of his billet and asked him about extra bread for my empty stomach.

After a bit he said he could get me a loaf or two of bread if I would give him my wedding ring or watch! Being so hungry at this time in my life I agreed to give him my wedding band for a loaf and a half of black bread to keep me alive. I cried so hard, but being hungry I followed him inside his billet for the bread he had under his bed. Inside the billet stood the Commandant of the camp! The corporal lifted up the loose boards and covered up with straw were rows of bread that really belonged to all the prisoners. Here the S.O.D. was selling what belonged to us for wedding bands, watches, pens to split with the Commandant. In one corner of the bed he held many of these items in a cardboard box that he obtained from the P.O.W.s The Commandant grinned because he and our corporal would split these things among themselves. Every time new P.O.W.s would arrive inside Stalag 12-A he made sure even though they were starving that he would end up getting something from them for an extra piece of bread. What a price we had to pay to survive.

I felt like killing him at times. He sold our wretched starving bodies for a few items that meant so much to us. Before I was forced marched out of this concentration camp, I had no watch, no wedding band, no pen. This S.O.B. had it all. This man had my brother-in-law's watch from his two day stay at this stalag. He was so weak when he arrived, that he had no choice but to give it up for bread to stay alive. He was one sick prisoner of war.

I hoped if I lived through this holocaust as a caged, sick and hungry animal, in the future I could tell the world about this American traitor. I shall never forget the sneer on his face as we were marched out of Stalag 12-A for places unknown in Germany. He should rot in hell!!!

Box Car Style

After being a P.O.W. at Stalag 12-A at Limburg, Germany for a short stay, one day we were ordered to march outside of town and then herded into boxcars. They forced 65 men into each box car - too many for such small boxcars. (Ours in the States are twice as large). Once inside, each man was issued a quarter loaf of bread, a chunk of horse meat, and a piece of stinking cheese. Then the Nazi guards padlocked each car so we cannot escape. How long we were to travel, and to where, only God knew. Once the padlocks were on, the train headed somewhere inside Germany.

It was cold as hell inside and we were half frozen because we didn't have any warm clothes to cover our bodies. All we had on were our field jackets, shirts, pants, and combat boots. Nothing else. Inside each car the Germans gave us an old fashion coal bucket to use as a toilet. You must believe me, this bucket was filled within the first few hours after being locked in! The waste stunk to high heaven, and we had no way to dispose of it. The rest of the trip, our waste was done inside our pants. The train was headed northeast toward the Russian front. Just by looking out a real small window and reading signs of cities and towns we knew we were going in that direction. The second day men started to bitch and complain about how cold it was, and how it stunk inside the box car. We could urinate between the cracks on the floor but that's all. The third day, men had eaten their small portions of food and some acted like animals toward their comrades. Some men ate sparingly. Those that ate theirs too soon were begging from those that had some left. What a sight. God let us live through this nightmare!

I had put my portion of food inside my shirt and at night I munched on it slowly to make it last a little longer. Somehow with God's help I can survive this nightmare and let the outside world know how we were treated as P.O.W.s. This day I was passing waste and blood inside my own clothes. I cannot help myself and I can't believe this is happening to me. Locked in like animals and treated as such by the supposed super race - the Germans!

The fourth day enroute to our destination the engine was disconnected and the boxcars were left on a side track. A few minutes later we knew why. We were left in the open, because our own P-38's are strafing our boxcars. First one way then they return and straff again - some of my own buddies were killed. What a mess. We were like mad men: trying to get out and not being able to - men dying - some praying - we clung to each other like little children. I missed the bullets coming through the roof of the car. Thank God for sparing me. I helped those that were wounded the best I could, and those that were killed we put in one corner of the boxcar.

We saw the P-38's fly off after a few minutes. Thank God for that. They must have thought we were a German troop train headed toward the Russian front. That is what entered my mind after the planes left. Through the small window I begged the German guard to open up and let

us out, but to no avail. Then I begged him to hand me some snowballs because the men were thirsty; some snow to quench their thirst. This the guard did do. He handed me about ten to fifteen snowballs. Thank God for this small favor. We needed the white stuff bad. It sure tasted good.

The fifth day we crossed the Oder River and near the town of Setten; the train slowed, then stopped. How cold it was! I couldn't believe it. Frost is a quarter inch thick on the bolts inside. After the engine is disconnected, the guards take the padlock off each boxcar. They make us unload the dead and wounded, then we were lined up in the deep snow. My legs were giving me plenty of pain. I hurt plenty, but there were some of my buddies worst off than I! I pray for those that have been killed by our own planes.

We were lined up like a bunch of cattle and counted off by the guards. Each man was given a half torn blanket to cover their body. Snow was ass deep and the temperature was zero and below. I can't believe what the body can endure!

Our wounded and dead were loaded on some wagons which were loaded with straw. Those wagons were pulled by some large horses. I don't know where the Germans were taking them. This place is worse than hell! I am so hungry..my hands were so cold..my pants were loaded with waste.. .what a mess! I eat a hand

full of snow while we were lined up. I understand we were headed toward one of the worst P.O.W. camps in Poland. You see, some of our own boys understood German and just listened for information of any kind.

There were about 250 P.O.W.s, and we were told to march. It was hard marching due to the deep snow and cold. After a few hours, we approach **Stalag 2-D**. I can't believe my eyes: four watch towers overlooking the big camp, German watch dogs inside the place. There were Russian P.O.W.'s inside quaking at the Americans as we enter the big barbed wire fence gate. There are also some Jewish political P.O.W.'s. They didn't look like they weighed 80 pounds. They had blue and white clothes on. They looked horrible. They were living skeletons. There were ropes around their necks and ankles, so they could not escape this hellhole. A few Canadian, Poles, and Russians were there, and now we Americans. The Canadians told us that they had been there since Dunkirk years before. They said that there was no way to escape, too many watch towers keeping the P.O.W.s inside. The few that tried were shot down in cold blood by the guards.

We were led to some wooden billets inside the camp, mixed with Canadians and Poles in the same compound. I am so hungry and cold and had not eaten since I ate all my horse meat in the boxcar. We were ordered outside by the Commandant for a count off and told that there was no escape from that place. We were told to wash up the best we could because we stunk like pigs, due to our pants loaded with our own waste. I was weak and loosing blood through my rectum. My weight was down to about 140 from 186. This worried me very much. I wanted to survive so bad. We used the snow to clean ourselves the best we could. Later that evening we were led to a big building to be fed.

Our meal consisted of rutabaga soup and one slice of black bread, plus a chunk of horse meat. What I wouldn't have given for a pancake breakfast - an American dream!

After our meal we were taken to another building and there we were stripped of our clothes and were deloused, for we were full of body lice. Before I put my clothes back on I washed my underwear with snow the best I could...it was a bloody mess! I shiver from the cold, because there was no heat inside that building. I did the best I could as far as personal hygiene under the conditions.

Of the few hundred men that started on the train, there weren't many left inside of 2-D. In my heart I felt somewhere, someone was saying a lot of prayers to get me this far. I had faith in my God and I kept saying to myself that if I should come out alive, I shall attend Mass every Sunday without fail.

Stalag 2-D shall live in my mind until the day I die. It was a prison camp that no woman should ever see. There were human beings that were walking skeletons. I still can't believe that the Germans could treat mankind like that. The place was hell!!!

For Honour and For Her

Somewhere, a woman, thrusting fear away -
Faces the future bravely for your sake -
Toils on from dawn till dark from day to day -
Fights back her tears, nor heeds the bitter ache -
She loves you, trusts you, breathes in prayer your name -
Soil not her faith in you by sin or shame -
Somewhere a woman - mother - sweetheart - or a wife -
Waits betwixts, hope and fear for your return -
Her kiss, her words, will cheer you in stride -

When death itself confronts you, grim and stern -
But let her image all your severance claim -

When base temptation scorch you with their flame.
Somewhere a woman watches filled with pride -
Shrined in her heart you share a place with none -
She toils, she waits, she prays, till side by side -
You stand together when the battles done -
Oh, keep for her sake a stainless name -
Bring back to her a manhood free from shame.
This poem by Margaret Scraton

Copied by me in 1945 Stalag X-B
Bremeshaven, Germany

Dreams of My Life

When my dreams come true -
It was a year ago or so -
We said so long - short and sweet - And oh, I miss you so !
You said you'd wait for me -
No matter how long it would be -
If I return to you somehow, someday - I would love you eternally.
I miss you each and every day -
Behind these barbed wire fence -
Your face I see in every star at night -
Just to embrace and kiss once more my ever loving wife.
My love for you shall never die - It shall go on and on -
Even tho I may not live -
I shall see you in the great beyond.
I love you, dearest Margaret. Stalag X-B

By Louis W. Tury

To my wife, Margaret
Prison Camp

Of all the places in the world At least it seems to me
A prison camp is not the place For women's eyes to see.

For months behind a barbed wire fence Can warp the sanest mind
Unless it keeps some sort of hold Or somehow strength can find.
And hunger causes men to steal The lowest thing to do
And some behave like animals To get some filthy stew.
But the saddest thing of all to see Is, virile, manhood brave
Reduced to fleshless skin and bones Like those due for the grave.
So, God forbade that you my sons Should ever captured be
And pray that all your battles then Shall end in victory.

Copied off the P.O.W. camp billet wall - 1945 Stalag 2-A

Bremen Vorde, Germany

My Wife Margie,

Every time the sun comes out My thoughts return to you. For there is a world of happiness In everything you do. Your courage make my load seem light You brighten all my way. Because your loving heart has found The beauty in each day.

A Child's Prayer

Oh, daddy dear - I wish you could hear The song I've made up just for you

It's called "Come home as soon as you can" For you see, we want you so much

Just Mommy and me

Margie

As I look back upon my life, I'd do nothing different, that I know. No regrets, however, darling - For you are a treasure, a wonderful wife. Lajos - yours

My Mother

No finer heart could be found

Though search the world you may

No sweeter smile could greet the morn And drive dull cares away.

No lovelier face could be my own To hold within my humble heart A pulse that beats for me alone Though one day we did part.

Once lovely hair, now silvery gray Adorns that mother, so sublime

No pasture, strong could ere be bought Nor found within the age of time.

I shall not need - I shall not want - I'll never find another

To take the place of one so kind God's masterpiece -

My Mother

Stalag 2-D

Pomerania, Poland 1945

A Prisoner's Prayer

Oh! God, my creator and protector - I know that thou are near me, and so I adore thee and give myself to thee, body and soul and with complete submission to thy will.

Thou hast saved me from death which has overtaken many of my comrades, and hast permitted that I shall be a prisoner of the Germans. I shall bear patiently and hopefully for the love of thee with all the difficulties of my state. Bless my companions and myself here, grant us to live in peace, comforting and consoling one another with fraternal love and charity.

Bless my family who are far away, my friends and all. I love my country and all my comrades in arms.

Give me peace and protect me from melancholy and despair; and above all, keep me from offending thee. My God, I thank thee for all thy blessings and I will try and serve thee as St. Peter said; "Rejoicing in hope - patience - and in Tribulation"

A Time of Passing

As I gaze in shades of green I see a face I've often seen He's walking in a midst of space He has a wise and aged face.

This man has lived a life that's full with times of questions, and times of despair With times of tender

loving care.
When brought into this world you see
Horses and buggy for him, fancy cars for me
Pumping water was his way
A switch of a faucet in my day.

As a boy he knew great fun
Laughing, singing, his races were run. The time has changed a bit since then
Yes, playing and laughing way back when.

Then years had passed, he grew much wiser. In his eyes, a glow of fire.
A brand new interest, a thing called romance
No more games, he then turned to dance
A dancing here, a turning there
He found one woman's trust and care.
This woman he took to be his wife
To live a full and prosperous life.
Together they had found a house
And settled to be each others spouse
To them, one daughter soon was blessed
Then another. No more rest.
For soon a third, a fourth, and more
A happy household and love soon outpoured.

A family loving - a real earth mixed with heaven
And soon the last child, her number was seven.

The children are growing and living their lives
I'm working my job and burden and strife,
But yet with my children and wife, I feel tired
I long for a place where my time can be whiled.
A place in the woods, My childhood dreams
Can now be fulfilled with a plan and scheme
A certain place for the wife and I
For the children to while - while times fly by !!

My Life Before Me
As I lay upon my sick bed
My life before me becomes a spread
First my childhood in the West Virginia hills
Then my youth with all it's thrills.
Then my marriage to my lovely wife
Next, World War II and all it's strife
My life so torn in war and lonely
A P.O.W. body worn thin and boney.
Liberated, hospitalized, and cared for
At the end of the terrible war.
Returned to my loved ones, oh, so weary
Loved by my wife and family dearly.
As my life went on, I got better
We started our lovely family together
Our lovely girls were our bundle of joy
Then our life, complete with our two boys
My life has been fulfilled with happiness
My wife, my seven children with their tenderness
Lord, keep me well each and every day
Let me share in my family's happiness every way

I don't ask much in this life's passing
Just our families happiness forever lasting.

Dad Tury

To each and everyone in my family God bless you all.
To My Wife With Love Eternally By Louis Tury Jr. 1979

Wrote when sick with my war legs
Your Monthly Letter

She doesn't know what you're going through It would be mighty hard if she only knew The long hard days,
just sitting here alone with your thoughts and your heart full of fear that you may never return to your
home again All hope is gone, you have lived in vain. Yet, as each week comes, you rewrite once more The
same old lines as the week before. And pray when she receives then she will never know better What you
couldn't write in your monthly letter.

Stalag 2-D

Pomerania, Poland 1945 Copied by Louis Tury Jr.



VARI - *(scribble)* (this is ALL of the 3rd *(scribble)*)

Louis Tury and the 3rd Squad at Camp Atterbury. Louis is standing, 2nd from left.

Two Members of Kingwood Family Missing in Action



These are the two sons and a son-in-law of Mr. and Mrs. Adam Krupinski of Kingwood, two of whom are missing in action in Germany. T-5 Sylvester A. Krupinski (left) has been missing since Dec. 16, and Staff Sgt. Louis Fury (center) since Dec. 17. T-5 Edward Krupinski is serving with the 101st Airborne Division. The two brothers met in England for the first time in two years and had Thanksgiving dinner together.

Kriegsgefangener

Camp des prisonniers

Date

March 25, 45

My Own DARLING Wife: I am in
 The best of health - All my love to you.
 REGARDS TO BOTH FAMILY'S. Miss you
 and am hoping to see you in the near
 future. Please don't worry MARGEIE.
 Hope you are feeling fine. Tell your
 son is on my lip ALWAYS. "Yours" LOUIS



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