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AMERICAN PRISONERS OF WAR

IN

GERMANY

Prepared by
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CONTENTS

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Introduction

Conditions in German prisoners of war camps holding Americans varied to such an extent that only by examination of individual camps can a clear picture be drawn. This report contains summaries of 12 typical German installations ranging from Stalag Luft 3, a well organized camp for Air Force officers, through Stalag 2B, an average Ground Force enlisted men's camp, to chaotic Stalag 9B, established for enlisted men captured during the Von Rundstedt offensive of December 1944.

Germany held a total of 92,965* American prisoners of war in these categories:

Air Forces	- 32,730
Ground Forces	- 60,235

In contrast to the number of Ground Force officers who formed only some 10% of the Ground Force prisoners of war, almost 50% of the Air Force personnel falling into enemy hands were officers. Figures for both branches soared during the 10 months after 6 June 1944 when totals were:

Air Forces	- 15,093
Ground Forces	- 9,274
Total	- 24,367

For army prisoners of war, Germany had three principal types of camp. OFLAG, a contraction of Offizier Lager (officers' camp), as its title denotes held officers. STALAG, a contraction of Stamm Lager (main camp) held enlisted men. DULAG, a contraction of Durchgangs Lager (entrance camp) was a transit camp but in the minds of airmen became synonymous with interrogation center. LUFT (air) appended to a name indicated that the camp held flying personnel. Generally, camps housing airmen were under the jurisdiction of the Luftwaffe, and camps housing ground troops under the jurisdiction of the Wehrmacht.

Prisoners of war (PW) formed camps within camps and had their own organizations. In officers' camps they were headed by the Senior American Officer (SAO) who was just what his name implied. In enlisted men's stalags, the Man of Confidence (MOC) was usually an NCO elected by his fellow PW, but sometimes he was appointed by the Germans.

Source material for this report consisted of interrogations of former prisoners of war made by CPM Branch, Military Intelligence Service, and reports of the Protecting Power and International Red Cross received by the State Department (Special War Problems Division).

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* 1 Nov. 45 Records.

DULAG LUFT

Introduction Dulag Luft, through which practically all air force personnel captured in German-occupied Europe passed, was composed of three installations: the interrogation center at Oberursel, the hospital at Hohemark and the transit camp ultimately at Wetzlar.

INTERROGATION CENTER

Location Auswertestelle West (Evaluation Center West) was situated 300 yards north of the main Frankfurt-Homburg road and near the trolley stop of Kupforhammer - the third stop after Oberursel (50°12' N. - 8°34" E). Oberursel is 13 kilometers northwest of Frankfurt-on-Main.

Strength The number of PW handled rose from 1000 a month in late 1943 to an average monthly intake of 2000 in 1944. The peak month was July 1944 when over 3000 Allied airmen and paratroopers passed through Auswertestelle West. Since solitary confinement was the rule, the capacity of the camp was supposedly limited to 200 men, although in rush periods as many as five PW were placed in one cell. Strength on any given day averaged 250.

Description The main part of the camp consisted of four large wooden barracks two of which, connected by a passage and known to PW as the "cooler," contained some 200 cells. These cells, eight feet high, five feet wide and 12 feet long held a cot, a table, a chair and an electric bell for PW to call the guard. The third barrack contained administrative headquarters. The fourth building, a large "L" shaped structure, housed the interrogating offices, files and records. Senior officers lived on the post; junior officers outside in a hotel. The commandant lived on a nearby farm. The entire camp was surrounded by a barbed-wire fence but was equipped with neither perimeter floodlights nor watchtowers.

U.S. Personnel Since PW were held in solitary confinement, and only for limited periods of time, no U.S. staff existed.

German Personnel German personnel - all Luftwaffe - was divided into two main branches: Administrative and Intelligence. Under Intelligence came officers and interpreter NCOs actually taking part in the interrogations and other intelligence work of the unit. The total strength of this branch was 50 officers and 100 enlisted men. Administrative personnel consisted of one guard company and one Luftwaffe construction company, each consisting of 120 men. Some members of the staff were:

Oberstleutnant Erich Killinger: Commandant
Major Junge : Chief of Interrogation

Major Boehringer : Executive Officer
Captain Schneidewindt : Record Section Chief
Leutnant Böninghaus : Political Interrogator

Later there were attached to the staff representatives of the General Luftzeugmeister's department, the General der Kampfflieger's section, the Navy and the S.S. Occasionally members of the Gestapo at Frankfurt were permitted to interrogate PW.

Treatment

The interrogation of Allied PW at the hands of Auswertestelle West personnel was "korrect" as far as physical violence was concerned. An occasional interrogator, exasperated by polite refusals to give more than name, rank, serial number or, more occasionally, perhaps by an exceptionally "fresh" PW, may have lost his temper and struck a PW. It is not believed that this ever went beyond a slap on the face dealt in the heat of anger - certainly physical violence was not employed as a policy. On the other hand, no amount of calculated mental depression, privation and psychological blackmail was considered excessive.

Upon arrival, PW were stripped, searched, and sometimes issued German coveralls. At other times they retained the clothing in which they were shot down. All were shut up in solitary confinement cells and denied cigarettes, toilet articles and Red Cross food. Usually the period of confinement lasted four or five days, but occasionally a surly PW would be held in the "cooler" for the full 30 days permitted by the Geneva Convention as a punitive measure, and Captain William N. Schwartz was imprisoned 45 days. Interrogators often used threats and violent language, calling PW "murderers of children" and threatening them with indefinitely prolongued solitary confinement on starvation rations unless they would talk. PW were threatened with death as spies unless they identified themselves as airmen by revealing technical information on some such subject as radar or air combat tactics. Confinement in an unbearably overheated cell and pretended shootings of "buddies" were resorted to in the early days. Intimidation yielded inferior results and the friendly approach was considered best by the Germans.

Food

Rations were two slices of black bread and jam with ersatz coffee in the morning, watery soup at midday, two slices of bread at night. No Red Cross parcels were issued. PW could obtain drinking water from the guards.

Health

As a rule, men seriously needing medical treatment were sent to Hohemark hospital. Those suffering from the shock of being shot down and captured received no medical attention, nor did the 50% suffering from minor wounds. Some PW arrived at permanent camps still wearing dirty bandages which had not been changed at Oberursel even though their stay had been of two weeks' duration. Upon several occasions PW were denied

the ministration of either a doctor or medical orderly and there is at least one instance where a flyer with a broken leg was refused treatment of any sort until he had answered some of the interrogator's questions four days after his arrival.

Clothing — PW received no Red Cross clothing. Instead they wore German fatigues or the uniforms in which they had been captured - minus leather jackets which were customarily confiscated.

Work — None

Pay — None

Mail — None

Morale — There is little doubt that the living conditions were expressly designed to lower morale and to produce mental depression of the most acute kind. Still, due partially to briefings which acquainted them with Oberursel and partially to their innate sense of loyalty, most PW successfully withstood the harsh treatment and yielded no important military information other than name, rank and serial number.

Welfare — Neither the Protecting Power, which was refused admission for a long time, nor the Red Cross nor the YMCA could do anything to ameliorate the condition of PW in the interrogation center.

Religion — None

Recreation — None

Liberation — On 25 April 1945 American troops overran Oberursel. They found Auswertestelle West no longer a going concern. Some 10 days earlier, its departments already widely dispersed over what remained of Germany, the installation had ceased to exist even as a headquarters of the German Air Interrogation service. Its records had been burnt or evacuated and its leading personalities, taking with them what remained of their organization, had fled to a new site at Nurnberg-Buchenbuhl. The new Dulag headquarters at Nurnberg did not survive the parent unit by many days. It was not long before Oberstleutnant Erich Killinger, the commandant, was discovered by Allied interrogators in an army cage. With the former roles of captive and interrogator now so completely reversed, it was a slightly apprehensive but stubborn Killinger who accompanied his captors back to the scene of his former triumphs at Oberursel.

HOHEMARK HOSPITAL

As soon as the Luftwaffe took over the Oberursel installation in December 1939 it became obvious that a high percentage of PW would be in need of medical

attention. To meet this, the camp authorities requisitioned part of Hohemark hospital one mile west of the interrogation center. This hospital had been used since World War I as a health resort and clinic for all types of brain injuries and contained a large number of German soldiers wounded in this war.

The wards for PW were on the second floor and comprised one single room, two double rooms and several rooms with four beds, totaling 65. Discipline was very mild. The doors of the wards were not always locked at night, and the only guards were the German medical orderlies. German medical treatment was excellent, as was the food, which came from Red Cross special invalid parcels and from the hospital kitchen. Walking cases were frequently allowed to meet and take meals together. Other ambulatory cases, as soon as their condition permitted, were allowed parole walks through the surrounding grounds and countryside.

Wounded men were sometimes interrogated directly during their stay at the hospital. At other times, they were not interrogated until after their convalescence when they were sent to Oberursel. The comparatively luxurious single and double rooms were set aside as places where high-ranking Allied PW could be interrogated in circumstances which the Germans considered appropriate to their rank. These PW did not have to be wounded to gain admission to Hohemark.

Several British and American orderlies formed part of the hospital complement. They were headed by an Edward Stafford, an American who was captured while flying in the RAF Ferry Command and called himself "Captain." His assistant was Captain Kenneth Smith, who was receiving treatment for facial burns during his stay. Inmates of Hohemark received the normal allotment of outgoing letters, but only the permanent staff received incoming letters. PW's only religious activity was listening to the Bible readings of a Hauptmann Offerman.

Hohemark was liberated simultaneously with Oberursel.

TRANSIT CAMP

Location

On 10 September 1943 the Dulag Luft transit camp, where PW who had been interrogated awaited shipment to permanent stalags, was moved from Oberursel to Frankfurt-on-Main. Here it was situated in the Palm Gardens only 1635 yards northwest of the main railroad station - a location which was a target area and therefore endangered the lives of PW.

On 15 November 1943 the Swiss stated, "This visit (to the camp) leaves a bad impression because of the new situation of the Dulag, so exposed to attacks from the air, which is not in conformity with Article 9 of the (Geneva) Convention."

Dulag Luft Wetzlar

Thus the following Swiss announcement in the spring of 1944 came as no surpirse: "Dulag Luft, Wetzlar, is succeeding Dulag Luft, Frankfurt, which was destroyed in course of one of the latest (24 March) air raids on Frankfurt. The camp is situated on a slightly elevated position approximately three to four kilometers west north west from Wetzlar, a town some 50 kilometers north of Frankfurt-on-Main and is a former German army camp (Flak troops)."

Strength

During the first nine months of 1943, 1000 PW a month passed through the transit camp. This increased to 1500 a month, half British and half American, in the last three months of the year. Statistics for October 1944 follow:

Incoming Personnel Total	1963
Daily Average	63
Total American	1312
Officers	155
NCOs	739
Total British	651
Officers	155
NCOs	496

894

Camp strength fluctuated from day to day. On the Swiss visit of 10 November 1944 it was 311; on 13 March 1945 it was 826. Except for the permanent staff of 30, PW seldom stayed more than eight days.

Description

During May and June 1944, inmates lived in 18 tents pitched on the eastern side of the camp area. On 13 July 1944, they moved to the newly-constructed buildings: five barracks and one large bungalow which held the messes and the store rooms. Capacity of the camp was 784, with tents available in case of a sudden influx. Two of the sleeping barracks were reserved for officers, two for NCOs, and the remaining one accommodated the permanent camp staff, sick rooms and medical inspection room. The mess had space for 300 men in the main room. The camp staff, the officers and the enlisted men ate separately.

Each room in the barracks held six to eight triple-decker bunks - 18 to 24 men. Each bed had a mattress filled with wood shavings and one pillow. All barracks had special wash rooms with built-in basins and running cold water.

Unoccupied space within the barbed wire was somewhat limited after the erection of the last two barracks and the laying out of vegetable gardens cultivated for and by the PW. The area gave a neat appearance, however, with tidy paths and well-tended lawns.

U.S. Personnel

Senior Allied Officer at Wetzlar was Colonel Charles W. Stark who enjoyed exceptionally friendly terms with

the Germans and drew many concessions from them. Members of his staff were:

1st Lt. Gerald G. Gille	: Adjutant
2nd Lt. Arthur C. Jaros	: Adjutant
2nd Lt. Herbert Schubert	: Mess Officer

In addition, the staff comprised:

1 Chaplain
5 Kitchen orderlies
4 Mess orderlies
5 Store orderlies
4 Barracks chiefs
3 Medical orderlies
4 Barracks orderlies
1 Gardener
1 Carpenter

A previous Senior American Officer was 1st Lt. John G. Winant.

German Personnel

The housekeeping organization consisted of:

Oberstleutnant Becker	: Commandant
Major Riess	: Camp Officer
Major Salzer	: Camp Officer
Major Heyden	: Camp Officer
Dr. Thomai	: Medical Officer
Dr. Wenger	: Medical Officer
Hauptmann Schmid	: Security Officer

In November 1944 there was reported the existence at the camp of an interrogation center. According to Colonel Stark, treatment was good and correct in every way. Some PW arriving from Oberursel were in solitary and asked purely "political" questions for two or three days. Then they were admitted to the transit camp. Chief of this interrogation section was Major Ernst Dornseifer.

Treatment

Treatment was better here than at any other American PW camp in Germany. German and American staffs seemed to cooperate with each other, resulting in favorable living conditions to both parties. The Senior Allied Officer operated Wetzlar as a rest camp where PW suffering from the harsh treatment at Oberursel might regain their strength and morale before traveling to permanent camps. As a result neither Germans nor Americans provoked any untoward incidents.

Food

No food shortage existed at Wetzlar, even though the Germans repeatedly cut their ration until the daily issue per man was officially announced in March 1945 as:

Meat	35 grams
Potatoes	320 "
Margarine	31 "

Butter	25 grams
Sugar	25 "
Bread	75 "
Salt	20 "
Coffee (ersatz)	5 "

For three days:

Barley	10 grams
Millet	21 "
Hulsenfruchte	63 "
Cheese	14 "
White Cheese	14 "

The difference between this sub-sustenance diet and the good meals actually eaten by PW was made up by Red Cross food. One parcel per PW was drawn each week and 90% of all Red Cross food was given to the kitchen to improve German rations. Usually the stock on hand consisted of four months' supply. Even in September 1944 when the order was given to cut food reserves to a very minimum, Wetzlar authorities allowed PW to keep four weeks' supply on hand. In March 1945, anticipating a possible evacuation from Wetzlar to the interior of the Reich, the SAC authorized the issue of two Red Cross food parcels per man per week, both to strengthen PW for the march to come and to prevent the loss of food which would be abandoned in the event of a sudden move.

The kitchen - staffed by Americans - was well equipped with two large cooking ranges, three boilers, a dish-washing room, a potato-peeling room, a tin-opening room and an adjacent storeroom.

Health

The sick bays were able to accommodate 40 men in beds, two of which were in a separate room reserved for contagious diseases. The medical inspection room was described as adequate and all necessary medicines and instruments were made available either from Red Cross sources or - to a lesser extent - from the Germans. Good medical treatment was received from the German staff doctor who cooperated first with Lt. Anthony S. Barling, RAMC, and then with Captain Peter Griffin during their brief stays in camp.

Each man received a hot shower upon his entrance to the compound and was subsequently permitted to take one each week. Although the barracks washroom taps ran only cold water, hot water could usually be drawn elsewhere some hours during the day. A 10-seat outdoor latrine was supplemented by satisfactory toilets of the modern flush type.

Although many men arriving from Oberursel were wounded and exhausted, the general state of health was considered good.

Clothing

Large numbers of PW arrived without outer uniforms, and sometimes without underclothing or shoes. Each new arrival was equipped with at least the following articles - all of which were supplied not by the Germans but by the Red Cross:

1 shirt
1 pr. drawers
1 undershirt
1 pr. socks
1 necktie
1 pr. trousers
1 blouse
1 pr. shoes
1 set toilet articles

Initially, the shortage of American stocks necessitated the drawing of British clothing. Later, however, most of the clothing issued was of American origin, and eventually it was possible to keep adequate stocks of British and American items separately. In March 1945 it was no longer possible to provide PW with neatly packed "captive cases" a sort of suitcase containing the articles listed above, for the supply was exhausted.

Work

Since air force personnel consisted solely of commissioned and non-commissioned officers, no work beyond some of their own housekeeping chores were required of them.

Pay

PW received no pay, but when the camp opened in the summer of 1944, the finance committee of Stalag Luft 3, Sagan, sent the permanent staff a fund of over 4000 reichmarks..

Mail

Transients were allowed to send their first letter or a postcard form informing next-of-kin of their status and address, but received no incoming mail. The permanent staff drew the usual allotment of letter forms and received incoming mail as well. Some air mail from the United States was received within three weeks. Average time for both air and surface mail was four months. As with all Luftwaffe camps, letters were censored at Sagan.

Morale

The Senior Allied Officer agreed with statements of the Swiss Delegates and German camp authorities that Wetzlar was an excellent camp and that "such favorable conditions are hardly to be found elsewhere in Germany." Morale of men leaving Oberursel was usually at its lowest ebb, and it is small wonder after receiving food, clothing and mingling in comparative freedom with their fellow Americans, that their spirits soared back to a level approaching normality. Most of them left Wetzlar prepared to face the difficulties of their new lives as PW.

Welfare

The Protecting Power visited Wetzlar in May, July, November 1944 and March 1945 - each time forwarding the complaints of the Senior Allied Officer and making a complete report on camp conditions.

The Red Cross supplied PW with practically all their food, clothing and medical supplies but made no visit until January 1945, when they wrote a report of their inspection.

From the YMCA, the camp received most of its library, which eventually totaled 1500 books, and equipment for indoor games and outdoor sports.

Religion

For some months the only religious activity was the regular Sunday service conducted by Warrant Officer Hooton, RAF, a Methodist. Early in 1945 Captain Daniel McGowan, a Catholic priest, conducted both Catholic and Protestant services every Sunday.

Recreation

New arrivals were usually in such condition as not to want strenuous exercise. Games, therefore, were as a rule limited to milder sports such as deck tennis. Once a week some PW were permitted walks outside the camp. The most popular indoor pastimes were reading, playing cards, discussing the new experience of being a PW and playing some of the table games provided by the YMCA.

Evacuation & Liberation

The Wetzlar camp log from 27 through 30 March follows:

27 March 1945

0530 German order to evacuate all those able to walk with the exception of few permanent staff, who should remain to run the place. 143 remained including Col. Stark, Lt. Jaros, Lt. Comdr. Jennings, Capt. Griffin, Lt. Gille and Capt. Rev. McGowan. German personnel left were 107 men, 34 women, including Maj. Dornseifer, Lt. Weyrich, and Mr. Rickmers.

0730 Transport left (82 men)

0830 We hear gun fire and sounds of approaching vehicles. Germans from across the road move into our shelters.

0945 Hear our troops are 4 kms west of us. Heavy gun fire all around.

1030 Heavy firing continues all around us. German guards are voluntarily laying down their arms.

1200 Col. Stark calls Mr. Rickmers and Lt. Weyrich into office and states that all guards turn in weapons and a system of joint sentry duty be posted. They agree and he is now in command - Maj. Dornseifer cooperating fully in this.

1430 Activity has been heavy all around us all afternoon.

1700 Fairly quiet for the moment. Col. ordered two privates to be put in the guard house cells as they are obviously drunk. German guards brought liquor into camp. He has issued orders for no drinking including the Germans.

2030 Col. sent F/Lt. Lyons, Sgt. Hanson and Mr. Rickmers to try contacting our forces in the west and report our location.

2300 Still very active all around us - M.G. fire and artillery.

2400 Still a good deal of firing. Most of the personnel sleep in shelters.

28 March 1945

0630 Fairly constant gun fire and activity all night.

1000 Dr. Griffin takes wounded Pfc. into Wetzlar for operation. Armored column passing to east of us.

1200 Lt. Valentine arrives in jeep. Boy, are we happy to see a Yank!

1500 Col. Stark and Capt. Griffin are off to Staff HQ with Lt. Valentine.

1700 Sgt. Hanson and Mr. Rickmers return. There has been heavy firing around us all day.

1800 4 German paratroopers walk into camp and surrender. They are locked up.

1830 Col. Stark returns with 3 War News Correspondents including Belden.

2400 Things are fairly quiet.

29 March 1945

0940 Spot cub plane landed on play field.

0945 Dogs were shot.

1000 Lt. Col. Grant of 7th Armored Division (?) arrived in jeep advising us of 750 PWs he had picked up. Limburg PWs are lousy and half starved. We have sent for them and will put them up here.

1200 Four Piper Cubs landed.

1300 Maj. McDougall (?), Medical Officer, arrived and will stay the afternoon in order to help with Limburg PWs.

1400 Col. Stark and party go out to recc'y some German motor equipment.

1415 Maj. Dornseifer gave Col. Stark a list of his people who he is anxious to have out of camp as they have strong party sympathies and might make trouble. Col. Stark turns them over to an Infantry Patrol. They include the following: Sgt. Lehmann, Sgt. Hackmann, Cpl. Busch, Cpl. Stoeckel and Cpl. Schaaf.

1420 First lot of distressed PWs arrived and are deloused, bathed and clothed.

1530 Maj. Teese, PWX-SHAEF executive, arrives with load of PWs.

1745 We are to be loaded with PWs. They have been arriving all PM.

2130 Finished feeding for night. 400 odd still to be deloused.

30 March 1945

Work continues thru the day, delousing and feeding PWs arriving in camp. Maj. Teese returns and advises us to expect 320 PWs from Hadamar in the morning. This lot will include 14 General officers and 79 Field Grade officers. Seven PWs return from our last transport, including W/Comdr. Carling-Kelly. Today the remaining German personnel was officially put to work in the office, on kitchen detail, policing camp, etc. They are dealt with thru Maj. Dornseifer, Mr. Rickmers and Sgt. Keller.

Work is going on to prepare for the maximum number this camp will hold. Medical officers have arrived and are organizing their departments. They hope to start evacuating the worst cases shortly. The Hadamar contingent started arriving at 1100.

With the arrival of British officers who outranked him, Col. Stark was no longer Senior Allied Officer present. Major Teese of PWX-SHAEF, suggested that the staff remain and help in processing PW expected to arrive within the next few weeks. A stay of such length did not seem necessary to Col. Stark and at 0515 in the morning of 31 March he drove away in a German car with Comdr. Jennings, USNR, and S/Sgt. Lee Hughes, AAF, leaving a note for Lt. Gille. He proceeded by motor and air transport to Paris, arriving 3 April 1945.

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STALAG LUFT 1

(Air Force Officers)

Location Stalag Luft 1 was situated at Barth, Germany, (54°22' N - 12°42' 30" E), a small town on the Baltic Sea 23 kilometers northwest of Stralsund.

Strength Stalag Luft 1 was opened in October 1942 as a British camp, but when the Red Cross visited the camp in February 1943, two American non-commissioned officers had already arrived. By January 1944, 507 American air force officers were detained there. The strength of the camp grew rapidly from this date until April 1944 when the Red Cross reported 3,463 inmates. New compounds were opened and quickly filled. Nearly 6,000 PW were crowded into the camp in September 1944, and at the time of the liberation of the camp 7,717 Americans and 1,427 Britons were returned to military control.

Description Early in 1944 the camp consisted of two compounds designated as South and West Compounds, containing a total of seven barracks in which American officers and British officers and enlisted men were housed. A new compound was opened the last of February 1944 and was assigned to the American officers who were rapidly increasing in number. This compound became North 1, and the opening of North 2 Compound on 9 September 1944 and North 3 Compound on 9 December 1944 completed the camp as it remained until 15 May 1945. The South Compound was always unsatisfactory due to the complete lack of adequate cooking, washing, and toilet facilities. The West Compound, however, provided inside latrines and running water in the barracks. North 1 Compound formerly housed personnel of the Hitler Youth, and because of its communal messhall, inside latrines, and running water taps, it was considered by far the best compound. North 2 and North 3 Compounds were constructed on the same design as the South Compound, and were as unsatisfactory.

The completion of the last two compounds gave the camp an L-shape appearance, which followed the natural contours of the bay on which the camp was situated. Guard towers were placed at strategic intervals, and although the compounds were intercommunicating the gates were closed at all times after the Spring of 1944. Prior to that, gates were kept open during the day.

Each barrack contained triple-tiered wooden beds equipped with mattresses filled with wood chips. A communal day-room was set aside in almost every barrack, but equipment was negligible. Lighting was inadequate throughout the camp, and since the

Detaining Power required the shutters to remain closed from 2100 to 0600, ventilation was entirely insufficient.

In addition to the buildings for housing, North 1 and West Compounds contained 1 kitchen-barrack, 1 theater room, 1 church room, 1 library, and 1 study room each. These were used by all compounds because no other facilities were available. Maintenance of the buildings was completely lacking in spite of the fact that the officers volunteered to take care of many of the repairs if furnished the necessary equipment.

Stoves for heating and cooking varied in each compound except that facilities in all compounds were inadequate. Many of the buildings were not weather proof, and the extremely cold climate of northern Germany made living conditions more difficult for the PW.

U.S. Personnel

Major Wilson P. Todd was the Senior American Officer until 19 January 1944 when Colonel William A. Hatcher arrived and replaced him. Colonel Jean R. Byerly acted as his Executive Officer until the opening of the North 1 Compound of which he became SAO. Toward the last of February however, Colonel Hatcher protested so strongly to the Detaining Power over the poor conditions in the camp that he was suddenly transferred to Stalag Luft 3 leaving Colonel Byerly as the SAO. At that time the compounds had been run as separate camps with little coordination between the compounds. After meeting with the Senior officers of all barracks, it was agreed that the British and Americans would be administered separately but with very close liaison, and that all Americans would be administered under a Provisional Wing Headquarters composed of four American groups. This organization was established on 6 April 1944 and remained somewhat the same until the liberation. Upon the arrival of Colonel Hubert Zemke, the Provisional Wing was turned over to his command.

Several changes were made as the camp enlarged, but for the most part the camp administration was carried out on a military basis similar to the operation of an air base. At the time Colonel Byerly turned over the command to Colonel Zemke, his staff was as follows:

Captain M. W. Zahn	Adjutant
Colonel C. R. Greening	CO, GP. 1
Colonel E. A. Malmstrom	CO, Gp. 2
Lt. Col. C. Wilson	CO, Gp. 5
Lt. Col. F. S. Gabreski	CO, Gp. 6

(Groups 3 and 4 were British Groups).

Because the advance of the Russians indicated an early liberation, Colonel Zemke changed the organization to an inter-Allied wing, nominating Group Captain C. T.

Weir as chief of staff of the organization called Provisional Wing X. Group commanders were retained and continued to be responsible for the administration, security, discipline and welfare of their own groups, but more emphasis was directed toward staff operations in the event of liberation. For this work, the following staff was appointed and served until the entire camp was evacuated:

Captain C. T. Weir	Chief of Staff
Captain M. W. Zahn	Adjutant
Lt. Col. C. F. McKenna	A-1
Lt. Col. L. C. McCollom	A-2
Lt. Col. J. V. G. Wilson	A-3
Lt. Col. Luther Richmond	A-4
Lt. Col. B. E. McKenzie	Provost Marshall
Major J. J. Fischer	Judge Advocate
1st Lt. J. S. Durakov	Russian Interpreter
2d Lt. T. L. Simmons	Finance Officer

Each staff officer had several assistants to aid him in the performance of his duties. There also existed a Security organization.

German Personnel The German personnel changed frequently during the existence of the camp. The officers, their positions, and the dates that they served are listed below.

Commandant:	Oberst Sherer	Sep. 43 to Jan. 45
	Oberst Warnstadt	Jan. 45 to Apr. 45
Adjutant:	Hauptmann Tems	Sep. 43 to Mar. 44
	Hauptmann Erbslch	Mar. 44 to June 44
	Major Buchard	June 44 to Apr. 45
Lager Officer W.	Hauptmann Eilers	Sep. 43 to Feb. 44
	Hauptmann Wolf	Feb. 44 to June 44
	Hauptmann von Beck	Feb. 44 to Oct. 44
	Hauptmann Luckt	Oct. 44 to Jan. 45
	Major Opperman	Jan. 45 to Apr. 45
Lager Officer N.1	Hauptmann Erbslch	Feb. 44 to June 44
	Major Schroeder	June 44 to July 44
	Haupt.von Stradiot	Jul. 44 to Oct. 44
	Hauptmann Probst	Oct. 44 to Dec. 44
	Major Steinhower	Dec. 44 to Apr. 45
Lager Officer N.2	Major Sprotte	Sep. 44 to Oct. 44
	Major Steinhower	Oct. 44 to Dec. 44
	Hauptmann Bloom	Dec. 44 to Apr. 45
Lager Officer N.3	Hauptmann Probst	Dec. 44 to Apr. 45

Of the above listed German officers, Major Opperman was the local Nazi leader and instructed the lager personnel and guards on all Nazi policies. The other outstanding members of the Nazi party were Oberst Sherer, Major Sprotte, Major von Miller, Major Schroeder, Hauptmann Erbslch and Hauptmann Tems.

Following the Normandy invasion the ardent Nazis tried to discuss the Nazi policy with the senior officers and to sway them to the German viewpoint of the war against the Russians. The Americans, nevertheless, did not enter into any discussions.

Treatment

Prior to April 1944 treatment was considered fairly good. Following the April meeting of the Protecting Power, however, the German attitude towards PW became more severe. New orders regarding air raids were issued by the Germans. These required all personnel to be inside when the "immediate warning" siren was blown. As a result, three cases of German patrol guards shooting at men inside the camp occurred during May. At the same time the Commandant issued regulations authorizing guards to use firearms to avenge what they termed "insults to German honor". The German interpretation of this order was extremely liberal, and more shooting developed. Oberst Scherer also became more severe in confining PW to the arrest-lock for minor infractions of German disciplinary regulations. He further denied all Red Cross foods and personal parcels as well as tobacco to PW undergoing confinement in the arrest-lock. This restriction was protested to the Protecting Power without results because the Commandant refused to forward the correspondence to Switzerland. A visit by the Protecting Power in July gave the SAO the opportunity of bringing these facts to the representatives' attention. Even though the commandant was spoken to severely about his most recent violations of the Geneva Convention, it was not until the Protecting Power informed the German Foreign Office which in turn wrote to Oberst Scherer directly that Red Cross and personal parcels were allowed PW in the arrest-lock.

After Oberst Warnstadt became commandant conditions became even worse. Instructions to the guards on the use of fire arms were liberalized, and on 18 March 1945, 2d Lieutenant E. F. Wyman was killed and a British officer was wounded during an air raid warning that was not heard by 95% of the men in the same area. The defective system and the "shoot to kill" order were responsible for this incident.

Both Oberst Warnstadt and Oberst Scherer were inclined to inflict mass punishment by restricting an entire barrack for one person's infraction of a rule, and several protests to the Protecting Power had to be made about these occurrences. However, little satisfaction was gained from these protests, and mass punishments continued to be the general policy.

Food

Food was handled through a central warehouse for Red Cross parcels with all German food being prepared in separate kitchens in each compound. The German food was prepared by personnel hired by the German authorities or by Czechs who had been captured while serving with the Allied forces. Red Cross parcels, when available, were issued at the rate of one per person per week. The distribution of this food was made by the barrack blocks, each barrack receiving one-third of its total weekly

parcels three days a week. All food with the exception of the German ration was prepared by individuals in their own rooms. Only North 1 Compound used their communal kitchen to combine the German ration and the Red Cross parcel items to supply complete meals.

The German food ration up until 1 October 1944 consisted of 1200 to 1500 calories daily per man. The ration was gradually cut until it contained only 800 calories. In September, October and November 1944, Red Cross supplies became so low that they, too, had to be cut. During this period men were put on half-parcels each week. A shipment was received in November and PW then drew the normal parcel each week during December in addition to a Christmas parcel. In January the parcel supply again took a drop, and the men received one-half parcel per week and in February only one-quarter parcel per week. From 3 March 1945 until the last of the month no parcels were distributed, and the German ration deteriorated to an extent that toward the end of the month, men became so weak that many would fall down when attempting to get from their beds. American "MP's" were placed around garbage cans to prevent the starving PW from eating out of the cans and becoming sick. About 1 April 1945 a shipment was received from Lubeck via Sweden, and from that time until the evacuation the men obtained sufficient food.

Until this "starvation" period, the normal daily menu would consist of about six potatoes, one-fifth of a loaf of bread, margarine, marmalade, a small piece of meat (usually horsemeat), two vegetables (cabbage, parsnips, beets or turnips) tea and coffee, and a small amount of sugar. In addition, a thin barley soup was frequently served.

Health

In January 1944 a medical record on every man in camp was established, and as new PW arrived, they were required to make out a similar record. The form consisted of recording any injuries or illnesses incurred since MIA, the nature of these, and the medical treatment needed by those not fully recovered while in camp. Illnesses and injuries incurred at camp were also included.

Originally the camp contained only a small infirmary which could accomodate thirty bed patients and provide two rooms for daily sick call. In September 1944 another large barrack was built adjoining the infirmary and provided adequate facilities for hospitalization. When the infirmary was enlarged, the Protecting Power made arrangements with the IRCC to send additional supplies which included surgical instruments. Although serious cases were sent to Stalag 2-A at Newbrandenburg, the hospital staff at the camp was able to care for most of the ill and injured men.

The most serious detriment to the health of PW at this camp was the very poor sanitation. One bathhouse containing 10 shower-heads represented the only facilities for over 4,000 officers to bathe, and it was also used as a delousing plant for new arrivals or for any outbreaks of body-crawling insects. Early in 1945 an additional bathhouse was completed which contained 20 shower-heads. Insufficient quantities of wash basins and soap made laundering difficult, and no arrangements were made to care for the men's laundry outside of the camp. Bed linen was theoretically changed once a month, but this period was greatly extended with the influx of new PW. No facilities existed for the disposal of garbage not cared for by incinerators, and latrine and wash drains were so unsatisfactory that the areas around the barracks were frequently flooded.

The climate in the region was extremely cold, and both the number of stoves and the amount of fuel issued were insufficient to maintain good health. Upper respiratory diseases were a source of concern to the medical staff, and this became a great danger when the Germans required the shutters to remain closed during the night. Small ventilators were allowed open but offered insufficient air under the crowded conditions.

The medical staff of two British doctors and six orderlies was too small, and although additional doctors were requested, it was not until 1 March 1945 that an American doctor, Captain Wilbur E. McKee arrived. The staff was considered very capable and cooperative at all times, but was hampered by the lack of medical supplies and facilities to handle such a large number of patients.

Clothing

The Germans issued no clothing to the PW at this camp except 30 sets of German coveralls and 30 pairs of wooden shoes for the kitchen help; these were obtained only after repeated protests. The Red Cross supplied quantities of uniforms and blankets, but the camp expanded so rapidly that supplies were always inadequate until the summer of 1944 when a very large shipment was received enabling each man in camp to have two complete uniforms and two blankets. However, in February 1945 many of the uniforms had become threadbare and a redistribution of uniforms was made.

The Germans also confiscated many articles of clothing under the claim that these items of American uniforms too closely resembled civilian clothes, thus violating the security regulations of the camp.

Work

All PW at the camp were either officers or non-commissioned officers, and although many of the NCO's came to the camp as volunteers for work in a "supervisory" capacity, they refused to work upon arriving

at the camp and learning that the work was actually orderly duty. British and American privates were promised for these duties but never arrived.

Pay

The rate of pay was RM 7.50 for the officers. Money was turned over to the Finance Officer who in turn made available to each officer sufficient amounts to take care of postage and toilet articles. The unused portion was made a part of the communal fund for the enlisted men.

Mail

All incoming mail at Stalag Luft 1 was censored at Stalag Luft 3 until January 1945. Some pieces of mail received at the camp had been in transit six and seven months, and normally men would be in the camp seven months before receiving their first news from home. The average time in transit from the United States was 19 weeks. Toward the end of the war, the transit time was longer due to the transportation tie-up.

Great difficulty was experienced in getting letter and card forms in sufficient quantities to have the normal ration issued each month. On several occasions none was available even though the commandant was informed that stocks were low and that additional supplies should be requisitioned.

Officers were permitted to send three letters and four postcards per month, while the enlisted men were allowed to send two letters and four postcards per month.

Morale

The morale of men was particularly good after the Allied invasion of the continent, and remained high until the starvation period during which time there was a definite decline. Normally speaking, however, the morale was at all times good.

Welfare

Representatives of the International Red Cross visited the camp approximately every four months, sometimes at the same time that the representative of the Protecting Power made inspection trips. Every attempt was made by these representatives to keep ample supplies of food parcels and clothing issues flowing into the camp, and the shortages of supplies were blamed on lack of cooperation of the Commandant of the camp or the bogging down of transportation facilities. The Protecting Power representatives did not seem to bring sufficient pressure to bear on the German officials to improve the camp conditions in the earlier stages, but after the Spring of 1944 improvements would be noted after these visits. The Protecting Power delegates promptly turned over to the IRCC and the YMCA all of the requisitions for supplies and equipment. These agencies were equally prompt in filling the orders. The YMCA representative went to the camp every 3 to 4 months and arranged for supplies of athletic equipment, books, musical

instruments, theatrical supplies as well as telegrams to the next of kin. His visits were considered very valuable as morale builders.

Religion

Protestant services were held from the time the camp was opened, but it was eight months before a Catholic priest was obtained for men of that faith. As the strength of the camp increased the Germans obtained additional clergymen until there were three Catholic and three Protestant chaplains. Unfortunately only two of the compounds offered satisfactory facilities for holding church services, and requests for other compounds to use the communal mess hall in North 1 compound were refused. Outdoor services were held when weather permitted.

Recreation

Outdoor recreation was hampered through lack of sufficient sportsgrounds. Only West and North 1 Compounds were there full-sized football and baseball fields, and although teams from other compounds were permitted to use this field for competitive sports, spectators were excluded. Excellent sports equipment was available throughout the camp, however, and the men in the other compounds managed to improvise games suitable to the limited space.

The two bands formed at the camp offered extremely good entertainment and provided music for theatrical productions which were frequently given. A radio was received through the YMCA, but the extra loudspeakers were not permitted in barracks by the Detaining Power.

An educational program was started early in 1944. When the camp became overcrowded, and communal rooms had to be sacrificed for living quarters, group study was no longer possible. Technical books of all kinds were available in the well-stocked libraries for individual study.

Many of the men with artistic talent spent their time in creative work, such as wood-carving, painting, drawing, and constructing models. The Recreation Officer collected all of these items for a post-war exhibit since an unusual amount of talent was apparent in the results.

Liberation

On 30 April 1945 the SAO had several conferences with the Commandant, who had orders to move the camp to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Russians. The SAO stated PW would not move unless force was used, and the commandant finally agreed to avoid bloodshed. At about 2200 that evening, the guards turned out the perimeter and street lights. A few moments later these same guards were observed marching out of the camp leaving the gate unlocked. As soon as this news was conveyed to the SAO, he formally took over the camp. The following morning the PW military police of the camp were put in charge of all guard stations

to see that the men remained orderly and stayed in the camp. Another organization was formed to serve as exterior guards to prevent wandering parties of Germans from coming into the camp. On 1 May 1945 contact parties were sent out to make contact with Russian advance troops. After two or three days of having Russian commanders of scouting parties visit the camp, the Russian commander of the area was finally reached, and arrangements were made to provide food for the PW.

Evacuation

Although the actual liberation was performed by the Russians, no effort was made by them to evacuate the PW from the area. On 6 May 1945, Colonel Byerly, the former SAO left camp with two officers of a British airborne division and flew to England the following day. After reporting to 8th Air Force headquarters on the conditions at the camp, arrangements were made to evacuate the liberated PW by air. This operation was completed on 15 May 1945.

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STALAG LUFT 3

(Air Force Officers)

Location

Until 27 January 1945, Stalag Luft 3 was situated in the Province of Silesia, 90 miles southeast of Berlin, in a stand of fir trees south of Sagan (51°35' North latitude - 15°19'30" East longitude).

In the January exodus, the South Compound and Center Compound moved to Stalag 7A, Moosburg (48°27' North latitude - 11°57' East longitude). The West Compound and North Compound moved to Stalag 13D, Nurnberg-Langwasser (49°27' North latitude - 11°50' East longitude) and then proceeded to Moosburg, arriving 20 April 1945.

Strength

On 14 April 1942 Lt. (j.g.) John E. Dunn, O-6545, U. S. Navy, was shot down by the Germans and subsequently became the first American flyer to be confined in Stalag Luft 3, then solely a prison camp for officer PW of the Royal Air Force. By 15 June 1944, U. S. Air Force officers in camp numbered 3,242, and at the time of the evacuation in January 1945, the International Red Cross listed the American strength as 6,844. This was the largest American officers' camp in Germany.

Description

When the first Americans arrived in 1942, the camp consisted of two compounds or enclosures, one for RAF officers and one for RAF NCOs. The rapid increase in strength forced the Germans to build four more compounds, with USAAF personnel taking over the Center, South, West and sharing the North Compound with the British. Adjoining each compound the Germans constructed other enclosures called "vorlagers" in which most of the camp business was transacted and which held such offices as supply, administration and laundry.

Each compound enclosed 15 one-story, wooden barracks or "blocks". These, in turn, were divided into 15 rooms ranging in size from 24 feet by 15 feet to 14 feet by six feet. Occupants slept in double-decker bunks and for every three or four men the Germans provided simple wooden tables, benches and stools. One room, equipped with a cooking range, served as a kitchen. Another, with six porcelain basins, was the washroom. A third, with one urinal and two commodes, was the latrine.

A "Block" could house 82 men comfortable, but with the growth in numbers of PW, rooms designed for eight men began holding 10 and then 12, and the middle of September 1944 saw new PW moving into tents outside the barracks.

Two barbed wire fences 10 feet high and five feet apart surrounded each compound. In between them lay tangled barbed wire concertinas. Paralleling

the barbed wire and 25 feet inside the fence ran a "warning wire" strung on 30-inch wooden posts. The zone between the warning wire and the fence was forbidden territory, entrance to which was punishable by sudden death.

At the corners of the compound and at 50-yard intervals around its perimeter rose 40-foot wooden guard towers holding Germans armed with rifles or machine guns.

U.S. Personnel

Lt. Col. Albert P. Clark, Jr., captured on 26 July 1942, became the first Senior American Officer, a position he held until the arrival of Col. Charles G. Goodrich some two months later. The enforced seclusion of individual compounds necessitated the organization of each as an independent PW camp. At the time of the move from Sagan, camp leaders were as follows:

Senior Allied Officer	-	Brigadier General Arthur W. Vanaman
SAO South Compound	-	Col. Charles G. Goodrich
SAO Center Compound	-	Col. Delmar T. Spivey
SAO West Compound	-	Col. Darr H. Alkire
SAO North Compound	-	Lt. Col. Edwin A. Bland

The staff of a compound was organized into two categories:

Main Staff Depts.	Secondary Staff Depts.
a. Adjutant	a. Mail
b. German property	b. Medical
c. German rations	c. Coal
d. Red Cross food	d. Finance
e. Red Cross clothing	e. Canteen
f. Education & Recreation	f. Orderlies, etc.

The basic unit for organization was the barrack building or block. Block staffs were organized to include the same functions as the Compound Staff, and the blocks themselves were sub-divided into squads of 10 men each.

Each compound had a highly organized Security Committee.

German Personnel

The original commandant of Stalag Luft 3 was Oberst von Lindeiner, an old-school aristocrat with some 40 years of army service. Courteous and considerate at first sight, he was inclined to fits of uncontrolled rage. Upon one occasion he personally threatened a PW with a pistol. He was, however, more receptive to PW requests than any other commandant.

After the British mass escape of March 1944, Oberst von Lindeiner was replaced by Oberstleutnant Cordes, who had been a PW in World War I. A short while

later Cordes was succeeded by Oberst Braune, direct and business-like. Stricter than his predecessors, he displayed less sympathy toward PW requests. Nevertheless, he was able to stop misunderstandings such as the one resulting in guards shooting into the compounds. In general, commandants tended to temporize when dealing with PW, or else to avoid granting their requests entirely.

Most disliked by PW were the Abwehr or Security officers - Hauptmann Breuli and his successor Major Kircher.

The Luftwaffe guards were fourth rate troops - either peasants too old for combat duty or young men convalescing after long tours of duty or wounds received at the front. They had almost no contact with PW. In addition to uniformed sentries, soldiers in fatigues were employed by the Germans to scout the interiors of the compounds. These "ferrets" hid under barracks, listened to conversations, looked for tunnels and made themselves generally obnoxious to the PW. The German complement totaled 800.

Occasionally, as after the March 1944 mass escape, Gestapo groups descended upon the camp for a long, thorough search.

Treatment

Because of their status as officers and the fact that their guards were Luftwaffe personnel, the men at Stalag Luft 3 were accorded treatment better than that granted other PW in Germany. Generally, their captors were correct in their adherence to many of the tenets of the Geneva Convention. Friction between captor and captive was constant and inevitable, nevertheless, and the strife is well illustrated by the following example.

On 27 March 1944 the Germans instituted an extra appel (roll call) to occur any time between the regular morning and evening formations. Annoyed by an indignity which they considered unnecessary, PW fought the measure with a passive resistance. They milled about, smoked, failed to stand at attention and made it impossible for the lager officer to take a count. Soon they were dismissed. Later in the day another appel was called. This time the area was lined with German soldiers holding rifles and machine guns in readiness to fire. Discreetly, PW allowed the appel to proceed in an orderly fashion. A few days later, nevertheless, probably as a result of this deliberate protest against German policy, the unwonted extra appel was discontinued.

Since the murder of 50 RAF flyers has been attributed to the Gestapo, acts of atrocious mistreatment

involving the regular Stalag Luft 3 guard complement may be narrowed down to two.

About 2200 hours, 29 December 1943, a guard fired a number of shots into one barrack without excuse or apparent purpose. One bullet passed through the window and seriously wounded the left leg of Lt. Col. John D. Stevenson. Although Col. Stevenson spent the next six months in hospitals, the wound has left him somewhat crippled.

About 1230 hours, 9 April 1944, during an air raid by American bombers, Cpl. Cline C. Miles was standing in the cookhouse doorway. He was facing the interior. Without warning a guard fired at "a man" standing in the doorway. The bullet entered the right shoulderof Cpl. Miles and came out through his mouth, killing him instantly.

Food

German rations, instead of being the equivalent of those furnished depot troops, compared with those received by non-working civilians - the lowest in Germany. While insufficient, these foods provided the bulk of staples, mainly through bread and potatoes. A PWs average daily issue of foods, with caloric content included, follows:

Type of food	Grams	Calories
Potatoes	390	331
Bread	350	910
Meat	11	20
Barley, Oats, Etc.	21	78
Kohlrabi	247	87
Dried Vegetable	14	38
Margarine	31	268
Cheese	10	27
Jam	25	69
Sugar	25	100
TOTALS	1124	1928

A conservative estimate of the caloric requirement of a person sleeping nine hours a day and taking very little exercise is 2,150 calories. German rations, therefore, fell below the minimum requirement for healthy nutrition.

Food came from four other sources: Red Cross parcels, private parcels, occasional canteen purchases and gardens. Of the Red Cross parcels, after the spring of 1943, 40% were American, 25% British, 25% Canadian and 10% miscellaneous such as New Zealand parcels, Christmas parcels and bulk issue from the British colony in Argentina. These were apportioned at the rate of one per man per week during periods of normal supply. If the International Red Cross at Geneva felt that transportation difficulties would prevent the usual delivery, it would notify the camp parcel officer to limit the issue to one-half parcel per man per week. Such a situation arose in September 1944 when all Stalag Luft 3 went on half parcels. Average contents of American and British parcels

were as follows:

American		British	
Food	Weight (Oz.)	Food	Weight (Oz.)
Spam	12	Meat Roll	10
Corned Beef	12	Stew	12
Salmon	8	Cheese	4
Cheese	8	Dried Fruit	6
Dried Fruit	16	Biscuits	10
Biscuits	7	Condensed Milk	14
Klim	16	Margarine	8
Margarine	16	Tea	2
Soluble	4	Sugar	4
Sugar	8	Cocoa	6
Orange Powder	4	Jam	10
Liver Paste	6	Powdered Eggs	2
Chocolate	4	Chocolate	4
		Vegetables	8

Since the kitchen equipment of 10 boilers and two ovens per compound was obviously inadequate, almost all food was prepared by the various room messes in the blocks. These messes obtained from the kitchen only hot water and, four times a week, hot soup. Cooking within the block was performed on a range whose heating surface was three square feet. During winter months, PW were able to use the heating stoves in their rooms as well. With few exceptions, each room messed by itself. All food was pooled, and room cooks were responsible for serving it in digestible and appetizing, if possible, form. Since the stove schedule provided for cooking periods from 3 p.m. to 9 p.m., some rooms ate their main meal in mid-afternoon, while others dined fashionably late. Below is a typical day's menu:

Breakfast - 9 a.m.
- Two slices of German bread with spread
- Coffee (soluble) or tea

Lunch - noon
- Soup (on alternate days)
- Slice of German bread
- Coffee or tea

Supper - 5:30 p.m.
- Potatoes
- One-third can of meat
- Vegetables (twice a week)
- Slice of German bread
- Coffee or tea

Evening snack - 10 p.m.
- Dessert (pie, cake, etc.)
- Coffee or cocoa

A unique PW establishment was Foodacco whose chief function was to provide PW with a means of exchange and a stable barter market where, for example, cocoa could be swapped for cigars. Profits arising from a two per cent commission charged on all transactions was credited to a communal camp fund.

Health

Despite confinement, crowding, lack of medical supplies and poor sanitary facilities, health of PW was astonishingly good.

For trivial ailments, the compounds maintained a first aid room. More serious cases were sent to one of the two sick quarters within the camp. Sick quarters for the South Compound originally consisted of a small building with 24 beds, a staff of three PW doctors and some PW orderlies. This also served the North and West Compounds. The Center Compound had its own dispensary and two PW doctors. On 1 June 1944, the three-compound sick quarters was replaced by a new building with 60 beds.

The Germans furnished very few medical supplies. As a result, PW depended almost wholly on the Red Cross. Large shipments of supplies, including much-needed sulfa drugs, began to arrive in the autumn of 1944. PW were also glad to receive a small fluoroscope and thermometers.

Most common of the minor illnesses were colds, sore throats, influenza, food poisoning and skin diseases. When a PW needed an X-ray or the attentions of a specialist, he was examined by a German doctor. It usually took months to obtain these special attentions. Cases requiring surgery were sent to one of the English hospitals, as a rule Lamsdorf or Obermassfeld. Emergency cases went to a French hospital at Stalag 8C, one mile distant.

Dental care for the North, West and South Compounds was provided by a British dentist and an American dental student. In 14 months, they gave 1,400 treatments to 308 PW from the South Compound alone.

Sanitation was poor. Although PW received a quick delousing upon entry into the camp, they were plagued by bedbugs and other parasites. Since there was no plumbing, both indoor and outdoor latrines added to the sanitation problem in summer. PW successfully fought flies by scrubbing aborts daily, constructing fly traps and screening latrines with ersatz burlap in lieu of wire mesh.

Bathing facilities were extremely limited. In theory the German shower houses could provide each man with a three-minute hot shower weekly. In fact, however, conditions varied from compound to compound and if a PW missed the opportunity to take a hot showerhe resorted to a sponge bath with

water he had heated himself - the only other hot water available the year around.

Clothing

In 1943, Germany still issued booty clothing of French, Belgian or English derivation to PW. This practice soon ceased, making both Britons and Americans completely dependent on clothing received from the Red Cross. An exception to the rule was made in the winter of 1943 when the camp authorities obtained 400 old French overcoats from Anglo-American PW.

Gradually, Americans were able to replace their RAF type uniforms with GI enlisted men's uniforms, which proved extremely serviceable. When stock of clothing permitted, each PW was maintained with the following wardrobe:

1 Overcoat
1 Blouse (Jacket)
2 Shirts, Wool or Cotton
1 Pr. Wool Trousers
2 Pr. Winter Underwear
2 Pr. Socks
1 Pr. Gloves
1 Sweater
1 Pr. High Shoes
1 Belt or Suspenders
1 Cap
4 Handerchiefs
1 Blanket (added to 2 German blankets)

Work

Officers were never required to work. To ease the situation in camp, however, they assumed many housekeeping chores such as shoe repairing, distributing food, scrubbing their own rooms and performing general repair work on barracks.

Other chores were carried out by a group of 100 American orderlies whose work was cut to a minimum and whose existence officers tried to make as comfortable as possible under the circumstances.

Pay

The monthly pay scale of officers in Germany was as follows:

F/O and 2d Lt.	72	Reichsmarks
1st Lt.	81	"
Capt.	96	"
Major	108	"
Lt. Col.	120	"
Col.	150	"

Americans adhered closely to the financial policy originated by the British in 1940-42. No money was handled by individual officers but was placed by the accounts officer into individual accounts of each after a sufficient deduction had been made to meet the financial needs of the camp. These deductions, not to exceed 50% of any officer's pay, took

care of laundry, letter forms, airmail postage, entertainments, escape damages and funds transmitted monthly to the NCO camps, which received no pay until July 1944.

Officers at Stalag Luft 1 contributed 33% of their pay to the communal fund, and the entire policy was approved by the War Department on 14 October 1943. Since the British Government unlike the U.S.A., deducted PW pay from army pay, Americans volunteered to carry out all canteen purchases with their own funds, but to maintain joint British-American distribution just as before.

Because of the sudden evacuation from Sagan, Allied PW had no time to meet with German finance authorities and reconcile outstanding Reichsmark balances. The amount due the U.S.A. alone from the German Government totals 2,984,932.75 Reichsmarks.

Mail

Mail from home or sweetheart was the life-blood of PW. Incoming mail was normally received six days a week, without limit as to number of letters or number of sheets per letter. (German objected only to V-mail forms.) Incoming letters could travel postage free, but those clipper-posted made record time. Correspondence could be carried on with private persons in any country outside of Germany; Allied, neutral or enemy. Within Germany correspondence with next-of-kin only was permitted. A PW could write one letter per month to next-of-kin in another PW camp or internees' camp.

SOUTH COMPOUND INCOMING MAIL

Month	Letters	Per Capita	Age.
Sep 43	3,190	3	11 weeks
Oct 43	5,392	5	10 "
Nov 43	9,125	9	10 "
Dec 43	24,076	24	8 "
Jan 44	7,680	7	12 "
Feb 44	10,765	9	12 "
Mar 44	11,693	10	12 "
Apr 44	16,355	15	12 "
May 44	15,162	13	13 "
Jun 44	13,558	11	14 "
Jul 44	26,440	20	14 "
Aug 44	14,264	11	15 "
Sep 44	10,277	8	16 "

The travel time reverted to 11-12 weeks in the autumn of 1944, with airmail letters sometimes reaching camp in four to six weeks. All mail to Luftwaffe-held PW was censored in Sagan by a staff of German civilian men and women.

Outgoing mail was limited, except for special correspondence, to three letter forms and four cards per

PW per month. Officers above the rank of major drew six letters and four cards while enlisted men received two letter forms and four cards. Protected personnel received double allotments. PW paid for these correspondence forms and for airmail postage as well.

SOUTH COMPOUND OUTGOING MAIL

Month	Letters	Postage in RMs
Sep 43	3,852	924.60
Oct 43	6,711	2494.60
Nov 43	7,781	2866.66
Dec 43	7,868	2968.00
Jan 44	7,811	2915.30
Feb 44	7,968	2907.10
Mar 44	7,916	3095.80
Apr 44	8,460	3154.90
May 44	8,327	3050.20
Jun 44	10,189	3789.60
Aug 44	8,780	3366.50
Sep 44	8,777	3288.30

Each 60 days, a PW's next-of-kin could mail him a private parcel containing clothing, food and other items not forbidden by German or U.S. Government regulations. These parcels, too, were thoroughly examined by German censors.

Morale

Morale was exceptionally high. PW never allowed themselves to doubt an eventual Allied victory and their spirits soared at news of the European invasion. Cases of demoralization were individual, caused for the most part by reports of infidelities among wives or sweethearts, or lack of mail, or letters in which people failed completely to comprehend PW's predicament. Compound officers succeeded in keeping their charges busy either physically or mentally and in maintaining discipline. The continual arrival of new PW with news of home and the air force also helped to cheer older inmates.

Welfare

The value of the Protecting Power in enforcing the provisions of the Geneva Convention lay principally in the pressure they were able to bring to bear. Although they might have agreed with the PW point of view, they had no means of enforcing their demands upon the Germans, who followed the Geneva Convention only insofar as its provisions coincided with their policies. But the mere existence of a Protecting Power, a third party, had its beneficial effect on German policy.

Direct interview was the only satisfactory traffic with the Protecting Power. Letters usually required six months for answer - if any answer was received. The sequence of events at a routine visit of Protecting Power representatives was as follows: Granting by the German of a few concessions just

prior to the visit; excuses given by the Germans to the representative; conference of representative with compound seniors; conference of representative with Germans. Practical benefits usually amounted to minor concessions from the Germans.

PW of Stalag Luft 3 feel a deep debt of gratitude toward the Red Cross for supplying them with food and clothing, which they considered the two most important things in their PW camp life. Their only complaint is against the Red Cross PW Bulletin for its description of Stalag Luft 3 in terms more appropriately used in depicting life on a college campus than a prison camp.

PW also praised the YMCA for providing them generously with athletic equipment, libraries, public address systems and theatrical materials. With YMCA headquarters established in Sagan, the representative paid many visits to camp.

Religion

On 1 December 1942, the Germans captured Capt. M. E. McDonald with a British Airborne Division in Africa. Because he was "out of the cloth" they did not officially recognize him as a clergyman, nevertheless, he was the accredited chaplain for the camp and conducted services for a large Protestant congregation. He received a quantity of religious literature from the YMCA and friends in Scotland.

In April 1942, Father Philip Goudrea, Order of Mary Immaculate, Quebec, Canada, became the Catholic Chaplain to a group which eventually numbered more than 1,000 PW. Prayer books were received from Geneva and rosary beads from France.

On 12 September 1943, a Christian Science Group was brought together in the South Compound under the direction of 2d Lt. Rudolph K. Grumm, 0-749387. His reading material was forwarded by the Church's War Relief Committee, Geneva, as was that of 1st Lt. Robert R. Brunn active in the Center Compound.

Thirteen members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints, sometimes known as the Mormon Church, held their first meeting in the South Compound on 7 November 1943. 1st Lt. William E. McKell was nominated as presiding Elder and officiated at subsequent weekly meetings. Material was supplied by the European Student Relief Fund, the Red Cross, the YMCA and the Swiss Mission of the Church.

Recreation

Reading was the greatest single activity of PW. The fiction lending library of each compound was enlarged by books received from the YMCA and next-of-kin until it totaled more than 2,000 volumes. Similarly, the compounds' reference libraries grew to include over 500 works of a technical nature.

These books came from the European Student Relief Fund of the YMCA and from PW who had received them from home.

Athletics were second only to reading as the most popular diversion. Camp areas were cleared and made fit playing fields at first for cricket and rugby and later for softball, touch football, badminton, deck tennis and volleyball. In addition, PW took advantage of opportunities for pingpong, wrestling, weight lifting, horizontal and parallel bar work, hockey and swimming in the fire pool. The bulk of athletic equipment was supplied by the YMCA.

The "Luftbandsters", playing on YMCA instruments, could hold its own with any name band in the U.S.A. according to those who heard them give various performances. PW formed junior bands of less experienced players and also a glee club.

Through the services of the YMCA, PW were shown seven films, five somewhat dated Hollywood features and two German musical comedies.

Other activities included card playing, broadcasting music and news over a camp amplifier called "Station KRGY", reading the "Circuit" and "Kriegie Times" journals issued by PW thrice weekly, following world events in the PW news room, attending the Education Department's classes which ranged from Aeronautics to Law, painting, sketching and the inevitable stroll around the compound perimeter track.

Sagan Evacuation

At 2100 hours on 27 January 1945, the various compounds received German orders to move out afoot withing 30 minutes. With an eye on the advancing Red Armies, PW had been preparing two weeks for such a move. Thus the order came as no surprise. In barracks bags, in knotted trousers and on makeshift sleds they packed a minimum of clothing and a maximum of food - usually one parcel per man. Each man abandoned such items as books, letters, camp records and took his overcoat and one blanket. Between 2130 and 2400 hours, all men except some 200 too weak to walk, marched out into the bitter cold and snow in a column of threes - destination unknown. Their guards, drawn from the camp complement, bore rifles and machine pistols. They marched all night, taking ten-minute breaks every hour.

The exodus was harrowing to PW of all compounds but especially those of the South, which made the 55 kilometers from Sagan to Muskau in 27 hours with only four hours sleep. Rations consisted only of bread and margarine obtained from a horse-drawn wagon. PW slept in unheated barns. At Muskau, on

the verge of exhaustion, they were billeted in a blast furnace, which was warm and an empty heating plant, which was cold. Here they were given a 30-hour delay for recuperation. Even so, some 60 men incapable of marching farther had to be left behind. The 25 kilometers from Muskau to Spremberg on 31 January, the South Compound, plus 200 men from the West Compound, went to Stalag 7A at Moosburg. They traveled two days and two nights in locked, unmarked freight cars - 50 men to a car. On 7 February, the Center Compound joined them. The North Compound fell in with the West Compound at Spremberg and on 2 February entrained for Stalag 13D, Nurnberg, which they reached after a trip of two days.

Throughout the march the guards, who drew rations identical with PW's, treated their charges with sympathy and complained at the harshness they all had to undergo. German civilians encountered during the trek were generally considerate, bartering with PW and sometimes supplying them with water.

Stalag 13D Conditions

Conditions at Stalag 13D, where PW stayed for two months, were deplorable. The barracks originally built to house delegates to the Nazi party gatherings at the shrine city, had recently been inhabited by Italian PW who left them filthy. There was no room to exercise, no supplies, nothing to eat out of and practically nothing to eat inasmuch as no Red Cross food parcels were available upon the Americans' arrival. The German ration consisted of 300 grams of bread, 250 grams of potatoes, some dehydrated vegetables and a little margarine. After the first week, sugar was not to be had and soon the margarine supply was exhausted. After three weeks, and in answer to an urgent request, 4,000 Red Cross food parcels arrived from Dulag Luft, Wetzlar. Shortly thereafter, the Swiss came to make arrangements for sending parcels in American convoy, and soon Red Cross parcels began to arrive in GI (Red Cross) trucks.

Throughout this period, large numbers of American PW were pouring into camp - 1,700 from Stalag Luft 4, 150 a day from Dulag Luft and finally some men from Oflag 64.

Sanitation was lamentable. The camp was infested with lice, fleas and bedbugs. Three thousand men, each with only two filthy German blankets, slept on the bare floors. Toilet facilities during the day were satisfactory, but the only night latrine was a can in each sleeping room. Since many men were afflicted with diarrhea, the can had an insufficient capacity and men perforce soiled the floor. Showers were available once every two weeks. Barracks were not heated. Only 200 kilograms of coal were provided for cooking. Morale dropped to its lowest ebb, but Col. Darr H. Alkire succeeded in maintaining discipline.

Nurnberg Evacuation

At 1700 hours on 3 April 1945, the Americans received notice that they were to evacuate the Nurnberg camp and march to Stalag 7A, Moosburg. At this point, the PW took over the organization of the march. They submitted to the German commander plans stipulating that in return for preserving order they were to have full control of the column and to march no more than 20 kilometers a day. The Germans accepted. On 4 April, with each PW in possession of a food parcel, 10,000 Allied PW began the march. While the column was passing a freight marshalling yard near the highway, some P-47s dive-bombed the yard. Two Americans and one Briton were killed and three men seriously wounded. On the following day the column laid out a large replica of an American Air Corps insignia on the road with an arrow pointing in the direction of their march. Thereafter, the column was never strafed. It proceeded to Neumarkt, to Bersheim where 4,500 Red Cross parcels were delivered by truck, then to Mulhauser where more parcels were delivered. On 9 April, the compound column reached the Danube which Col. Alkire flatly refused to cross since it meant exceeding the 20 kilometer-a-day limit. With his refusal the Germans completely lost control of the march and PW began to drop out of the column almost at will. The guards, intimidated by the rapid advance of the American Army, made no serious attempt to stop the disintegration. The main body of the column reached Stalag 7A on 20 April 1945 (See "Influx", Stalag 7A).

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OFLAG 64

(Ground Force Officers)

Location

Oflag 64 was situated in Poland, two and one-half miles northwest of the railroad station in Altburgund (new German name for the old Polish town of Schubin, 53°01' N. - 17°44' E.). The grounds were formerly those of a Polish college.

On 21 January 1945, 1,471 ground force officers and enlisted men left Schubin just ahead of the advancing Russian Army to travel a total of 345 miles, arriving at Oflag 13B, Hammelburg on 9 March 1945.

Strength

Oflag 64 was opened on 6 June 1943 with just a handful of ground force officers. In October of that year, the Red Cross reported 224 American officers and 21 enlisted men there. Almost all of these men had been captured in North Africa and had been held in other camps prior to the opening of Oflag 64. By July 1944, the population had increased to 620 officers and 57 enlisted men. At the time of the evacuation from Poland on 21 January 1945, the camp strength was 1,557.

Description

The camp was composed of a main stone building and six barracks. Only three of these barracks were used until the last few months of the occupation. The buildings were 120 feet long and 40 feet wide. They were subdivided into cubicles seven feet by 10 feet which quartered an average of eight officers. The PW slept in double-tiered wooden bunks equipped with straw mattresses, a pillow, one sheet and a pillow case. The Germans supplied two thin blankets which were totally inadequate for the climate. A large sports ground was available within the compound. The latrines were situated in separate buildings adjoining the barracks, but were of the pit-type at first. Later, latrines equipped with cesspools and pumps were installed, but were insufficient in number.

U.S. Personnel

Colonel Thomas N. Drake was the SAO from its opening on 6 June 1943 until his repatriation on 27 July 1944. Colonel George V. Millett succeeded Colonel Drake and was SAO until the arrival of Colonel Paul R. Goode on 16 October 1944. From that time until the liberation, the camp administration was organized as follows:

Senior American Officer	:	Colonel Paul R. Goode
Executive Officer	:	Colonel G. V. Millett
Ass't. Executive Officer	:	Major K. Hanson
Adjutant	:	Major Merle A. Meacham
Welfare Officer	:	Lt. Col. J. K. Waters
Senior Medical Officer	:	Capt. F. M. Burgeson

There was also a highly organized Security Committee.

German Personnel

The German personnel consisted of approximately 100 men from the 813th Infantry (Grenadier) Regiment, and four administrative officers. The administration was organized in the following manner:

Camp Commander	:	Oberst Schneider
Second in Command	:	Oberstleutnant Leuda
Security Officer	:	Hauptman G. Zimmerman
Welfare Officer	:	Sonderfuhrer W. Theissen
Chief Physician	:	Dr. Pongratz

According to Colonel Drake, the relations between the PW and the Germans were quite impersonal. Hauptman Zimmerman was particularly disliked for his frequent pettiness. He was a Nazi party-member of good standing and often appeared to be able to reverse decisions of Oberst Schneider.

Treatment

The treatment at Oflag 64 was considered better than that of other American PW camps containing ground force personnel. As the camp strength increased, the buildings naturally became more crowded, and comforts experienced in early 1944 disappeared with the shortages of fuel and food all over Germany. According to repatriates who arrived in January 1945, the Germans displayed a definite tendency to provoke incidents in the camp. It appeared that the Germans desired to have as many PW as possible under sentence. As an example, in the summer of 1944 four officers were being marched under guard to the hospital at Gneisen for treatment and were ordered not to use the sidewalk but to walk in the streets of the town. They felt this was humiliating treatment and in violation of the Geneva Convention. They brought this point up to the guards and after some discussion were permitted to use the sidewalks. However, this incident was reported and the four were brought up for trial on the charge of "Obstructing the Functions of the German Reich". The trial was held in October 1944 and the men were acquitted of the charge. However, in December 1944, the four were informed that they would be retried on charges growing out of the incident. The retrial was held on 25 January 1945, and all four officers received the death sentence. They were liberated before the sentence could be carried out.

A similar instance of this tendency to perpetrate incidents occurred on 22 September 1944 when Lt. James R. Schmitz, the Assistant Adjutant, was in the camp office alone and was approached by two unteroffiziers about to post anti-escape posters. Because Lt. Schmitz considered the posters insulting to American officers in that they accused our government "of resorting to gangster warfare up to and within the frontier of the Fatherland" he requested them to wait until he could contact the SAO. Unable to do so, he brought back to the office Lt. Col. Schaefer who discussed the posters with the

Germans. As they were leaving Lt. Schmitz stood in the doorway in token protest. When one unteroffizier approached and touched Lt. Schmitz, he immediately got out of the way. Nevertheless, Lt. Schmitz was accused of blocking the doorway and Lt. Col. Schaefer was accused of interfering with the functions of the German Reich. They were both tried on 28 December 1944 and sentenced to death, but were liberated before the sentence could be carried out.

The treatment grew steadily worse from the Allied invasion until winter. Then as it became obvious to the Germans that defeat was inevitable, many of the guards and camp officials became more lenient, and the treatment improved. There was a noticeable scarcity of true Nazis in the last few days.

Food

From the time the camp opened until the evacuation, the German rations were very poor in both quality and quantity. The Red Cross food parcel became the means of subsistence in the camp and the difference between complete misery and tolerable existence. From 10 October to 3 December 1944, no Red Cross parcels were delivered in camp and the men suffered accordingly. During the period from 20 October to 15 November 1944, all men in camp were checked for weight loss, and the average was nine pounds per man. The German ration during that period was as follows:

Per day each man received:

Meat	35 7/10	Grams
Cooking Oil	9 7/10	"
Margarine	21 4/10	"
Cheese	4 1/2	"
Barley	25	"
Potatoes	353	"
Cabbage	200	"
Carrots	100	"
Dried Vegs.	6 2/5	"

ONE ONLY OF THE FOLLOWING:

Turnips	400	Grams
Suger	25	"
Sauerkraut	48 2/5	"
Tea (ersatz)	1	"
Jam	25	"
Bread	318	"
Soup Powder	3 1/2	"
Coffee (ersatz)	2 1/2	"

Health

In spite of many hardships due to insufficient food, impure water supplies, and poor sanitation facilities, the health was surprisingly good. The "revier" itself was old, the floors unpainted, the plumbing a constant source of concern among

the doctors. The 30 beds available in the "revier" were usually occupied by men suffering from stomach ailments, colds and other routine complaints. It was not equipped to handle the cases of those seriously ill or badly wounded. These cases were sent to the hospital at Wollstein.

Fortunately for the early arrivals at Oflag 64, RAF doctors who had formerly inhabited the camp left behind about 25 units of Red Cross medical supplies. These sufficed until more supplies were received from the International Red Cross. However, the flow of supplies was inadequate and undependable. By constant nagging, special drugs and emergency items were obtainable from the Germans in rare cases, but the American doctors preferred to isolate themselves from the German doctor as much as possible.

Clothing

Thanks to the Red Cross, clothing was adequate during 1943 and early 1944. However, by November 1944, clothing was so scarce that the Germans demanded that PW turn in all but one uniform. They also demanded field jackets, which were refused. As a result, the guards came through the barracks with fixed bayonets and fired their rifles in the air forcing the men into giving up their jackets. The original excuse for confiscation was that clothing was needed for new PW, but men arrived in Russian, French and British uniforms which were never replaced by American equivalents. Bed clothing was completely inadequate, and many times officers slept two to a bunk in order to "pool" their blankets. The Germans at no time provided sufficient clothing.

Work

The officers at Oflag 64 were not required to do any work except their own fatigue details around camp. These duties were assigned by the SAO's staff. However, 33 of the enlisted men who were sent as orderlies were required to work at a near-by sawmill. Their work was not too hard, and their noon-day rations were slightly better than the camp's.

Pay

In the beginning, officers were paid on a sliding scale according to rank, with lieutenants receiving 60 marks a month. From this 22 marks were deducted for food and 10 for orderly service. The balance was supposed to be used for purchases from the canteen, but since this offered nothing but weak beer and an occasional razor blade, the money was no asset. At no time was an officer permitted to have in his possession more than 30 marks, and an American finance officer was assigned to keep a duplicate set of records on the financial status of each PW. He made arrangements with the German officials to disburse the amounts owed. After a visit on 23 October 1944, the Red Cross reported that camp money disbursal had stopped entirely and the amounts were credited to a special account of each officer.

Mail

The officers received three letter forms and four cards each month. The enlisted men received two letter forms and three cards a month. The SAO received 10 letter forms and 10 cards a month along with necessary letter forms to conduct camp affairs. The Germans checked the number of outgoing letters from each officer a month in the early days. however, it was later noticed that this practice had stopped, and officers were able to borrow mail forms and write as many letters as they wished. There was never any shortage of letter forms and none was ever refused an individual as a punitive measure. The eight censors were all except one enlisted men and ex-residents of the United States. They performed other duties, and for this reason mail was often unnecessarily delayed, sometimes for two weeks. Transit time for letters, including airmail from the U.S.A. to the camp was erratic, varying between 30 and 90 days. Toward the end of the war the mail service grew slower as transportation facilities were harassed by Allied bombers.

Morale

The morale of the men, especially after "D-Day", was exceedingly high. This spirit was reflected in the monthly publication known as the Oflag Item, which was issued from November 1943 to January 1945. By making light of the "Kriegie-woes" and reviewing the months' activities in the vein of a collegiate newspaper an easy air of comradeship was developed. The "Little Theater of Schubin College" was a huge success. PW produced a total of eight three-act plays, all of which were former Broadway hits. They also produced seven one-act plays, eight musical reviews and one original three-act play. In addition to these activities the men took part in many types of sports. A league was formed for baseball and softball enthusiasts as well as basketball players. Thus, men kept their morale high by keeping occupied.

Welfare

Insofar as the Germans were concerned, welfare consisted of only the barest necessities. All phases of welfare were handled by the International Red Cross, the Protecting Power and the YMCA. As mentioned before, the Red Cross food parcels and clothing took care of two basic requirements of PW. The Protecting Power in its capacity of mediator made seven visits to the camp. The representatives were punctilious about interviewing the American staff in privacy and made a conscientious effort to improve situations about which complaints were made, even though their representations to the German officials were often ignored after their departure.

The athletic and recreational equipment provided by the YMCA contributed a great deal to the welfare of the men. The library at camp was well stocked with a good variety of literature from text books to murder thrillers.

Religion

The religious activities in the camp were very satisfactory. A room was furnished by the Germans and made into an attractive chapel by the men. At one time there were as many as eight chaplains at the camp, but because they felt they were needed elsewhere, they requested transfers to other camps. Only a Protestant and Catholic Chaplain remained.

Recreation

In addition to the many activities mentioned in the paragraph on Morale, there was a great deal of interest in art, crafts and education. Of all recreations, reading seemed to take first place. Many officers availed themselves of numerous text books to improve their knowledge on various subjects. The school was well attended and foreign languages appeared to be favorite subjects.

Many men who had dabbled in art as a hobby took advantage of their leisure to improve their style. Cartoonists appeared from every barrack and new hobbies were developed daily. However, the favorite pastime of all was re-reading letters from home and day-dreaming about the end of the war.

Evacuation

On 21 January 1945, the SAO was informed that the camp was to be evacuated immediately, and that all able-bodied men would fall out to begin the march. The German doctor and the American medical staff hurriedly examined all of the men in the camp, and after a great deal of discussion, agreed to leave behind 86 men under the supervision of Col. Drury. These men were to remain in the hospital until the advancing Russians over-ran the camp. The other 1,471 officers and enlisted men left on foot for the 345 mile trek to Brandenburg.

After the able-bodied men left the camp, the first problem facing the new SAO was to keep the Poles out of the camp because they began a systematic routine of looting. During the first 24 hours several small groups of Germans passed the camp on the same road taken earlier by the column, but they did not enter the camp. Late that evening the Poles reported that Russian tanks had been in the town but had passed on again before they could be informed of the Americans' presence. On the morning of 22 January 1945, both American and Russian flags were raised over the camp and shortly afterward the first Russians appeared on the road. The SAO was told by the tank commanders that they must move on, but that the rear echelon would give PW the best of care. As more and more trucks passed, and no one seemed to have authority to begin the evacuation, the SAO decided to commandeer a truck and driver and return to the Corps headquarters. After sending six

telegrams from that headquarters and discussing the problem at length with the commanding general, Col. Gen. Blov, Col. Drury made evacuation plans.

On 28 January 1945, the men left Schubin by truck and were taken to Rembertow, arriving 31 January 1945. At Rembertow the Russians had taken over a former Polish military school and turned it into a refugee processing center with approximately 5,000 tired, hungry and frightened people of mixed nationalities. In spite of many promises of assistance, it was not until 22 February 1945 that the group boarded a train for Odessa. Meanwhile, several impatient officers had left the camp and proceeded on their own to reach Moscow where they were given air passage back to the United States. The group reached Odessa on 1 March 1945, and were evacuated to the United States by plane and boat.

The 1,471 officers and enlisted men under the command of Oberst Fritz Schneider marched to Exin, Poland (24 kms.) where they were supposed to entrain for a new camp in Brandenburg. However, upon their arrival it was discovered that no arrangements had been made for the journey and the group continued on foot to an estate just outside of Exin where they were quartered for the night in cow barns. The weather was below freezing and the ground was covered with snow. The day's march had been gruelling and 186 men decided to hide in the hay lofts and make their way back to the Russian lines. All of these were successful in their escape, and were able to reach Rembertow where they joined Col. Drury's group.

During the entire 45 days of the march the quarters were, with few exceptions, hay barns, stables, cow sheds or machine shacks. They were often overcrowded, and many were lofts with only one ladder for entrance and exit, thus presenting a great hazard in case of fire. Despite continued protests on the part of Colonel Goode, it was not until 2 February 1945 that the Germans sent a quartering party forward in advance of their arrival. Prior to this time, PW would arrive at their destination at dusk with wet and cold feet and be forced to stand around while hasty arrangements were made for quartering. Frequently fires were not permitted so that shoes and socks could not be dried nor could food be cooked.

The camp sites often lacked adequate drinking water and no shaving or washing facilities were available. No provisions for baths were made during the entire period.

Medical supplies were not provided at all by the Germans until 17 February 1945. After that date only a very limited amount was given.

There had been continuous trouble in providing transportation for the sick and no effort was made to provide proper places for sick call. The ration provided on the march was inadequate. The German ration officer stated that they were receiving the same ration as the German guard company, but this was not true. The average ration for the day was one bowl of turnip soup, a few potatoes, a cup of ersatz coffee or mint tea, a half a slice of brown bread. The only supplement to this diet was an occasional barter with the farmers along the way who wanted cigarettes, soap, fountain pens, etc., until finally 500 Red Cross parcels were obtained on 17 February 1945. These had to be shared by 1,023 men.

The table below gives the number of kilometers the men marched each day:

DATE	DISTANCE (KM)	
January 21	24	
22	23	
23	7	
24	9	
25	21	
26	0	
27	18	
28	17	
29	7	
30	12	
31	14	
February 1	3	
2	18	
3	0	
4	17	
5	21	
6	22	
7	20	
8	20	
9	13	
10	13	
11	14	
12	24	
13	7	
14	13	
15	0	
16	23	
17	27	
18	8	
19	10	
20	20	
21	0	
22	16	
23	19	
24	23	
25	21	
26	0	
27	16	
28	11	
March 1 to 5	0	
6	9	boarded train arriving at Hammelburg 9 March 1945.

Only 423 officers and 67 enlisted men completed the trek to Oflag 13B, arriving in a state of exhaustion.

Liberation

On 27 March 1945, Colonel Goode was notified that camp 13B would be evacuated that afternoon at 1600 hours. At 1300, American tanks appeared and after a brief consultation, the Germans agreed to surrender the camp immediately. Three of the staff officers and one German officer were selected to carry the white flag of surrender to the American tank column. As they marched out of the gate, an SS private shot Lt. Col. John K. Waters, seriously wounding him. Immediately the tanks started firing and after a few minutes the camp was in the hands of the Americans. However, the spearhead was not prepared to transport so many officers, and it was impossible to remain there and defend the area. Many of the men climbed on the tanks and attempted to get back to the lines that night, but road blocks and mines hampered their progress. The following two days saw nearly all of the men returned to the camp under German guard. Meanwhile the Germans had returned to evacuate the remaining prisoners to southern Germany, and about 500 men were sent to Nurnberg by train. Two days later, the remaining men were marched to Stalag 7A, Moosburg. This trip was approximately 90 miles and it required 15 days to march because of the weakened condition of the men and the constant bombing by the Allied air forces of installations along the way. Many men escaped during this march during the confusion. Upon their arrival at Stalag 7A, Colonel Goode organized the camp of 30,000 PW for their final rescue which occurred 29 April 1945.

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RESERVE-LAZARET OBERMASSFELD

(Orthopedic Hospital)

Location Obermassfeld lies in the agricultural and pastural region of Thuringia, nine kilometers south of the city of Meiningen (50°34' N. - 10°24' E.)

Description The main building was a large three-story stone structure erected after World War I as a boys' school. Later it was taken over by the S.A. and then by the Hitler Youth before its conversion into a hospital. Three one-story wood and tar-paper barracks stood in the courtyard to house internal medicine cases, and a fourth barrack was used as an isolation ward. The main installation was divided into rooms comprising patients' wards, medical officers' quarters, two operating theaters - septic and aseptic, a plaster room, X-ray room, orderlies' and guards' quarters. In March 1945, in preparation for an influx of PW from camps near the fighting zones, a French hospital tent was erected near the lazaret proper.

A shortage of water plagued the hospital during the summer of 1944. While there were a sufficient number of washrooms, and showers could theoretically be taken at least once a week, the insufficient water supply actually made the washing situation unsatisfactory. This water shortage was caused by leaks in old underground pipes which were eventually repaired. The number of latrines was insufficient for the hospital when it was at full strength.

The aseptic operating theater became septic in July 1944, probably because of its long use. This condition caused the loss of one life with the result that British medical officers refused to perform any "clean surgery" in the theater. During the winter of 1944-45 the operating theater was closed down completely and operations were carried out in the former sterilizing room. This move was necessitated by a critical fuel shortage which prevented the heating of the large theater. Similarly, enough hot water for the hospital's needs was difficult to obtain. When the coal supply was altogether exhausted, working parties were sent out into the surrounding region to forage for wood. A small shipment of coal, arriving in March 1945, eased the situation somewhat.

Strength Maximum capacity of the hospital building was 360, with the barracks providing space for 140 additional beds. Before the invasion of the continent, patients were almost exclusively British and American air forces personnel shot down on raids over German Europe. Even after the landings on Normandy, few Allied ground

force men were sent to Obermassfeld. Strength averaged 400, at first preponderantly British. Thus on 5 April 1943, the hospital had 10 Americans and 178 Britons. As American participation in the war increased, numbers of American PW patients grew until on 10 March 1945 there were 189 Americans and 254 Britons.

To relieve crowding in the spring of 1943, convalescents were sent to the lazaret at Kloster Haina. When a strength of 560 severely taxed hospital facilities in April 1944, plans were made for recuperating post-operative cases to be transferred to the lazaret at Meiningen - opened in May.

Allied Personnel

Originally run by British PW, Obermassfeld retained its British staff until its liberation. Not until July 1944 were six American medical orderlies reported added to the hospital complement, and the sole American doctor on the staff remained only three months. Charges by some American patients of favoritism and preferential treatment shown by the British staff to British patients were not substantiated by him. Leading members of the staff were:

Lt. Col. A. T. Marrable	- Senior Medical Officer
Major J. B. Sherman	- Assistant SMO
Major Henderson	- Surgeon
Major A. C. Whitcombe	- Executive Officer
Major Kimbell	- Surgery Chief
Major G. Smyth	- Medical Chief
Capt. S. E. Morgan (USA)	- Medical Officer
Capt. B. M. Egan (USA)	- Chaplain

On 7 November 1944 the staff numbered 101, assigned as follows:

British Medical Officers	15
American Medical Officer	1
British Dental Officers	2
British Chaplain	1
American Chaplain	1
British X-Ray Technician	1
British Medical Students	2
British Medical Orderlies	50
American Medical Orderlies	6
British Housekeeping Unit	22

German Personnel

Except for a few occasions when patients were confined in solitary rooms for three or four days because of some trivial infraction of Dr. Falke's rules, PW had no complaints against the Germans. The British Staff welcomed the non-interference and cooperation of the German staff headed by:

Oberstabsarzt Dr. Schuttler	- Chefarzt (1945)
Oberstabsarzt Dr. Falke	- Chefarzt (1943-4)
Oberstabsarzt Dr. Koch	- Asst. Chefarzt
Stabsarzt Dr. Reichel	- Asst. Chefarzt
Major Lumpke	- Abwehr

Treatment

In January 1945 Obermassfeld held two Jewish PW who had been unmercifully beaten and were near death as a result. It is probable that this violence occurred prior to their entry to Obermassfeld, where no such mistreatment was ever reported.

Food

The German ration plus Red Cross food, which was never lacking, assured all PW of a sufficient diet. Food was cooked in a kitchen which held three large boilers and one cooking range shared by Germans and Allies alike, an arrangement which proved barely satisfactory because of lack of enough equipment. German women prepared the German issue, and PW the Red Cross food. Men who lived in the barracks had hearths on which to cook their own food - enabling them to avoid the strained facilities of the hospital kitchen. Special diets could be prepared for cases urgently in need of such. At the end of August 1944 there was on hand a food supply of

1209 British parcels
2429 American parcels
1851 Canadian parcels
391 Milk parcels
5448 British Invalid parcels
2869 American Invalid parcels

and as late as 10 March 1945 despite shortages encountered elsewhere, Obermassfeld had food stocks to last six weeks at the customary consumption rate of one parcel per man per week.

Health

Most patients were seriously wounded with amputations and infected gunfire wounds. The majority came to the hospital directly from combat, either air or ground. They remained at the hospital until the beginning of their convalescence when they were transferred to the Meiningen Reserve Lazaret where their strictly orthopedic treatment was under the supervision of a British specialist and various physical "re-education" teachers.

All medical matters were left in the hands of the British medical officers and little interference was experienced from the German Chefarzt. The drug supply furnished by the Germans covered about 50% of the requirements but by winter 1944 several items, especially plaster bandages, cloth bandages, gauze and cotton wool were no longer available; nor was sterile water. Plaster bandages were used at the rate of 2000 a month and in March 1944 only 1200 were on hand. Seventy Red Cross medical parcels were used per month. Medicines and equipment not furnished by the Germans were obtained from the Red Cross, and at no time was there a shortage so critical that it resulted in handicapping the efforts of the medical staff. Both treatment and equipment were exceptionally good.

Dental treatment and equipment was always satisfactory.

Clothing

As far back as April 1943 the Senior British Officer was requesting that clothing be shipped directly to the Lazaret instead of coming from adjacent Stalag 9C. Yet in September 1944 clothing was still drawn from the stalag. Inasmuch as most patients were aviators who had been shot down, many arrived with their uniforms burned. Extremely few had passed through the Dulag Luft transit camp where they might have been outfitted anew. Nevertheless, the large reserve stock of clothing which should have been on hand in the lazaret was never sent directly from the Red Cross, and the Germans issued practically nothing with the result that Obermassfeld constantly suffered from slight clothing shortage. Each new arrival did, however, receive a shirt and pyjamas upon his admission. The most frequent requests were for shoes - to aid in the construction of protheses - and flannel shirts - to keep pneumonia patients warm and to serve as padding for plaster casts. PW also needed toilet articles such as razors, brushes, laundry soap, toothbrushes, combs and handkerchiefs. Some 900 Red Cross blankets, in addition to those supplied by the Germans, were sufficient to cover all beds satisfactorily.

Work

Medical personnel volunteered for work. Privates who formed the housekeeping detachment considered themselves fortunate to be employed on details which were pleasant compared to those performed by other PW in Germany.

Pay

Patients did not begin to receive pay until they had been in the lazaret for three months. Those who had been shifted from other lazarets where they had stayed fewer than three months, and those who were sent from Obermassfeld to convalescent centers before three months had elapsed, complained about their lack of pay. Their accounts did not become effective until they reached permanent PW camps.

Pay for medical personnel was regularly given in cash until November 1944, when issue of marks or lagergeld was stopped by the High Command. Subsequently, all monetary operations were transacted on "PC2" (Personal Card No. 2). Medical personnel no longer received specie but were credited with amounts due on their individual "PC2".

Mail

Patients were allowed to write three letters and four cards a month; medical personnel, twice that amount. Incoming mail was unlimited. Most of the parcels announced as sent by next-of-kin did not arrive. Those that did were damaged. No Americans stayed in the hospital long enough to receive replies to their letters. Mail from England took three months in transit. The Senior Medical Officer complained that 22 letters sent to the Protecting Power were not acknowledged.

Morale

Morale among the medical personnel, busily engaged in their peacetime profession, was high. Among patients, thanks to the good treatment received, it was no lower than that of patients in hospitals anywhere.

Welfare

In addition to providing Obermassfeld with almost all its food, clothing and more than half its medical supplies, the Red Cross visited the hospital quarterly and submitted comprehensive, if optimistic, reports to the U.S. State Department through neutral channels.

The Protecting Power Delegate inspected the hospital every three months, supported the Senior Medical Officer in his claims against the German commandant with good effect and circulated detailed reports of camp conditions.

The YMCA kept the hospital well stocked with books, games and athletic equipment.

Religion

In April 1943, the only religious services were provided by a chaplain from Egendorf lazaret who visited Obermassfeld once a month. By the beginning of 1944, a Church of England chaplain was assigned to the hospital. Catholics, however, of whom there were about 100 at any given time, requested that a priest be permanently stationed at the hospital. In July 1944, the Swiss, German staff and PW again petitioned higher headquarters for a Catholic chaplain, but it was stated that none was available. In November, the commandant reported that Captain B. M. Egan, a Catholic chaplain in the U.S. Army, would stay and minister unto his fellow PW when he finished the treatment he was undergoing as a patient.

Recreation

Little need for recreation existed, for convalescents were sent to other hospitals as soon as they were fit enough to be transferred. Those strong enough to exercise could play ball games on a field near the hospital. Otherwise patients were not allowed to go out.

Liberation

By 20 March 1945 the Senior Medical Officer had anticipated the arrival of Allied forces and planned accordingly. Since most patients were too weak to be moved, PW in Obermassfeld were liberated at the beginning of April by American troops.

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MARLAG UND MILAG NORD

(Naval Personnel)

Location

The camp was situated at Westertimke (53° 51' North latitude - 9° 67' 45" East longitude) 30 miles southwest of Hamburg and 10 miles north of Bremen. It was well placed on sandy ground planted with pine trees. On 10 April 1945, the majority of PW was evacuated toward Lübeck, but many of the personnel who were unable to march remained as a unit until liberated by the British on 14 April.

Strength

Created for the confinement of Navy and Merchant Marine personnel only, the installation under normal conditions had a capacity of 5300 and in emergencies of 6900. According to official figures of the Protecting Power, the strength in April 1944 was 4268 and in December 1944, 4223 with 41 nations and races represented. In April 1945, approximately 1900 RAF officers were removed from Stalag Luft III at Sagan and were accommodated in this camp. In September 1944, a large group of civilian internees was brought in from Gironagny and placed in the Ilag. At no time were there more than 71 Americans from the Navy and Merchant Marine in this camp, and on 2 April 1945 two American Air Corps officers were imprisoned there, the first non-naval American personnel to arrive.

A month before liberation the camp held 35 American Merchant seamen and nine regular service personnel including: Major Peter Ortiz and Lt. Walter W. Taylor of the Marine Corps and Lt. (jg) Richard M. Harris, USNR.

Description

The entire camp, which was constructed in the autumn of 1942 and subsequently added to, consisted of seven lagers as follows: Lager I, Dulag, which was used as an interrogation and transit compound; Lager II, Marlag, housing personnel of the Royal Navy; Lager III, Milag, for the confinement of Merchant Marine personnel of the various nationalities; Lager IV, Milag (Inder), accommodating Indian seamen of the Merchant Navy; Lager V, Wache, for the camp guard; Lager VI, Kommandatur, the administrative officer for the entire establishment; Lager VII, Stabslager, living quarters for the administrative personnel of the entire establishment.

The Marlag Lager for the Navy PW and the Milag Lager for Merchant Marine PW each had two compounds designated as Marlag "O" and Marlag "M" and Milag "O" and Milag "M" for officers and enlisted men respectively. When the 1900 RAF officers arrived, PW from Marlag "M" were transferred to the Ilag compound and the British fliers were accommodated in Marlag "M".

Each compound consisted of several sturdily built one-storied wooden buildings which were well-lighted and heated. There were 29 of them in Marlag and 36 in Milag.

The majority of them were used as barracks for the PW while the others were kitchens and dining rooms, ablution barracks, guard barracks, storehouses, postal section and other administrative buildings. Each building used as living quarters comprised many rooms accommodating 14 to 16 officers or 18 men of other ranks. There were two and three-tiered bunks furnished with palliasses of straw with washable covering. Two blankets were issued each man and some PW had an extra Red Cross blanket. Personnally owned blankets were rare. Cleanliness was the rule and for the most part the barracks were well kept although at times the palliasses were infected with vermin.

The entire camp was surrounded by barbed wire and the Marlag and Milag compounds were also separated by barbed wire. Within the lagers, the compounds for officers and men were also separated by wire. In addition each compound had a barbed wire cattle fence about a yard high placed about four yards inside the outer fencing. PW were not allowed to go beyond the cattle fencing. Placed at the corner of each camp were watchtowers with machine guns and searchlights, which were always turned off during an air raid warning.

German Personnel

At first the camp was commanded by Kapitan zur see Schuhr, a regular German navy officer who was severe but considered by PW as just. After his transfer the personnel was as follows:

Camp Commander	: Fregatten-Kapitan Schmidt
Second in Command	: Korvetten-Kapitan Kogge
Security Officer	: Oberleutnant Schoof
German Physician	: Stabsarzt Dr. Trautman

Accompanying officer of the G.H.C.: Major Bosenberg

Kapitan Schmidt was short and fat and looked like a pig. He weighed about 290 pounds, was five feet nine inches tall, about 54 years old and had grey hair. The security officer, Oberleutnant Schoof, was about six feet tall, weighed about 150 pounds and had a very thin long nose, dark skin and black hair. The PW did not come into contact with other members of the camp personnel.

When the camp was first formed the camp guard comprised NCOs and men from naval artillery units. These men, between 45 and 55 years, were unfit for frontline service. In addition about 30 members of the German marine forces were distributed throughout the camp as cooks and clerks. Later on the guards at the camp were of the Wehrmacht and wore the uniform of this ground force organization. According to observations by PW there were eight guards around the enlisted men's barracks going on duty at 0730 hours and remaining there until 1800 hours. Armed with pistols, they patrolled the barracks area and sometimes entered them. There were two guards along the inner fence of the enlisted men's compound. Shifts changed every two hours. Twelve guards patrolled as sentries

along the outer fence around the compounds at all times. The guards were old and were for the most part German farmers recently inducted into the Wehrmacht although some of them had been veterans of the first World War. As a rule the guard personnel was changed about every six months. PW traded with the guards whenever they would come into the barracks and talked to them quite openly.

U.S. Personnel

The compounds were administered by English personnel who filled the staff positions. Ph.M. 1/C Charles H. Carter was the American MOC in Marlag "M" and Joseph Ashworth, of the U.S. Merchant Marine Corps, was American MOC in the Milag compound.

The basic unit for organization was the barracks and the barracks' chiefs were all English inasmuch as the number of American PW in the two compounds was so small.

Health

In general the health in the camp was very good. There were a few cases of tuberculosis in the hospital, which was in the Milag section of the camp and was operated by the British, and also a very few cases of dysentery. The American MOC in Marlag "M" acted as the doctor for the Americans. All dental work was done by an English dentist. It was reported by those who had been to the hospital that the treatment was quite good, but the hospital ran short of medical equipment and supplies.

Washing facilities were in a separate building in the camp. In this building were three cold showers which the men could use at any time and 53 water spigots. The men received what was supposed to be a hot shower once a week, but the building where the showers were situated was a quarter of a mile from the camp and three parties of 25 men each would be taken down at one time. Therefore, the men who went in first were the only ones to get a hot shower, because when the others came later the water was cold. The latrine, which was in a separate building, consisted of 47 stools over a hole in the ground. They were cleaned out about once every two weeks. Drinking water was plentiful and was available at all times except the one period of three weeks in December 1944 when the Germans claimed that the pump was broken and needed repair. At that time the water was on only during certain hours of the day.

Food

The usual German ration existed in this camp. Breakfast comprised two slices of bread, half a cup of ersatz coffee and sometimes a small piece of cheese. For dinner the prisoners had soup made out of turnips and potatoes, and for supper each PW was issued three potatoes. About once a month a little horsemeat and sugar was issued. The meager rations were supplemented by Red Cross parcels, the food of which was prepared by PW on the stoves in the barracks.

Clothing

The Germans issued no clothing to the PW although there was a great demand for winter overcoats and warm garments. Red Cross shipments were received quite regularly and distribution was made of the necessary clothes to each PW. The English had set up a shop to repair shoes and there was also a tailor shop in the camp. The Germans did not confiscate any uniforms of the prisoners who were allowed to keep whatever clothing they had.

Treatment

The treatment of PW was correct. There were no indications of any disciplinary actions having been taken against American PW. The guards were older men and would do favors for the PW for cigarettes. Consequently there was a sort of mutual understanding and as long as the PW did not cause any trouble they were not interfered with by the Germans.

Work & Pay

PW from Marlag and Milag never worked outside of the camp, but when they were asked to do so they refused. Seamen 2/C were made to do work within the camp but the Seamen 1/C did nothing except work on cleaning details and KP within the barracks. Those PW who worked received 40 pfennings per day, and according to statements of some they received seven marks 50 pfennings a month. The money was in camp currency and could be spent in the PX operated by the Germans. In November 1944 the Germans stopped issuing camp currency and paid the PW in German marks. No man was ever allowed to have more than 30 marks in his possession.

Recreation

In each compound there were sports fields where the PW could play baseball and volley ball. A great deal of equipment was supplied by the Red Cross and YMCA. Other exercise was obtained by walking around in the enclosure during the day, and toward the end of the war the Germans permitted the PW to walk outside the compounds under guard. They would give the guards cigarettes for the privilege of taking these walks and at times would go as far as two and three miles from the camp but never near any town. Plays were put on by the PW in the camp theatre. They also had a band, using instruments issued by the Red Cross and those purchased by the British from the Germans. A well-stocked library (3000 volumes) was run by the British. In regard to education, there were 19 men giving instruction in 25 separate courses, which included languages, mathematics, commercial subjects, vocational, economic and scientific. Classes were very popular and well attended. Textbooks for these courses were obtained from the Red Cross and YMCA.

Mail

In general the delivery of mail was very erratic. The average number of letters received per man per month was seven and required as many as 61 days for transit. Parcel post packages required about 43 days in transit. PW received two letter and four card forms per month, while the medical staff received a double ration of the

forms. The Germans were quite regular in issuing these forms and at times additional ones could be obtained from PW who did not desire to use theirs. There were no restrictions on the number of incoming letters a PW could receive and the letters could be kept indefinitely. German civilian girls censored incoming as well as outgoing mail.

Religion

Two small chapels, one for Protestants and the other for Catholics, were in the camp. Protestant church services were held in the morning and evening of every Sunday. In addition prayers were held every night and there was a mid-week "fellowship discussion group" meeting. The YMCA provided hymnals and prayer books and at Christmas time provided hundreds of booklets with Christmas carols. An English chaplain served as minister. A French civilian internee was the Roman Catholic chaplain; Mass and benedictions were held each day.

Welfare

Representatives of the Protecting Power came to the camp about every three months. They made fairly rigid inspections and received oral and written complaints from the Senior British Officers and the Men of Confidence in the individual compounds. The German staff usually accompanied the Swiss representatives when they made a tour of the camp. Complaints about food, clothes, sleeping accommodations, the need for fuel and other matters were turned over to the Germans. In some cases the complaints were acted upon promptly but in other cases, particularly in regard to the coal situation, action was promised but never fulfilled. According to statements of PW, they felt that the Swiss representatives were doing all they possibly could but were handicapped by the Germans in the High Command.

The Red Cross and the YMCA were particularly helpful in regard to the welfare of the PW. Recreational supplies, books and clothing were provided whenever requested, and whenever representatives of these two organizations came to the camp, PW had ready access to them and could usually obtain whatever they requested.

Evacuation & Liberation

On 8 April 1945, the German camp commander notified PW that the camp was to be moved to Lubeck. The few Americans in the camp were to have marched along with the Royal Navy and Merchant Navy personnel. PW who were unable to march were to remain in the camp under German command. The first day out of the camp the column was strafed by British planes and a great deal of confusion resulted, with most of the men going back to the camp. Some Americans escaped and hid out in the woods west of the camp. They spent several days there but when they became sick from drinking stagnant water they decided to give themselves up. Upon their return they found the English in complete control of the camp.

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STALAG 2B

(Ground Force Enlisted Men)

Location The camp was situated one and a half miles west of Hammerstein, (53°41' N. - 16°58' 30" E.) west Prussia, on the east side of a highway leading to that city.

Strength In August 1943 the stalag was reported as newly opened to privates of the U.S. ground forces with a strength of 451. The Hammerstein installation acted as a headquarters for work detachments in the region and seldom housed more than one-fifth of the PW credited to it. Thus at the end of May 1944, although the strength was listed as 4807, only 1000 of these were in the enclosure. At its peak in January 1945, the camp strength was put at 7200 Americans, with some 5315 of these out on nine major kommando companies which in turn were subdivided as follows:

Company Lauenberg	- 65 kommandos -	1700 men
Company Stolp	- 40 kommandos -	750 men
Company Rummelsberg	- 28 kommandos -	550 men
Company Köslin	- 25 kommandos -	450 men
Company Falkenberg	- 15 kommandos -	315 men
Company Jastrow	- 25 kommandos -	450 men
Company Dt.Krone	- 20 kommandos -	550 men
Company Schlochau	- 12 kommandos -	200 men
Company Neu Stettin	- 15 kommandos -	350 men

Description The camp sprawled over 25 acres surrounded by the usual two barbed-wire fences. Additional barbed-wire fences formed compounds and sub-compounds. Ten thousand Russians lived in the East Compound, while the other nationalities - 16,000 French, 1600 Serbs, 900 Belgians - and the Americans were segregated by nationalities in the North Compound. Within the American enclosure were the playing field, workshops, dispensary, showers and delouser. At times more than 600 men were quartered in each of the three single-story barracks 15 yards wide and 60 yards long, made available to the Americans. Although this resulted in extremely crowded conditions, it contrasted well with the Russian barracks which held as many as 1000 PW apiece. Barracks were divided in two by a center washroom which had 20 taps. Water fit for drinking was available at all hours except during PW's last two months when it was turned off for part of the day. Bunks were the regulation PW triple-decker types with excelsior mattresses and one German blanket (plus two from the Red Cross) for each. In the front and rear of each barracks was a urinal to be used only at night. Three stoves furnished what heat there was for the front half of each barrack, and two for the rear half. The fuel ration was always insufficient, and in December 1944 was cut to its all-time low of 12 kilos of coal per stove per day. On warm days, the Germans withheld part of the fuel ration.

U.S. Personnel

Pvt. Harry Galler was Man of Confidence from August 1943 until July 1944, when the Germans refused to negotiate with him because they had discovered he was Jewish. Pvt. Galler attributes the German discovery to the activities of a purportedly British PW who called himself Pvt. Leonard B. Cornwall but confided that his real name was Leonard B. England. This man was actively anti-Semitic, possessed a list of American PW who were Jews, spoke fluent German and seemed on friendly terms with the German staff. He was suspected by some PW of being a German stool-pigeon planted in camp to create dissension.

With the resignation of Pvt. Galler, M/Sgt. John M. McMahan became MOC - a position he held until his escape from a marching column on 13 April 1945. Other members of the permanent camp staff were:

Adjutant:	M/Sgt. Robert Ehalt
Red Cross Representative:	Pfc. Gunnar Drangsholt
Mail NCO:	S/Sgt. Edward Volberding
Personal Parcel Distributor:	S/Sgt. Stephen Novak
Recreational Supplies:	Pvt. Henry Wintjen
Educational Department:	Sgt. John Dixon
	Sgt. Eastburn Maynor
Protestant Chaplain:	Cpl. Alfred C. Carroll
	Pvt. Bruce Meads
Catholic Representative:	Pvt. Thomas McGovern
Medical Officers:	Capt. Wilbur McKee
	Capt. Henry Wynsen
	Capt. John Moorman
	Capt. Louis Salerno
	Dr. Buls (Belgian)

A Security Committee also existed.

MOC of the nine major kommando companies were:

Lauenberg:	Cpl. John Kuntz
Stolp:	S/Sgt. Jacob G. Schick
Rummelsberg	Pfc. Paul Sapsara
Köslin	Sgt. Warren Mason
Falkenberg:	Cpl. Kenneth Castor
Jastrow:	Pvt. Frank De Luca
Dt.Krone:	1st Sgt. Leonard Fleharty
Schlochau:	Pvt. Arnold Trautman
Neu Stettin:	Pvt. Milton Bartelt

German Personnel

Although the German commandant seemed correct in his attitude toward American PW, it is unlikely that the extreme severity of some of his underlings could have existed without his knowledge and consent.

Oberstleutnant Von Bernuth:	Commandant
Oberst Von Keppler:	Commandant
Oberstleutnant Segars:	Executive Officer
Hauptmann Springer:	Kommando Officer
Hauptmann Giesel:	Security Officer

Hauptmann Wagner:	Medical Officer
Unteroffizier Krause:	Chief Censor
Feldwebel Kohler:	Lager NCO
Unteroffizier Wendorf:	Kommando NCO

Of the Germans listed, only the medical officer was liked by PW. The censor was disliked to an extreme, and PW hated Springer, Wendorf and Kohler all three of whom were described as Nazi fanatics who enjoyed wreaking hardships on Americans. Springer is held to be responsible for the killing of men on kommandos.

Treatment

Treatment was worse at Stalag 2B than at any other camp in Germany established for American PW before the Battle of the Bulge. Harshness at the base stalag degenerated into brutality and outright murder on some of the kommandos. Beatings of Americans on kommandos by their German overseers were too numerous to list, but records show that 10 Americans in work detachments were shot to death by their captors.

In the fall of 1943, when Hauptman Springer was seeking men for work details, American NCOs and medical corpsmen stated that according to the Geneva Convention they did not have to work unless they volunteered to do so, and they chose not to volunteer. At this, the German stated that he did not care about the terms of the Geneva Convention and that he would change the rules to suit himself. Thereupon, he demanded that the PW in question fall into line and give their names and numbers for kommando duty. When the Americans insisted on refusing, Hauptmann Springer ordered a bayonet charge against them. At the German guards' obvious disinclination to carry out the command, Hauptmann Springer pushed one of the guards toward an American, with the result that soon all PW were forced to line up as ordered.

Typical of the circumstances surrounding the shootings are the events connected with the deaths of Pfc. Dean Halbert and Pvt. Franklin Reed. On 28 August 1943, these two soldiers had been assigned to a kommando at Gambin, in the district of Stolp. While working in the fields, they asked permission to leave their posts for the purpose of relieving themselves. They remained away from their work until the work detachment guard became suspicious and went looking for them. Some time later he returned them to the place where they had been working and reported the incident to his superior. Both of the kommando guards were then instructed to escort the Americans to the kommando barracks. Shortly after they had departed, several shots were heard by the rest of the Americans on the work detachment. Presently the two guards returned and reported that both Pfc. Halbert and Pvt. Reed had been shot to death for attempting escape. The guards then ordered other American PW to carry the bodies to the barracks.

On another kommando, the Germans shot and killed two Americans, stripped them and placed the bodies in the latrine, where they lay for two days serving as a warning to other PW.

Eight of the killings took place in the latter months of 1943, one in May 1944 and one in December 1944. In almost every case the reason given by the Germans for the shootings was "attempted escape." Witnesses, however, contradict the German reports and state that the shootings were not duty but clear cases of murder.

Food

From the Germans, PW received daily 300 grams of coarse bread and 500 grams of potatoes; twice weekly they received 300 grams of meat and 20 grams of margarine; once a week they drew 50 grams of cheese; marmalade was issued sporadically. All these rations were found in the mid-day meal, which was always in the form of soup. The breakfast ration consisted solely of ersatz coffee. There was no supper.

To supplement the meager German diet, PW relied on Red Cross food. From 19 September 1943 until 1 November 1944, one parcel per man was issued each week. From 1 November until 1 January 1945, the parcel distribution was cut to one-half parcel per man per week because of an insufficient stock. During December 1944 and January 1945, however, carloads of parcels, Christmas parcels included, totaling 101,000 were received. In late January five carloads of parcels were received from Stalag Luft 4 where the Germans said there was no room for them. Later the MOC of Stalag Luft 4 stated that he had never approved the shipment.

Parcels were stored in the lager reserve in Hammerstein and in the headquarters of the various kommando companies. In the stalag proper, they were kept within the "Green Post" compound, between the North and East camps. Many of the parcels arriving at the railroad station were broken open. Whether this damage was due to rough handling in transit or to German pilfering could not be determined. On 19 January 1945, 46,000 parcels were on hand. One month later there were none. The German complement had confiscated 6000, the Wehrmacht 2000, civilians stole 400 and the rest were given to evacuating Americans and other fleeing nationalities passing through the area. During this period five carloads (13,500 parcels) destined either for Stalag 2B or 2D were never received. Their disappearance may be attributed either to German looting or Allied air attacks on trains.

Health

Health was surprisingly good. Aside from minor ailments such as diarrhea or grippe, the main illnesses were malaria, from which some 100 men suffered, and diphtheria, which struck a maximum of five men a month.

Medical supplies in the lazaret were woefully short. PW received no stocks from the Red Cross until June 1944, .

when they got a few parcels in response to two telegrams sent without knowledge of the Germans. Pvt. Drangsholt, the Red Cross representative in camp, had twice been able to wire Switzerland when on business outside the stalag. Within two weeks after the first telegram had been sent, medical supplies were flown to camp. Among the most needed drugs were quinine, atabrine and aspirin. Previous to this time, the Germans had refused to pass on the American medical officer's requisitions, saying that he did not need the supplies. For example, when he asked for 1000 phenobarbitol tablets, the Germans would give him 10, say he now had a supply and would get some more only when his current supply was exhausted. Furthermore, the Germans disliked sending telegrams to the Red Cross in Switzerland for such telegrams gave the impression, they said, that the PW were receiving nothing. Yet, at times the Germans gave only 100 atabrine tablets to some 90 men shaking from malaria and then claimed that the Americans had no right to protest to Geneva about lack of supplies.

Examination of men chosen for kommandos provided the American medical officer with a great deal of difficulty, for the German idea of a PW's fitness for duty differed substantially from the American. Captain McKee tried to hide men who were too sick to go out on work detachments and usually put them in the hospital after falsely diagnosing their cases as grippe or dysentery. Some men, always unwilling to work, sought excuses to forestall their being chosen for kommando duty. The medical officer gave these men all the help he could. He did not, however, permit himself to aid malingerers to the point where it would jeopardize those who were actually sick. Ear, eye, nose, throat, mental, venereal and similar serious cases were sent from Stalag 2B to other hospitals. But PW on kommando sometimes suffered from lack of medication and proper treatment.

One 48-hole latrine, with adequate urinal space, served as many as 1800 PW during the daytime. Since they lacked equipment for many months, PW found it difficult to keep the latrine clean. Twice a day a detail washed it down with hot water.

Bathing facilities were satisfactory. A PW could take three hot showers a week. The shower building was open eight hours a day and contained some 80 shower heads. Men were deloused periodically.

Clothing

The clothing situation was always a source of contention. The Germans insisted they had the right to keep a man's old clothing when he was re-outfitted with Red Cross supplies. This made it necessary for PW to work in rain and mud in their one and only uniform. Eventually the Protecting Power did see that PW were allowed to keep their old clothes.

As in other camps, the Germans never pretended to supply enough clothes and when they were called upon to furnish garments issued wooden shoes, rag-like socks, undershirts spun from processed wood and old overcoats infested with bugs. The Red Cross provided enough of all items except shoes, overcoats, socks, gloves and blankets. The Germans had enough blankets in camp to issue two per PW but instead sent them to Volkssturm troops digging trenches in the vicinity.

In December 1944 the camp received from the Red Cross a shipment of 2380 American uniforms badly needed by 1100 new arrivals. The Germans broke all precedent by demanding that the uniforms be yielded to them and subsequently seized them by force. French PW under German guard loaded trucks which were driven out of camp. Although PW received a receipt for the clothing, they never got a satisfactory explanation. The Man of Confidence complained to the commandant three times and was told that the confiscation order came from the Red Cross. The Protecting Power denied knowledge of any such order and promised an investigation.

Work

Except for housekeeping chores benefiting PW, no work was performed in the stalag. All men fit to work were sent out to kommandos where conditions approximated the following:

A group of 29 Americans were taken under guard to a huge farm 6 kilometers from Stolp, where 12 French PW were already working without guards. Americans were billeted in a section of a large brick-floored barn. Adjoining sections were occupied by pigs, cows and grain. PW slept on double-decker bunks under two blankets. The French had a small building of their own. Guards lived in a small room opening onto the Americans' quarters.

Each day the men rose at 0600 and breakfasted on Red Cross food and on potato soup, bread and hot water (for coffeee) which they drew from the farm kitchen. At 0630 they washed their spoons and enamelled bowls and cleaned their "barracks." They shaved and washed themselves in three large wash pans filled from a single spigot which gave only cold water. The outdoor latrine was a three-seater.

At 0700 they rode out to potato fields in horsedrawn wagons driven by coldly hostile German farmhands who would welcome the opportunity tc shoot a "kriegie." Under the eyes of a watchful, armed guard they dug potatoes until 1130, when they rode back to the farm for the noon meal. This consisted of Red Cross food supplemented by German vegetable soup. Boarding the wagons at 1300, PW worked until 1630. The evening meal at 1700 consisted of Red Cross food and the farmers issue of soup, potatoes and gravy. After this meal they could sit outdoors in the fenced-in pen (30 feet by eight feet) until 1830. Then the guard locked them in their section for the night.

On Sundays the guard permitted PW to lounge or walk back and forth, in the "yard" all day, but they spent a good deal of their time scrubbing their "barracks" and washing their clothing. Sunday dinner from the farm usually included a meat pudding and cheese.

Once a month each PW received a large Red Cross food box containing four regulation Red Cross parcels. These were transmitted to distant kommandos by rail and to nearby units by Wehrmacht trucks. Parcels were stored in the guard's room until issued. The average tour of duty on a farm kommando lasted indefinitely. On other work detachments it lasted until the specific project has been completed.

Pay

The finance officer collected $17,000 from the Americans in camp. None of this money was returned.

PW who did no work received no pay. Working PW received 70 pfennigs a day in lagergeld which was of little value since it could be spent only on knicknacks which were seldom available either in the stalag or kommando headquarters.

Mail

Each PW was furnished with two letter forms and four cards per month except for a few months when a shortage, reputedly caused by bombing, cut the issue in half. Medical orderlies received double allotments. Forms were not withheld as punishment. Surface mail to the U.S.A. averaged three and a half month's in transit; airmail, six weeks. Only a spot-check censorship was made by the American staff.

The number of incoming letters was unlimited and PW could retain such mail indefinitely. Surface mail from the U.S.A. took four months to reach camp; airmail, five weeks. All letters were censored at the stalag by Wehrmacht personnel, civilians and SS troops. As a rule, censorship was sloppy. Once a week incoming mail was delivered to kommandos and outgoing mail picked up and brought to the camp for censoring and dispatch. Communication between the men at the stalag and those on kommando was permitted.

Personal parcels generally arrived in good condition about four months after being mailed. Some of these parcels, like a few of the letters, were censored in Berlin. Most, however, were censored at Stalag 2B, where an American always witnessed the censoring. German guards on work detachments made a habit of stealing cigarettes from personal parcels, and at the base camp 90,000 Old Gold and Raleigh cigarettes were confiscated because their packages bore the slogan "For victory - buy war bonds."

Morale

Morale of the Americans as a group was exceptionally high. They were always "cocky." All propaganda efforts by the Germans were ineffective and paradoxically lifted the morale of PW who had schooled themselves to believe

the exact opposite of what they recognized as German propaganda. Discipline was good, with only a few PW causing trouble. PW were largely satisfied with their American camp staff which saw that they were regularly fed and adequately clothed. Only during the period of the evacuation march when PW encountered wretched quarters and lack of food did morale dip.

Welfare

All PW felt extremely grateful to the Red Cross for delivering food, clothing and medical supplies. Had it not been for the Red Cross, states the Man of Confidence, many more men would have died.

The Protecting Power representative visited the camp quarterly and investigated all complaints. Although the visits did not accomplish much, it was felt that the representative had the interests of PW at heart and did as much as he could for them. The May 1944 visit differed from the other in that it seemed to accomplish better results. Kommando killings ceased, except for one in December 1944, but whether this was because of the Protecting Power or coincidence is not known.

The YMCA provided PW with sports equipment, books and musical instruments enough to earn the gratitude of the many men who availed themselves of recreational opportunities.

Religion

The chaplaincy in Stalag 2B was initiated by Pvt. Bruce Meads who arrived in August 1943. When his health broke down in February 1944, leading to his eventual repatriation, he was succeeded by Cpl. Alfred C. Carroll. At first regularly scheduled chapel services were held in any available barracks space. Later permission was granted worshippers to leave the American compound and use the French chapel. With the consent of the abwehr officer, Pvt. Meads began the practice of visiting one kommando each Sunday. Subsequently his assistants visited as many as four kommandos per Sunday.

Catholics attended regular Masses celebrated by a French priest. He and his assistant, Pvt. Thomas McGovern, visited working parties twice monthly. Aside from the services conducted by these representatives, no organized religious activities for kommandos existed.

Recreation

In 1943 and the spring of 1944, PW were locked up in their compound and could only walk in a 50 x 50 yards space in the rear of the three barracks occupied by Americans. In the summer of 1944, after one year in camp, Americans were given access to the athletic field situated in the center of the camp between barracks #8 and #10. Football, softball, basketball and volley ball could be played on this

field simultaneously. Most equipment came from the YMCA and some came from the Germans. The softball field could be used at any time in the evening after 1700 hours; the football field, volley ball and basketball courts were shared with PW of other nationalities.

By November 1944 some 8000 books had been received from the YMCA, Red Cross and European Student Relief Fund. Sgt. Eastburn Maynor was in charge of the library which could be visited any time during the day or evening. A reference library of 2500 books was maintained in addition to the 8000 volumes already mentioned.

A theater built by the French was shared by all. Several original musical comedies were produced by Americans, and since the theater seated only 300 men, five separate performances had to be given to assure each PW of an opportunity to attend. At times the band and theater group, under guard, were permitted to give performances for the benefit of work detachments. The band numbered 18 pieces; all instruments were supplied by the YMCA or Special Services, U.S. Army.

Once three groups totaling 1500 Americans were escorted to motion pictures in Hammerstein - a privilege accorded PW of other nationalities. The Americans spruced up and wore class "A" uniforms putting German officers and soldiers, who were untidy, to shame. This was resented by German civilians and Americans were not taken again to the movies in Hammerstein.

Evacuation & Liberation

On 28 January 1945, PW received German instructions to be ready to evacuate camp at 0800 the following morning. Upon receipt of these instructions, the MOC set up a plan of organization based on 25-man groups and 200-man companies with NCOs in charge. On the day of evacuation, however, PW were moved out of camp in such a manner that the original plan was of little assistance. German guards ordered PW to fall out of the barracks. When 1200 men had assembled on the road, the remaining 500 were allowed to stay in the barracks. A disorganized column of 1200 marched out into the cold and snow. The guards were considerate, and Red Cross food was available. After the first day, the column was broken down into three groups of 400 men each, with NCOs in charge of each group.

For the next three months, the column was on the move, marching an average of 22 kilometers a day six days a week. German rations were neither regular nor adequate. At almost every stop Sgt. McMahan bartered coffee, cigarettes or chocolate for potatoes which he issued to the men. Bread, the most important item, was not issued regularly. When it was needed most, it was never available. The soup was, as a rule, typical, watery German soup, but several times PW got a good,

thick dried-pea soup. Through the activity of some of the key NCOs, Red Cross food was obtained from PW camps passed by the column in the march. Without it, it is doubtful that the majority of men could have finished the march. The ability of the men to steal helped a lot. The weather was atrocious. It always seemed to be either bitter cold or raining or snowing. Quarters were usually unheated barns and stables. Sometimes they slept unsheltered on the ground; and sometimes they were fortunate enough to find a heated barn.

Except for one period when Red Cross food was exhausted and guards became surly, morale of the men remained at a high level. Practically all the men shaved at every opportunity and kept their appearance as neat as possible under the circumstances.

From time to time weak PW would drop out of the column and wait to be picked up by other columns which were on the move. Thus at Dahlen on 6 and 7 March, the column dwindled to some 900 American PW. On 19 March at Tramm, 800 men were sent to work on kommandos, leaving only 133 PW who were joined a week later by the large kommando company from Lauenberg. On 13 April the column was strafed by four Spitfires near Dannenberg. Ten PW were killed. The rest of the column proceeded to Marlag 10C, Westertimke, where they met the men they had left behind at Stalag 2B who had left on 18 February, reached Stalag 10B after an easy three-day trip, and then moved to adjacent Marlag 10C on 16 April. Westertimke was liberated by the British on 28 April 1945.

-XXX-

STALAG 3B

(Ground Force Non-Commissioned Officers)

Location

Stalag 3B was situated three-quarters of a mile northwest of Furstenberg, Germany (52.9 N - 14.42 E), which is 60 miles southeast of Berlin and 15 miles south of Frankfurt-on-Oder. The camp lay on the east bank of the Oder Spree Canal, between the canal and the railroad, and was set in an agricultural region.

Strength

As of 20 July 1944, this ground forces, enlisted men's camp held, out of a total of 22,522 prisoners, 2903 Americans of whom 2207 were in the camp, 27 in the infirmary and 36 in the hospitals, including three American doctors and 27 NCOs, members of the sanitary personnel. The remaining 600 were in work detachments.

By 18 December 1944, the number of Americans in the camp and its kommandos totaled 4207, 3338 of whom were in the base camp at Furstenberg. Of the 4207 American PW, 3205 were NCOs; three were American medical officers.

The number of army ground force personnel, mostly NCOs, continued to mount in Stalag 3B. Finally, when the Germans decided to move the men westward on 31 January 1945, it had reached 5000.

Description

The Furstenberg camp, a typical large stalag, served as the base installation while numerous working kommandos operated within a considerable distance. Also connected with Stalag 3B were a stalag infirmary, a stalag lazaret and a hospital at Gorden.

Stalag 3B is spread out on a plain, two kilometers southwest of the railroad station, and two kilometers from a glassworks. The American camp, which during the early part of 1944 consisted of six wooden barracks, was 350 meters from the entrance to the stalag, at the left of a central avenue. The barracks were set 20 meters apart, perpendicularly to the central avenue. Behind these barracks was a spacious, sandy lot where the PW could walk about freely, play games or prepare individual meals. A small barrack was located in the middle of this lot; it was for the American MOC and his assistant and was used as an American administrative barrack. This small barrack consisted of two rooms, one of which was comfortably furnished and served as the office; the other as a bedroom, with two single wooden beds.

The PW barracks were divided into two parts, each housing, in early 1944, 150 to 190 men or an average of a little over 300 men per barrack. In early 1945, when the men were evacuated, 12 instead of six barracks were provided for the Americans, whose compound measured 300 by 2000 feet, and 450 men instead of 300 lodged in each barrack.

Each half of a barrack was separated from the other by the lavatories, and by a small room which served as an individual kitchen. Two latrines with flushing water were installed at each end, but were only used at night.

Situated on one side of each barrack were a series of triple-decker bunks; the other side consisted of a central passageway and of tables and stools placed near the windows. Light was dim due to the fact that the men's clothing hung from lines stretched in all directions. The barracks were absolutely full; the cubic amount of air was sufficient, but the habitable space was very inadequate. Later on, when more PW moved in, it was necessary to remove some of the tables and install more bunks.

Electric lights were insufficient, making reading at night very trying on the eyes. The barracks were heated by means of three large brick stoves for each half barrack. The quantity of coal furnished the men was insufficient, even for mild winter weather.

The lavatories in the center of each barrack had 24 running water faucets available at all times for the 300-400 men in the barracks. Nearby were large cement tubs for the laundry, but PW had no hot water for that purpose. In the corner of this central laundry, was a stove used exclusively for the preparation of individual dishes.

The kitchen was spacious and well lighted, but lacked utensils.

An additional barrack served as a recreation hall, theatre, church and library. This barrack was entirely built with material from the Red Cross: crates, paper, cans, etc.

U.S. Personnel

Three different enlisted men held the position of MOC at Stalag 3B, serving their terms in the following order: M/Sgt. Clyde M. Bennett, S/Sgt. Arthur S. Taylor and S/Sgt. Joseph C. Gasperich. Sgt. Taylor relieved Sgt. Bennett in May 1944 when the latter departed from camp. Sgt. Gasperich fell heir to the position in August 1944, and served up to and including the evacuation of the camp. Medical officers present in the stalag were Capt. Sidney Brockman, who later left, 1st Lt. Henry W. Hughes and 1st Lt. Stanley M. Awramik, who came in from kommando to replace Capt. Brockman. Cpl. Herman Foster was placed in charge of Red Cross parcels. An American enlisted man, Sgt. Richard M. Gray, acted as chaplain in the American compound, while a Polish padre served as chaplain for the entire camp. Capt. Louis Salerno also served as a medical officer at this camp for a time.

German Personnel

Camp Commandant at Stalag 3B was Oberst Blau, while Oberleutnant Gross served as Lager Officer and Feldwebel Schoen as Lager NCO. The Oberst was an old-line German soldier, rarely seen by PW. Gross, five feet nine inches, 140 pounds, thin, hatchet-faced, femine in appearance and speech, intensely hated by Americans because he constantly bedevilled them. He sometimes kept them out for two hours on appel, hailed them out of the barracks just when they were about to eat, and confiscated their food and cigarettes on shallow pretexts. Schoen, five feet eight inches, 170 pounds, heavy-set, black hair, black-bearded, rough-faced, was reported by PW as a vicious person.

Hauptmann Winkler was the camp security officer. Major Wolfe, the medical officer, rarely had anything to do with PW. The recreation officer, Lt. Von Fricken, was five feet, 11 inches tall, 35 years old, slim, suave and brown-haired. He spoke excellent English. He appeared to be in charge of theatrical activities and said he made frequent trips to other camps. He told Americans that he had managed a W. T. Grant store in an eastern state and that he was forced to enter the Wehrmacht while visiting Germany. He cursed the Germans while talking to the PW and although he was sometimes openly ridiculed by the PW, who did not salute him nor come to attention when he entered their barracks, he apparently did not ask that they be disciplined. Some PW could not decide whether he was a German or American spy. Von Fricken also told another story: He had represented the Gestapo for 12 years in the United States, and boasted that he got out of the country two days before the FBI would have caught him.

Treatment

It was reported that Hauptmann Winkler, Oberst Blau and Lager Officer Gross never abided to a great degree by the Geneva Convention. They always claimed that they were giving the PW all that the German High Command permitted them and would take orders and recommendations from no one else except the High Command.

The PW had difficulty in submitting themselves to the extremely strict discipline of the camp. German camp authorities, from the Commandant down to the lowest-ranking officer, were very narrow-minded and obstinate to all proposals with regard to an easier running of the camp. It was, therefore, difficult for the PW to acclimate themselves.

The most serious problem encountered by the PW in Stalag 3B was undoubtedly that of the continual repetition of searches and the confiscation of such articles as cigarettes, clothing and food.

There were no atrocities.

Food

In early 1944 there were no serious complaints about the food ration. Cooking was done by Americans who did a good job in accordance with American taste. In addition

to the German rations, PW received a regular supply of Red Cross parcels, amounting to one per man per week. Food at this time was plentiful and PW appeared well nourished.

Meals were prepared under the supervision of an American NCO who was held in great esteem by the other PW. At first, when Red Cross parcels had not yet been received at the camp, the basic food rations furnished by the American authorities were carefully weighed by the American head cook, but when Red Cross parcels began to arrive the German rations were no longer weighed. However, the rations varied little at this time, except for sugar and potatoes which at times were reduced in quantity by one-third.

The average German basic food ration for two weeks and for 26 men was as follows:

Meat	8,500 gr.	Marmalade	8,050 gr.
Margarine	10,025 gr.	Pastes	2,510 gr.
Cheese	1,485 gr.	Cereals	935 gr.
Bread	12,090 gr.	Potatoes	728,000 gr.
Sugar	10,400 gr.		

PW complained of the poor quality of the potatoes, of which 20-40% frequently had to be thrown away. Furthermore, oftentimes peas received by the PW were infested with worms.

In the kitchen there was a stove which used exclusively for preparing individual meals. This stove was added by the camp commandant to make up for the insufficient number of individual stoves in the barracks. The lack of dishes, forks and knives was noticeable, however, the PW did not complain greatly over this and manufactured their own utensils.

During the latter part of 1944, the following meals could generally be provided each day from the German rations: ersatz tea or coffee for breakfast, a litre of soup for dinner, a dry ration of about one-half pound loaf of bread divided among six men and a pound of margarine for 30 men, together with a few potatoes. This amounted to about six potatoes, three spoonfuls of sugar, three spoonfuls of jam and 300 grams of bread per man per week (an average loaf of bread weighed 1500 grams). In addition, the Germans issued dehydrated rutabaga soup five times a week, potato soup once a week and grain or vegetable soup once a week. These dehydrated soups were frequently full of maggots.

During the period 10 September to 18 December 1944, the PW received only one Red Cross parcel each. Aside from rare next-of-kin parcels, they lived solely on German rations which had deteriorated to rutabaga soup, bread, potatoes (12 to a man per week), and ersatz coffee or tea. They were constantly hungry and the food situation was not alleviated until 18 December when each PW received one parcel and thereafter a half parcel a week.

In December 1944, the Germans commenced dumping the Red Cross food parcels out of the cans into dishes. The Germans controlled this procedure while the Americans watched, and five Germans were intercepted stealing chocolate, raisins and cigarettes from the parcels. Each barrack leader assigned his own men on detail to watch and after that nothing was stolen. A protest to the Protecting Power was lodged on the opening of the parcels, but the Swiss replied that the Germans were within their rights as the contents of the parcels were given to PW in an edible state. During this time, the commandant would not permit a prisoner to receive his cigarettes from his next-of-kin parcels. The cigarettes were removed from the NOK parcels and placed into a storeroom and distributed three packs weekly along with five packs from the Red Cross parcels. However, no PW was to have more than five packs of cigarettes in his possession.

Private cooking was hampered through lack of fuel and the fact that the stoves were too large and practically useless for cooking.

Food was sufficient when backed up with Red Cross parcels but the men endured hardships if this supplement was lacking. One PW had the following to say regarding the German ration: "A lot of us became sick from eating rotten food but we had to eat to live. They fed us lots less than we could eat."

In September 1943, after the PW received Red Cross parcels, they experienced their first "shake-down" inspection by the Germans. The pretext was that PW had too many cans of coffee and too many cigarettes and had supposedly started a black market among the citizens of Furstenberg, who in turn shipped supplies to the Berlin black market. This was untrue but the Germans confiscated all cans of coffee in excess of one can per man, cigarettes in excess of two packs and any extra quantity of margarine and meat. A month later, the same thing occurred and any extra coffee and food was confiscated. During these searches the guards stole many articles not supposed to be confiscated.

On 31 January 1945, the PW were evacuated from Stalag 3B. They were provided with no food at the beginning of the march or the following day when they stopped at their first bivouac area. They received no food until the afternoon of the third day when they received one-fifth of a loaf of bread per man. Throughout the march they were given very little water and for two days they had no water whatsoever. For the entire seven days of the march they drew one and one-quarter loaf of bread per man and one-eighth of a #2½ can of cheese for eight men at one time. This was the entire German ration for the march.

In May 1944, following an unsuccessful escape attempt, Gestapo agents visited Stalag 3B and staged a thorough

search. PW were kept outside quarters during the search and when they returned to the barracks they discovered that food had been removed from many of the Red Cross parcels. This food was not returned.

Health

First Lt. Henry W. Hughes and 1st Lt. Stanley M. Awramik were in charge of the camp's infirmary. Lt. Hughes was permitted daily to visit the American patients at the camp's lazaret where the patients were attended by American medical orderlies. Conditions at the lazaret were said to be quite satisfactory though there was no definite ward or bed space reserved for the Americans. All the surgical work was performed by a Russian PW surgeon who was very capable. Other American doctors, Capt. Sidney Brockman and Capt. Louis Salerno, also served at Stalag 3B.

German drug and medical supplies were rationed and Americans had to use principally Red Cross supplies. Dental facilities were insufficient, with only one dentist, an Italian, in charge of the entire camp. There was a lack of material, especially for fillings. The men had difficulty in being treated as there was always a long waiting list.

All mental cases from Stalag 3B were sent to the mental home at Gorden near Braunschweig. The Senior American Medical Officer, Lt. Hughes, was permitted regular visits to the hospital to ascertain the well-being of the patients.

In December 1944 a new military hospital, consisting of three new brick and cement barracks, was made available in the camp. The surgical installation was complete, with rooms for dressing wounds, septic and antiseptic operation rooms, consultation room, laboratories, pharmacy and lounge for doctors and members of the sanitary personnel. The only complaint concerning the military hospital was that the rooms were inadequately heated, except for the room of post-operative cases and the one occupied by fever patients. In December 1944, 90 patients were in the military hospital, including a few serious cases (1 case of perforating appendicitis, 1 case of chronic nephritis and 1 case of tuberculosis of the bones); stomach ulcers were common in the stalag. The large number of anemia cases was due, according to the doctor, to undernourishment. Tonics for the undernourished as well as milk for the fever patients were needed. Cases of gastritis, cholecystitis and rheumatism were also frequent.

A small epidemic of diphtheria broke out in the camp in November 1944. In December 1944, there were three diphtheria patients and six germ carriers.

In conclusion, it can be said that the health of the men at Stalag 3B was good, and that the cooperation between the Germans and the American doctors in caring

for patients was excellent. There was practically no interference from the Germans with regard to the actual medical attendance and nursing of the sick in the camp. Although at times the medical supply was low, it always proved to be sufficient.

Clothing

In February 1944 the clothing situation in the base camp was good, due mostly to the arrival of shipments from the Red Cross. At this time, however, men on labor detachments were in need of clothing, such as working outfits. Each man owned a uniform and a few extra pieces. The same held true for the labor detachments, but in this case, extra clothing was necessary. Each man also owned a pair of shoes; a second pair was issued only when the first pair was obviously beyond wear.

In November 1944, PW felt they needed 2000 blankets, 8000 pairs of wool socks, 1500 pairs small-sized shoes, 4000 pairs of gloves and 1000 pairs of shoe soles, leather, nails and heels. They complained at this time of the confiscation of American clothing by the Germans in September, when 181 articles of clothing were discovered missing after a German search. The camp commandant stated that the clothing, and other articles confiscated, had come into the camp illegally and were justly confiscated. Furthermore, it was reported by the MOC that military clothing (jackets and trousers) were confiscated by the German security department from men arriving from other stalags, before admittance to Stalag 3B. The commandant stated that the clothing which was confiscated was excessive to the clothing marked on the men's clothing cards and that it must be considered as illegally obtained.

Clothes were taken from the warehouses of the Americans on the pretext that they must serve to clothe prisoners newly arrived at transit camps. The following objects were confiscated on 18 November 1944: 1604 belts, 340 pairs of stockings, 221 shirts, 517 sweaters, 1200 wool caps and 1140 shoe laces. The Americans had to turn over 1000 coats on 25 November 1944. On 4 December they were asked for 1000 pairs of shoes. After bargaining it was finally decided that they had to turn over to the Germans 100 pairs of shoes and 80 packages of food.

During early December the Germans requested the Americans to relinquish their field jackets. When the Americans refused the Germans backed up their demands with entrance into camp of reserve soldiers who, together with the guards, fixed bayonets and fired some shots into the air. However, almost simultaneously the PW, following the orders of MOC Gasperich who had been warned of the expected seizure, ripped and tore the jackets beyond use because it was suspected the enemy wanted them for their own soldiers.

Generally speaking, at this time (in spite of the seizures) the American PW were well equipped; they lacked only coats and small tunics. In summary, it can be said that the PW were properly clothed at all times, but it must be noted that the Germans did not issue any clothing and that the men were kept warm only by the Red Cross clothing shipments into the camp.

Work

Five kommando detachments were dependent on Stalag 3B. In February 1944, 668 soldiers were employed in the construction of a power plant at No. 1 (Trattendorf); 14 volunteer NCOs were doing agricultural work at No. 2 (Schorbus); 67 soldiers were digging, building embankments and doing similar work for German railroads at No. 3 (Markisch-Heide); 27 NCOs were doing agricultural work at No. 4 (Schuhlen); and 14 NCOs were employed in agriculture at No. 7 (Roitz).

All NCOs were working voluntarily; no pressure was applied to make them work on kommandos. In the base camp, only the members of the sanitary personnel and a few hundred volunteers worked. Work was the hardest at Kommandos No. 1 and No. 3, where civilian overseers were sometimes extremely harsh.

Pay

Whether at the base camp or at the kommandos, workers received a minimum of 70 pfennings per day. The members of the sanitary personnel received 30 marks per month; the senior medical officer 96 marks. These amounts corresponded to German army pay, but were paid in "lagergeld" instead of German currency. The printing of the "lagergeld" stopped in the fall of 1944, when amounts due PW were supposedly credited to their accounts by the German Finance Office.

Mail

American PW received two letter forms and four postcards each month. There was no limit to the number of letters they could receive. Medical officers and members of the sanitary personnel were entitled to twice the amount above-mentioned. Letters took from three to four months to reach the United States after leaving the camp, and a reply took approximately the same length of time. The correspondence was censored in Berlin; the period of time elapsing between the arrival of a letter and its release by censorship was not in excess of a week.

In November 1944, all outgoing PW mail was stopped for a fortnight because one American had written an anonymous letter to a false address, insulting the German Reich, its Fuhrer and the camp authorities. As this man's name was never disclosed to the Germans the whole camp was punished by the above-mentioned measure taken by camp authorities.

Americans complained most about the fact that their families were regularly sending NOK packages and yet comparatively few were received during their incarceration.

Morale

Morale in Stalag 3B was good. PW were satisfied with the way the camp was being run by their elected officers, and eagerly awaited the day of liberation. As they were sure of an Allied victory, it can be said that the major detriment to their morale was the occasional lack of food.

Welfare

The American Red Cross and the YMCA performed an admirable task in looking after the welfare of the American PW. Art, sporting and recreational equipment furnished to the PW by the YMCA was gratefully accepted and put to good use. Morale was boosted by messages transmitted from their families to PW by the YMCA delegates.

Red Cross food kept the men from going hungry; and Red Cross clothing, from freezing. Influenza would have been widespread among the men in the winter had not the Red Cross supplied the PW both with blankets and medicines.

Approximately every three months, delegates of the International Red Cross and the Protecting Power visited the camp, at which time they made investigations of the conditions and listened to the complaints of the PW. Strong protests were made to the Germans when room was found for improvement in the existing conditions. Many attempts were made to better PW life, even though sometimes the delegates were powerless to aid the Americans. Representatives made reports to the State Department on the care of our PW by the Detaining Power.

"I'll never forget the Red Cross or the YMCA" (a common statement of gratitude made by the PW at Stalag 3B), is testimonial to their interest in the welfare of American PW.

Religion

One barrack provided space for a theatre at one end, a chapel on the other and a library in the center. The inside of the chapel was built entirely by the PW with material from the Red Cross; crates, paper, cans, etc. The chapel was attractively decorated by numerous PW draftsmen and painters.

A Polish Catholic priest, Father Walter Samolewicz, interned at Ilag 7Z (Tittmoning), held divine services at the camp. Private Richard Gray, a member of the sanitary personnel, acted as Protestant chaplain. PW were quite satisfied with this arrangement.

Germans never interfered with religious activities.

Recreation

As mentioned above, a large barrack housed a theatre, a library and a chapel. Concerts and lectures were held in this building. The library contained 10,800 books, many of which were sent to labor detachments. Cpl. Edward P. Tryor was librarian.

Exercise was obtained through occasional walks, baseball, football, basketball, volleyball and other sports, equipment for which was furnished by the YMCA. Indoors, PW played table tennis, cards, checkers and other games. They established a glee club and choir as well as a 17-piece orchestra. Instruments were furnished by the YMCA. Original productions were presented semi-monthly or monthly in the theatre built by the PW. Twice-weekly quiz contests helped to enliven the monotonous routine. Art equipment was also furnished by the YMCA for those who desired to work along that line.

Educational courses were offered in German, Agriculture and Spanish for the benefit of the PW. The school, however, was not well attended.

Until late 1944, beer could sometimes be bought by PW at the canteen, which usually was very low on other stock.

Evacuation

On 31 January 1945, 5000 PW from Stalag 3B were marched west on two hours' notice. They had not expected the move. Roads were jammed with refugees and troops, and PW at Stalag 3B had expected to be left there until overrun by the Russians. At 1500 hours they were told to be ready to move in two hours. Actually, it was three or four hours later before they left the camp, and then they spent two more hours outside before the movement got underway. Each man had one-half of a Red Cross parcel issued three or four days before the march started, but no food was on hand at the start of the march. Although ample stocks of Red Cross parcels were kept at Guben, a few miles away, the Germans made no effort to bring them to Stalag 3B for distribution. On the first day the column marched until 1700 hours, 1 February, 24 consecutive hours from the time they had been alerted to move. This long march was made through snow, ice and deep puddles. PW were then jammed into small barns to sleep. The next seven days they completed their march to Stalag 3A (Luckenwalde), 108 kilometers west of Furstenberg, arriving 7 February 1945. For food during the march they had a total of one-half loaf of bread and one-half pound of cheese per man plus one ration of soup distributed once to one-half the men. Horse carts followed the column and picked up PW too sick to keep up with the column. On the march the guards were guilty of no brutality, and sympathized with PW.

Liberation

The PW remained in Stalag 3A until 22 April, when the camp was liberated by the Russians. Stalag 3A was turned over to the Americans on 6 May at which time Lt. Col. Walter M. Oakes and a Col. Herte of the American PW took over the camp.

-XXX-

Moosburg

STALAG 7A.

(Ground Force Enlisted Men
Air Force Officer Evacuees)

Location

Stalag 7A was in Bavaria 35 kilometers northeast of Munich and one kilometer north of Moosburg (48°27' North Latitude, 11°57' East Longitude).

Strength

This installation served several purposes: It was the camp for NCO's of the U. S. Air Force until 13 October 1943 when all 1900 were transferred to Stalag 17B. It was the transit camp from which officers and men of the ground forces captured in Africa and Italy were routed to permanent camps. It was headquarters for working parties of ground force privates who numbered 270 in September 1943, dropped to nil the following month and rose to 1100 in July 1944. As Germany collapsed in the spring of 1945, it became the final gathering place for no fewer than 7948 officers and 6944 enlisted men moved from other PW camps.

Description

Situated in a flat area surrounded by hills, the camp was roughly a square divided into three main compounds which in turn were subdivided into small stockades. The Nordlager held newly arrived PW two days while they were searched, medically examined and deloused. The Suedlager held only Russians. The Hauptlager housed PW of other nationalities - French, Polish, Jugoslav (Serb), British and American. Although nationalities were segregated by compounds, intercommunication existed. No effort was made to keep transient American PW from the permanent inmates. Seven guard towers and the usual double barbed wire fence formed the camps perimeter.

Barracks were rectangular wooden buildings divided into two sections, A and B, by a central room used for washing and eating. In it were a water faucet, and water pump and some tables. The barracks chief and assistant had a small corner room to themselves. PW slept on triple-deck wooden bunks and gunny-sack mattresses filled with excelsior. Gradually the number of men per barracks increased from 180 to 400. Men slept on tables, floors and the ground.

U. S. Personnel

Because of the camp's shifting population, leaders were changed frequently. Among them were:

MOC Cpl. Charles Daramus	February 1943
MOC S/Sgt. Earl Benson	March 1943
MOC S/Sgt. Clyde M. Bennett	March 1943
MOC S/Sgt. Kenneth J. Kurtenbach	July-Oct 1943
MOC M/Sgt. John M. McMahan	June-Sept 1943
MOC S/Sgt. James P. Caparel	Oct 1943 - Feb 1944
MOC T/Sgt. Philip M. Beeman	Feb 1944 - Apr 1945

SAO Col. A. Y. Smith (AAF) Feb - Mar 1945
SAO Col. Paul R. Goode April 1945

Chaplain 1st Lt. Eugene L. Daniel Feb 1944 - Apr 45

Major Fred H. Beaumont, Medical Corps
Captain Gordan Keppel, Medical Corps
Captain Louis Salerno, Medical Corps
1st Lt. James Godfrey, Medical Corps
Captain Garrold H. Nungester, Medical Corps

German Personnel

The guard was drawn from the Fourth Company of the 512th Landeschuetzen Battalion. Four officers and 200 men were employed on general duties. Ten sonderfuehrers with the rank of officers acted as interpreters. Twenty civilian men and 20 civilian women were employed as clerks in the camp. This complement was increased in April 1945 with the arrival of the entire camp staff and guard personnel of Stalag Luft 3, Nurnberg. Control of the camp, however, remained in the hands of the regular Stalag 7A staff:

Commandant	- Oberst Burger
Asst. Commandant	- Oberstleutnant Wohler
Security officer	- Hauptman Baumler
Doctor	- Oberfeldarzt Dr. Zeitzler
Lager officer	- Hauptman Malheuim
Parcel officer	- Sonderfuehrer Kluge

It has been reported by some PW that Burger, Malheuim and Kluge, a fanatic of the worst sort, were shot three days after the camp's liberation.

Treatment

German treatment was barely correct. In addition to harsh living conditions caused by extreme overcrowding, instances of mistreatment occasionally cropped up. Thus, at one time the Germans tried to segregate all Jews among U. S. PW, calling them in from work detachments and allotting them a separate barrack. The MOC lodged a protest with the Protecting Power immediately. When questioned, camp authorities stated that the action was taken for the Jews' own protection against possible civilian acts of violence. Eventually, the attempt at segregation failed and Jews were not distinguished from other American PW.

At the Munich kommando, guards jabbed PW with bayonets and hit them with rifle butts. In the base camp an NCO reported being kicked, then being mistaken for a Frenchman and choked during an argument and later handcuffed after an escape attempt. Once an American, using a hole in the fence instead of the open gate to go from one compound to another, was shot at but not hit. In April 1943 a Russian was shot on the compound wire and left hanging there wounded. An Englishman went to lift him off the wire and was shot but recovered. The Russian died.

In July 1943, 500 Americans without overcoats were forced to stand in formation for five hours in a heavy rain. The reasons, said the Germans, was that the Americans had not been falling out at exactly 0800. During the first two weeks of August, the camp discipline officer had the PW fall out for roll call at 2100, 2400 and 0300. They were punished thus because many Americans had been escaping. PW showed no annoyance and displayed such good morale that the Germans discontinued the practice, especially since both sides knew that the PW could sleep all day but the guards could not.

Sonderfuehrer Kluge once marched 1100 PW for a whole day without food through Nurnberg so they could see the devastation wrought by Allied bombing.

In September 1943 when PW ventured out of the barracks to watch the bombing of Munich, Germans came into the compound with dogs, one of which jumped into a window and was stabbed by a retreating American. During the Regensburg raid when PW were again outside their barracks contrary to orders, a German night fighter flying over the camp reported that someone in the American compound was signaling with a mirror. After that PW were notified that anyone outside the barracks during an air raid would be shot. One night a JU 88 with lights on made two runs over the camp and dropped cement blocks. Germans then started propagandizing to the effect that the Allies were bombing their own PW camps.

Food

Here too PW depended on Red Cross food for sustenance and nourishment. Until September 1944, each PW drew his full parcel per week, and a two months' reserve was kept on hand in camp. Then the ration was cut to half a parcel per man per week and the reserve not allowed to exceed one month's supply. With the influx of PW in the beginning of 1945, stocks fell to an all time low. PW feared a complete collapse in the delivery of Red Cross food. Fortunately, this fear never materialized.

In July 1943, the MOC persuaded the Germans to issue each man a spoon and crockery plate. Cooking utensils were improvised from whatever materials could be found. Fifteen or 20 men formed mess groups, pooled their Red Cross rations and took turns in preparing them. They cooked over the small barrack's stove. Each barrack had two men on the chow detail, and the space around each stove was therefore quite crowded. At 0630 the detail brought hot water from the compound kitchen. Breakfast usually consisted of coffee and a few biscuits only. At 1130 they brought the German dinner ration - usually potatoes boiled in their

jackets - from the kitchen. Sometimes spinach-type greens or barley soup were added. Five men divided one loaf of coarse German-issue bread. For supper at 1700, PW drew more potatoes. On Sundays they received greens with morsels of meat. Twice a week they had a small piece of margarine. At first, French cooks prepared the food in the compound kitchen, but since Americans thought some of the victuals disappeared in the process, they later installed their own cooks.

Health

Health was good. Several American doctors, captured early in the African and Italian campaigns accompanied PW to Stalag 7A and were able to remain with them until their transfer to permanent camps. The camp also had some British doctors and some French. Men reported to the dispensary and if deemed ill enough for hospitalization were kept in the compound infirmary which could accomodate 120 patients in 10 rooms. More serious cases went to the German camp lazaret outside the compound. This installation consisted of eight barrack-type buildings, two of which were equipped for surgical operations.

Allied doctors complained of a serious shortage of medical supplies. At first they used German drugs and such equipment as they could get. Later the Red Cross sent supplies which alleviated the shortage but did not satisfy the doctors' demands.

Despite delousings, lice and fleas troubled PW a great deal. Americans, however, unlike the Russians, never contracted typhus. For a time they suffered from skin diseases brought about by uncleanliness; washing facilities were completely unsatisfactory and a man was extremely lucky to take a shower every 15 days.

Latrines were always a source of contention between PW and camp authorities. Complaint was constantly made that the pits were emptied only when they threatened to overflow and that there was no chloride of lime to neutralize the odor which permeated the surrounding area.

Emergency dental treatment could be obtained in the German lazaret.

Clothing

Since the Germans issued practically no clothing and the flow of needy transients through camp was heavy, the clothing shortage was always acute. From February 1943 on, the reports of the Protecting Power repeatedly carried such paragraphs as the following: The general condition of clothing is very bad. The American Red Cross should send out clothing in sufficient quantities as the cold season is approaching. Great coats and whole uniforms are badly wanted. The supply of uniforms issued by the Detaining Power is

12

mainly old French or British uniforms in a state of mending which leaves no hope for long wear.

Clothing from the Red Cross did arrive, but not in sufficient quantity to provide for equipping newly captured PW who were wearing only the clothes in which they were captured and sometimes not even those. It was observed by a Man of Confidence that four warehouses in camp contained many new English overcoats and battle-dress outfits as well as many articles of American clothing taken from PW as they entered the camp or left it. These included aviators' leather jackets, American coveralls, combat jackets, pants, shoes, hats and shirts. It was believed by the Man of Confidence that the clothing in storage was more than enough to alleviate the suffering of both American and British PW, yet all pleas and efforts to have the Germans ameliorate the situation were to no avail.

Work

The original group of air force PW - comprised almost exclusively of NCO's - was not ordered to work, nevertheless, before going to Stalag 17B many volunteered for kommando duty merely to get on the other side of the compounds barbed wire and have more liberty. On the other hand, Germans insisted that ground force privates be assigned to labor details. Camp authorities tried to have PW volunteer for duties - a practice which the MOC advised against except in the case of farm work, which was less unpleasant than other kommando duty.

Attached to the camp were as many as 83 work detachments ranging in size from four men (usually sent out to farms) to 900 men. The three main kommandos were situated in Munich, Augsburg and Landshutt. After the heavy bombing of Munich on October 4, 1944, a work detachment of some 1400 PW was formed. This party consisted of 60% Americans and 40% British. It left the Stalag at 0500 and returned at 2000. PW traveled in cattle cars from Moosburg station, standing up all the way to Munich and back. The time spent in the train going to and returning from work was three and one-half hours. During their eight working hours a day, PW cleared debris, filled bomb craters and dismantled damaged rails. Men received two meals at Munich and their regular ration at the camp. In the event of air attacks, adequate shelter was provided. There were instances of Germans pricking with bayonets and hitting them with rifle butts to make them work faster and harder.

A model farm kommando was described as follows: Twenty PW live in a farmhouse of five rooms, including a room with a stove for the cooking of Red Cross food. They sleep in three of the rooms in double-tier beds with straw mattresses and eiderdowns. Bathing and toilet facilities are primitive but similar to those used by their employer. The

men sometimes eat with the farmer for whom they work and their diet, supplemented with Red Cross food, is good. Medical supplies for minor injuries are on hand and a civilian doctor takes sick parade twice a week. PW each possess two work uniforms, a dress uniform and two pair of shoes. Fourteen of the men are free on Sundays; the others do the essential farmwork, namely feeding cattle and cleaning stables. Razor blades, beer and matches are available. PW have neither time nor facilities for sports. The mail situation is satisfactory except for the pilfering of parcels en route from the stalag to the detachment.

On only three occasions was the Man of Confidence permitted to visit kommando camps for inspection. Although he turned in complaints, no improvement in conditions resulted.

Pay

In March 1943, it was reported that the matter of paying officers had not yet been settled between PW and camp authorities. In the same month, an American enlisted man on kommando was paid the equivalent of $13.00 a month. Another worker revealed that the wage rate of .70 Reichmarks a day. In July this was increased to .90 Reichmarks a day.

In April 1944, an advance of 50 Reichmarks was made to officer PW of the Allies, but in April 1945, the Senior British officer stated that officers were not being paid and that they had not received any pay statements for seven months. Similarly, the 1400 man kommando working daily in the debris of Munich was not paid because the labor performed by them was considered by the Germans to be "emergency" labor to which anyone resident in the Reich was subject without pay.

In October 1944 it was announced that PW pay, which up to that time had been in camp money or "lagergeld" would henceforth be in Reichmarks.

Mail

During their stay at camp, transient PW were allowed to send one postcard, usually their first, in which they informed next-of-kin of their German PW number and address. PW permanently at 7A drew two post cards and two letter forms per month. Incoming mail, censored at camp, was unlimited in quantity but sporadic in arrival, especially at kommandos, which received no incoming mail for months at a time. Both outgoing and incoming letters took four months in transit, as did personal parcels. The flow of such parcels was light.

On 10 November 1944, four French PW were employed to unload coal into a bunker of the German barracks situated in the vicinity of the camp. They found

that a large number of both official and private letters and cards were scattered in the coal. They picked up several loose letters as well as bunches tied together in small packages. Part of the latter included official letters addressed to the spokesmen of the different nationalities represented in the camp, coming from the Red Cross, the YMCA and other organizations. The next morning the French, British and American spokesmen went to the Commandant's office to protest and demand explanations as well as the restitution of the mail after inspection of the bunker in question. The following day, the camp commandant made it known that he would take charge of the affair personally. After a hasty censorship, a considerable number of letters (two sacks weighing 88 pounds apiece) were delivered to PW. These letters dated from the months of May, June and July 1944. It was impossible to say how long they had been in the coal. The commandant stated that an error had been made and that punishment would be inflicted, but that no letter had been burned.

The assistant American MOC was under the impression that mail - including outgoing letters - definitely had been burned. This impression was strengthened after the incident when the Germans issued additional new letter forms.

Morale

Initially morale was high. Air force NCO's repeatedly made breaks from camp, and before their transfer to Stalag 17B showed their hostility toward the Germans by often refusing to salute, by failing to come to attention when a German officer entered the barracks and by their careless, slouching, hands-in-pocket walk.

After their sojourn in camps in Italy, ground force PW captured in 1942-43 were pleasantly surprised by the treatment accorded them in Stalag 7A which had been a model camp for several years.

In spite of a succession of able camp leaders, morale slumped when the camp grew so crowded that PW had neither decent living quarters, nor satisfactory sanitary facilities nor sufficient clothing. Early in 1944 the MOC reported that stealing among PW was common and that fights were inevitable. However, except for a period of three weeks in December 1944, the strongest morale factor - food - was available. In the spring of 1945, although the camp was more crowded than ever, morale did not slump. Red Cross food kept coming through, and the arrival of officers with strong, experienced SAO's did much to prevent the spirit of PW from disintergrating.

Welfare

A representative of the Protecting Power made a routine visit to the camp every six months. In addition he would make a special trip whenever summoned. MOC's were permitted to talk to him privately, but despite oral and written protests about both general and specific affairs of the camp, very little improvement was ever effected. The representatives repeatedly said that his hands were tied and there was nothing he could do about it. One MOC felt that the representatives were characterized by indifference and inertia until the arrival of American officers in the camp. Subsequently, their attitude changed for the better.

PW were indebted to the Red Cross for almost all their food, clothing and medical supplies. While food parcels arrived regularly and in sufficient quantity most of the time, the camp suffered a constant clothing shortage since the stocks shipped from Geneva were not enough to equip the many thousands of transient PW who passed through the camp every few months.

The first groups of PW arriving in camp reported the presence of recreational and athletic equipment which had come from the YMCA. Later, however, as the stalag evolved into a transit camp and work camp, need for such equipment was less evident and little was received.

Religion

In 1943-44, Camp chaplain was 1st Lt. Eugene L. Daniel who won the admiration of both Americans and British. He had complete liberty to look after PW in the stalag, and once a month went to visit the two work detachments near Munich. He also received permission to visit the Wehrkreis PW hospital. In addition to Chaplain Daniel, Captain Arkell of the Church of England held services for Protestants.

Roman Catholics were permitted to attend weekly masses celebrated by French priests.

Jews were for a time segregated in separate barracks. Otherwise they were not discriminated against. Nor were they offered any religious services.

Conditions on kommandos varied. A few were visited by PW chaplains or attended local services, but most had no opportunity for religious observances.

Recreation

Before their transfer to 17A, the air force NCO's main diversions were baseball and bridge. They also played a good deal of volley ball. For a time they had a basketball court, but tore down the backboards for fuel. They also played horseshoes. A Camp baseball league had many games between the "POWs", "Wildcats", "Bomber Aces", "Luftgangsters",

and so on. At first they were allowed to use the soccer field behind their compound, a privilege later denied them. PW lacked sufficient space for recreation, especially toward the end when the compound was so completely overcrowded that Italians were sleeping in tents on the baseball diamond.

The original study program included classes in Spanish, German, French, auto mechanics, economics, bookkeeping, accounting, and mathematics. The YMCA furnished the books for these courses.

A theater kept its 1943 participants interested and its audience amused. Plays were given in a room between two barracks, and because of the limited accommodations, a show could have quite an extended run. The program was well arranged to provide continued and varied entertainment. One of the plays was "Our Town". Another was one written by the director of the group and called, "Uncle Sam Wants You". The German censor cut some of the jokes from this piece, but he did not understand most of them. The camp commandant attended one performance. There were also a minstrel show and some singing performances. When the camp became so crowded during the fall of 1943, a group of men used to go from barracks to barracks to sing each night. The band was short of instruments.

In 1944 and 1945, conditions deteriorated. Ground force enlisted men indulged in little or no sports or recreation either because there was too little equipment for the transients or because as regular members of kommandos they were too tired after the day's work to play.

Influx

On 2 February 2000 officers of the South Compound, Stalag Luft 3, reached Stalag 7A, followed on 7 February by 2000 more from the Center Compound. They were placed in the Nordlager from which small groups were taken to be searched, deloused and sent to the main camp. No facilities were provided for washing, sanitation, cooking and only straw spread over the floors of the barracks served as bedding. In somewhat less than a week, all personnel had moved to the main camp, where conditions were little better.

Over 300 men were housed in barracks normally holding fewer than 200 men. In order to provide bunks for this number in each building, the Germans arranged three-decker in groups of four, thus accommodating 12 PW per unit. The barracks had no heat and as a result were damp, cold and unhealthful. The German administration was unprepared for the influx of new personnel and seemed completely disorganized. German rations were unbelievably poor;

no inside sanitary facilities existed and there was no hot water. The 2000 PW of the Center Compound were quartered in two adjacent but separate stockades some distance from the enclosure holding their mates from the South Compound. At the rear of the barracks in each of the two stockades, a small open area - barely large enough to hold the various units for counting - was available for exercise. Aside from this, no facilities were provided for physical training or athletics. Nor was there any recreational material other than books in a traveling library provided by the YMCA.

In March the Germans provided boilers and fuel enough to allow each man to draw a pint of hot water twice daily. In order to improve the quantity and quality of German rations issued to Americans, Colonel Archibald Y. Smith, SAO, made a continuous effort to place an American officer and several enlisted men in the German kitchen. This was finally accomplished 24 March and henceforward rations improved steadily. The German administration also consented to allow groups of 50 men under guard to gather small quantities of firewood in the area adjacent to the camp. These improvements, although falling far short of the provisions of the Geneva Convention, helped a great deal to improve the mental and physical state of all the PW. During all of this period Red Cross food, initially on a half-parcel basis, was increased to full parcels and the health of the PW remained remarkably good. By this time, too, news of the Allied advances acted as a tonic on the men.

The first of April saw many PW from other camps throughout Germany evacuated to the vicinity of Stalag 7A to prevent their recapture by Allied forces pressing toward the center of the Reich. This influx brought about a state of unbelievable overcrowding and confusion. Members of the former South Compound were moved en masse into the enclosure occupied by the Center Compound. Thus 4000 PW lived in an area which had been unable to support 2000 satisfactorily. Large tents were erected in whatever space was available; straw was provided as bedding. It was not uncommon to see men sleeping on blankets in foxholes. Col. Paul R. Goode became SAO upon the arrival of officers from Oflag 64 in mid-April. Air force officers from Nurnberg arrived on 19 April. During the last 10 days of April it was felt that all PW would be left in camps, following the agreement between the German Government and the Allies, and preparations were made accordingly. However, fear that the Germans would move PW to the Salzburg redoubt and there hold them as hostages was never absent.

Liberation

On 27 April two representatives of the Protecting Power arrived at Moosburg to attend and facilitate the transfer of the PW camp from German to American authority. On the 28th it was learned from Oberst Burger, the commandant, that order was to be assured by assigning PW officers to various PW groups. Moreover, Col. Burger kept the entire German administrative staff in camp, as well as the complete guard staff. Col. Burger had not yet received from the German military authorities a reply to his question concerning the avoidance of fighting in the vicinity of the camp. The commandant asked the two Swiss to act as intermediaries between himself and the Men of Confidence.

After a conference with the Men of Confidence, the two Swiss were recalled to the commandant. It appeared that the unexpectedly rapid advance of the American forces in the region necessitated an immediate conference between the camp authorities, represented by Oberst Braune, and the local German Army Corps Commandant in order to propose the exclusion of fighting from the Moosburg region. The proposal, made by Oberst Braune and the Swiss representative, was accepted in view of Article 7 of the Geneva Convention. Appropriate instructions were given to the commander of the division in the sector in question, and the proposal was formulated for presentation to the advancing Americans. According to this proposal, an area of a few kilometers around Moosburg would have to be declared a neutral zone.

At dawn on the 29th, the American and British Men of Confidence, the Swiss representative and an officer from the SS fighting division in the region drove in a white Red Cross car to the American lines. They were stopped by two tanks commanded by a colonel who drove them to the commanding general. After a long discussion with the German spokesman, the general declared the proposal unfavorable and unacceptable. The German returned to his divisional headquarters and the Swiss then drove to camp with the Men of Confidence.

At 1000, immediately after their arrival, the battle started. The ensuing fight lasted some two and a half hours, during which a shell hit one of the camp barracks injuring 12 of the guards and killing one. PW remained calm although tank shots, machine guns and small arms fire could be heard. Half an hour after the fighting abated, Combat Team A of the 14th Armored Division appeared at the camp entrance. The guards, unresisting, were disarmed. PW burst out rejoicing but did not try to leave camp. The supervision of the camp automatically went to the Men of Confidence, and an official transfer did not take place.

By instruction of the American military commander, part of the German administrative personnel remained at their posts. The remainder, including the guards, were taken as PW. The Swiss reported that treatment of German camp authorities and guards by American troops was correct.

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Bad Orb

STALAG 9B

(Ground Force Privates
Captured in the "Bulge")

Location

Stalag 9B was situated in the outskirts of Bad Orb (50°14" N. - 9°22" E.) in the Hessen-Nassau region of Prussia, 51 kilometers northwest of Frankfurt-on-Main.

Strength

On 17 December 1944, 985 PW captured during the first two days of the German counter-offensive, were marched for four days from Belgium into Germany. During this march, they received food and water only once. The walking wounded received no attention except such first aid as American medical personnel in the column could give them. They reached Gerolstein and were packed into boxcars, 60 men to the car. The cars were so small that the men could not lie down. PW entered the cars on 21 December and did not get out until 26 December. En route, they were fed only once. Eight men seeking to escape jumped into a field and were killed by an exploding land mine. The German sergeant in charge, enraged that anyone had attempted escape, began shooting wildly. Although he knew that every car was densely packed with PW, he fired a round through the door of a car, killing an American soldier. The day after Christmas, the men arrived at Bad Orb.

On 25 January the camp reached its peak with 4070 American enlisted men. The following day 1275 NCO's were transferred to Stalag 9A, Ziegenhain. On 28 February 1000 privates left Stalag 12A, Limburg, for Bad Orb. They marched in a column which averaged 25 miles a day. On leaving, they were given one-half a loaf of bread and a small cheese for the five-day march. No medical supplies were available; men who collapsed were left behind under guard. PW had no blankets and some had only a shirt and pair of trousers for clothing. Their arrival, plus that of other PW, brought the camp strength to 3333 on 1 April 1945.

Description

From 290 to 500 PW were jammed into barracks of the usual one-story wood and tarpaper types, divided into two sections with the washroom in the middle. Washroom facilities consisted of one cold water tap and one latrine hole emptying into an adjacent cesspool which had to be shoveled out every few days. Each half of the barracks contained a stove. Throughout the winter the fuel ration was two arm loads of wood per stove per day, providing heat for only one hour a day. Bunks, when there were bunks,

were triple-deckers arranged in groups of four. Three barracks were completely bare of bunks and two others had only half the number needed with the result that 1500 men were sleeping on the floors. PW who were fortunate received one blanket each, yet at the camp's liberation some 30 PW still lacked any covering whatsoever. To keep warm, men huddled together in groups of three and four. All barracks were in a state of disrepair; roofs leaked; windows were broken; lighting was either unsatisfactory or lacking completely. Very few barracks had tables and chairs. Some bunks had mattresses and some barrack floors were covered with straw, which PW used in lieu of toilet paper. The outdoor latrines had some forty seats - a number totally insufficient for the needs of 4000 men. Every building was infested with bedbugs, fleas, lice and other vermin.

U.S. Personnel

Pfc. J. C. F. Kasten was Man of Confidence, assisted by Pvt. Edmund Pfannenstiel who spoke German fluently. When Pfc. Kasten was sent out on a kommando working party, the barracks leaders suggested that Pvt. Pfannenstiel succeed him. Pvt. Pfannenstiel refused to take the post, however, until the barracks leaders had consulted PW in their charge and gained their approval. Subsequently, he was an extremely able MOC. His assistant was Pfc. Ben F. Dodge. Other important members of the staff were:

Captain O. C. Buxton	Medical Corps
1st Lt. J. P. Sutherland	Medical Corps
Captain M. A. Eder	Dental Corps
1st Lt. S. R. Neel	Chaplain
1st Lt. E. J. Hurley	Chaplain

German Personnel

Noteworthy members of the German complement are listed below:

Oberst Sieber	Commandant
Oberstleutnant Woderg	Deputy Commandant
Hauptmann Horn	Camp Officer
Hauptmann Kuhle	Lager Officer
Sonderfuhrer Bonnkirch	Welfare Officer
Gefreiter Weiss	Interpreter
Pvt. Wolfgang Dathe	Mess Guard

It was Hauptmann Kuhle who permitted American PW to replace Russians in the camp kitchen and Pvt. Dathe who enabled them illegally to appropriate extra rations. Gefreiter Weiss, at great personal risk, informed the MOC as to the progress of the war and daily located the position of advancing American troops on maps which he smuggled in to the American PW.

After a 23 March 1945 visit the Swiss Delegate reported, "In spite of the fact that it is difficult to obtain any kind of material to improve conditions, it is most strongly felt that the camp commander with his staff have no interest whatsoever in the welfare of the prisoners of war. This is clearly shown by the fact that although he made many promises on our last visit, he has not even tried to ameliorate conditions and is apt to blame the Allies for these conditions due to their constant bombing."

Treatment

In a report describing Stalags 9A, 9C and 9B, which he visited 13 March 1945, the Representative of the International Red Cross stated, "The situation may be considered very serious. The personal impression which one gets from an inspection tour of these camps cannot be described. One discovers distress and famine in their most terrible forms. Most of the prisoners who have come here from the territories of the East, and those who still continue to come, are nothing but skin and bones. Very many of them are suffering from acute diarrhea with bloody phlegm due to their complete exhaustion. Pneumonia, dorsal and bronchial cases are very common.

The prisoners who have been in camp for a long time are often also so thin that those whom one had known previously can hardly be recognized.

These prisoners, in rags, covered with filth and infested with vermin, live crowded together in barracks, when they do not lie under tents, squeezed together on the ground on a thin pallet of dirty straw or two or three per cot, or on benches and tables. Some of them are scarcely able to get up, or else they fall in a swoon as they did when they tried to get up when the Representative was passing through. They do not move, even at meal time, when they are presented with their inadequate German rations (for example 9B has been completely without salt for weeks).

Food

When the Americans arrived the Kitchen was in charge of Russian PW under the lax supervision of German guards. Sanitary conditions in the kitchen were foul and the soup prepared was practically inedible. When the MOC was permitted to substitute American PW for the Russian help, there resulted a considerable improvement in the preparation of the meager prison fare. The eight bushels of potatoes which German Pvt. Bathe enabled the Americans to steal was most necessary since the German ration was terribly slight. It consisted of 300 grams of bread, 550 grams of potatoes, 30 grams of horse meat, 1/2 litre of tea and 1/2 litre of soup made from putrid greens. The greens made the men sick, and the MOC intervened

to have the allotment of greens changed to oatmeal. Later, even this small ration was cut so that at the end of their stay PW were receiving only 210 grams of bread and 290 grams of potatoes per day. The MOC was convinced that a larger ration was available and attributes its non-distribution to Oberst Sieber, the commandant. The full ration listed above was the minimum German civilian ration minus fresh vegetables, eggs and whole milk. No German soldier was so ill fed.

A thousand men lacked eating utensils of any kind - either spoons, forks or bowls. They ate out of their helmets or old tin cans or pails - anything on which they could put their hands.

Only one shipment of Red Cross food reached camp, 2300 parcels on 10 March 1945. Failure of another shipment to arrive from Geneva was attributed to the chaotic transportation conditions within Germany.

The German rations had a paper value of 1400 calories. Actually, the caloric content was even further lowered by the waste in using products of inferior quality. Since a completely inactive man needs at least 1700 calories to live, it is apparent that PW were slowly starving to death.

Health

In the month between 28 February and 1 April, 32 Americans died of malnutrition and pneumonia. Medical attention was in the care of the two American medical officers and 10 American medical orderlies. On 23 March the infirmary held 72 patients, 22 of whom were pneumonia cases. The others suffered from malnutrition and dysentery. Influenza, grippe and bronchitis were common throughout the camp. No medical parcels were received from the Red Cross and the extreme scarcity of medicines furnished by the Germans contributed to deaths of PW who otherwise might have been saved. The MOC considered it fortunate in light of the exposure, starvation and lack of medical facilities, that more PW did not die.

Clothing

Instead of issuing clothing, the Germans confiscated it from PW. Upon being captured many men were forced to give up everything they were not wearing, such extra items as shoes, overshoes, blankets and gloves. Some had only shirts and trousers, no jackets. Others lacked shoes and bundled their feet in rags. At Limburg and elsewhere en route from the front, Germans took Americans' overcoats with the result that as late as the last week of March one-fifth of the PW had none.

No clothing came from the Red Cross because of the transportation breakdown.

Work

On 8 February 350 of the physically fit PW were sent to a work detachment in the Leipzig district. Other men at the camp were forced to carry out the stalag housekeeping chores. Until Pvt. Pfannenstiel became MOC, German guards had marched into the camp and taken the first men in sight for necessary camp details. This resulted in considerable inequity since they not infrequently took the same men time after time. The MOC arranged to take care of all details through men physically fit to work and subsequently furnished a daily work roster to the Germans.

Pay

In December 1944 en route to Bad Orb, PW were lined up at Waxweiler and forced to give up all money in their possession. About $10,000 was taken from the 985 men by the German lieutenant in charge and no receipts given.

Since the issue of "lagergeld" had been abolished, no money was paid to officer or NCO's. The amount due them was credited by the Germans to their accounts every month, to be settled at the war's end. Non-working privates received no pay.

Mail

No incoming mail was received. The issue of letter-forms was irregular and haphazard, but each PW was permitted to mail home a form postcard informing NOK of his status.

Morale

Morale fell rapidly under the brutalizing conditions and by March the majority of men were absolutely broken in spirit, crushed and apathetic. The Swiss delegate emphasized the fact that even American and British PW asked for food like beggars.

Welfare

The Protecting Power inspectors visited the camp on 24 January and 23 March 1945, each time reporting the atrocious camp conditions and extracting promises from the commandant.

The International Red Cross representative wrote an extremely strong report decrying camp conditions as he saw them on 10 March 1945. That more Red Cross food and supplies did not reach camp must be attributed to the disruption of German transport.

For similar reasons, the YMCA was never able to visit the camp nor to supply recreational equipment.

Religion

Until 25 January, no room was available for either Catholic or Protestant services, although two chaplains were present in the camp. In February, however, the chaplains held regular services for both denominations and received the cooperation of German camp authorities.

When the MOC refused to single out Jews for segregation, a German officer selected those American PW who he thought were Jews and put them in a separate

barracks. No other discrimination was made against them.

Recreation

From the end of December to the middle of January, PW were allowed to leave the barracks only between 0630 and 1700 hours; the rest of the time they were locked in. Outdoor recreation was non-existent because of PW's weakness. The British lazaret at Bad Soden sent over 32 books - the only volumes obtainable.

Proposed Evacuation

Being informed of the rapid advance of the American forces, Pvt. Pfannenstiel began to prepare a camp organization to meet the contingencies of their arrival. Secretly, with the aid of the barrack leaders, he selected 500 of the most reliable men in the camp and made them military police, whose authority was to begin when the American troops arrived in the vicinity, at which time they were to maintain control and order within the camp. About the third week in March, the district commander ordered that 1500 of the men in Stalag 9B be marched eastward to another camp. When he received this order, subject protested that to march the men in their semi-starved condition was impossible. He realized that the Americans were close and wished to prevent the march by any means possible. The district commander met his protest by reducing the number demanded to 1000. Subject was told to choose the 1000 best fitted for the march. He then went to the German medical officer in charge of the camp and pointed out that there were a number of diphtheria and possibly typhus cases in the camp and that to march them off might spread an epidemic through the area covered by the march. He was successful in convincing the doctor who proceeded to slap a ten-day quarantine on the camp. By this means subject was able to prevent the movement of any of the American Ps/W until they were rescued by American forces.

Liberation

Subject was attending church services in the camp at 1415 hours on Easter Sunday, 1 April 1945, when he was called out of the church. He suspected at this time that the Americans might be closing in on the camp. Sent by the camp commander to Bad Orb, a hospital town, he was taken to the major in command of the town hospitals. The major proposed that subject take a white flag and proceed to meet the American troops and guarantee the surrender of the town. This proposal strongly accorded with the wishes of the townspeople. Subject felt that an American soldier wandering around alone behind German lines carrying a white flag might have some trouble so he refused to go unless he was accompanied by two unarmed German officers. The major named two officers and with them subject proceeded toward the edge of town. By this time an American unit, rumored to be one of great size and power, had occupied the hill overlooking the town. As subject's party reached the edge of the town, it was stopped by the German, Major Fulkmann,

charged with the military defense of the town. Fulkmann denied having made any arrangement with the medical major for its surrender and refused to permit the party to proceed until he had consulted with the medical major.

At this time the German garrison opened up with small arms fire against the American position on the hill, and the Americans answered with machine guns. Subject's party was caught between the two fires. The German officer with him then walked down the street and told him to follow and keep cool. In the meantime the American firing, which had started high over his head, was getting lower and lower. Without much time to spare, the German officer and he managed to duck into an underground hospital. During the night the medical major and the major in command of the garrison met at the hospital to consult on what to do. In the meantime the Americans began firing artillery shells into the town. They dropped one shell regularly every 15 minutes. The medical major persuaded the garrison major that resistance was hopeless and the latter agreed to withdraw his troops. The withdrawal took place during the night and the next morning Pvt. Pfannenstiel's party again went forward with their white flag to meet the Americans.

They made contact on the edge of the town with Capt. Langley, commander of an American reconnaissance group of 200 men that had run 60 miles ahead of the main body of the American forces, and hours ahead of its own ammunition supply. By the time that the group entered Bad Orb with its tank guns and anti-tank weapons pointing fiercely in all directions, there was not a single round of artillery ammunition available to be fired from any of the guns. Subject borrowed a car and returned with some of the American soldiers to Stalag 9B. There everything was in order, the German guard unit remained and the camp commander turned over the control of the camp to the Americans. At about noon, American units of the main body began to pass through the town, and when they learned of the pitiful condition of the American Ps/W at Stalag 9B, the units, as they passed through, emptied their PX stores and sent them up to the prisoners. After several days, the American personnel at Stalag 9B were evacuated to camp Lucky Strike near Le Havre.

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OFLAG 13 B

(Transit Camp For Evacuees)

Location — Oflag 13 B was situated in a rural district just outside of Hammelburg, Germany (50°45' N. - 9°54' E.), and formed a part of a complex consisting of other prisoner of war camps within a German military training center.

Strength — Approximately 300 American officers opened the camp on 11 January 1945, and by the time the Protecting Power visited the camp on 23 January 1945, the strength had increased to 453 officers, 12 non-commissioned officers and 18 privates. All of these men were captured on the Western Front between the 15th and 22nd of December 1944. By 25 March 1945, the strength had increased to 1291 officers and 127 enlisted men which included the 423 officers and 67 enlisted men who arrived from Oflag 64 at Schubin, Poland.

Description — The American compound was formerly occupied by Serbian officers and consisted of seven stone barracks of antiquated types. Soon after the opening of the camp as an American Oflag, the buildings received some badly needed repairs which made them livable. Approximately 200 men were crowded into each five-room barrack, and although ventilation and daylight were adequate, each room contained only two drop lights of 15 watt bulbs. During the extremely cold weather, the men tried to keep from freezing by putting on all available clothing and huddling around the one stove furnished to each room. For each stove, the Germans issued 48 coal briquets for three days. These briquets measured about 5" x 3" x 3". As a result of this small ration, the barrack temperature averaged about 30 degrees. At the insistence of the SAO, small details were permitted to "scrounge" for pieces of wood to supplement the fuel supply.

Wash rooms did not exist and the officers had to carry water from the kitchen faucet to the few wash basins supplied to each room. No hot water was available for washing because of the fuel shortage, and the delousing plant was not in operation for three full months. Toilet facilities were completely inadequate in type and number. Complaints about this were handled by the Protecting Power and some improvement was achieved.

U.S. Personnel — Upon the opening of the camp, Colonel Charles C. Cavender became the SAO, and he appointed Major Albert L. Berndt as the SMO. There were no other officers appointed to hold definite offices. However, when the evacuated officers of Oflag 64 arrived at the compound, Colonel Paul R. Goode

became the SAO and organized the camp on the same basis as the compound at Schubin, Poland. He used the Oflag 64 staff, but retained Major Berndt as the SMO.

German Personnel — The German camp commander was Generalmajor von Goeckel, who had as his executive officer Oberst Giese. However, the block commander for the American officers' section was Hauptmann Fuchs. General von Goeckel was the commander of the entire military installation and delegated most of the prisoner of war administration to Oberst Giese.

Treatment — Treatment was only fair. It must be pointed out the the camp was opened at the time of Germany's last offensive, the "Belgian Bulge". Soon after the opening of the camp it was apparent that this thrust was destined to fail, and strong feeling of tension between the American and German personnel existed. There were many Allied air raids in the vicinity, and the air alert system at the camp was rigid.

When an air alert was sounded, all POW were required to hurry to their barracks and were given only three minutes in which to clear the open areas between buildings. One evening a warning signal was given and about an hour later the second alarm was sounded. At this moment, four American officers were standing at the fence talking to some Serbian officers and were slow in leaving the fence. Just as they reached the steps of their barrack, and before the termination of the three-minute period, a guard saw them and fired at them. He was about 75 yards away, but he hit one of the officers in the back, piercing his lung and chest. The officer died the following day of the wounds.

46

When more and more air raids occurred and the rigidity of the air alert rules remained the same, it became necessary for the men to be confined to their barracks for six and seven hours at a time. The SAO complained to the German commandant that the lack of indoor toilet facilities and the long periods of confinement were detrimental to the health of the men. The commandant later rescinded the order, and gave permission for the men to go to the latrine. The following day, one of the officers left the building and walked toward the latrine. A guard yelled something at him in German which the PW did not understand, and the guard immediately shot him in the back of the head. This incident was witnessed by the camp commandant, General von Goeckel, Colonel Goode, and Major Berndt as they were approaching the area. When they reached the officer he was dead and the guard merely stated he did not know about the new rule.

There was one particular rule which caused a great deal of dissension between the Germans and Americans. The commandant issued orders that all Americans were required to salute all German officers first, regardless of their rank. Naturally, this rule was violated on many occasions and was always a subject of discussion between the SAO and the German officials. After the arrival of the officers from Oflag 64, the commandant was persuaded to revoke the order.

Food

When the camp first opened the ration had a "paper value" content of 1770 calories per day. This was below the normal requirement for men getting plenty of sleep and performing no work. The ration was cut several times until it contained only 1070 calories a day. Officers were allowed to purchase supplementary rations from the canteen when supplies were available. These usually consisted of cabbage, carrots and beets. There were no Red Cross packages delivered during the entire period, but the Serbian officers insisted on sharing with the American officers on a per capita basis all of the Red Cross food parcels received by Serbs. In all, approximately 1500 parcels were given to the Americans during the three months of the camp's operation.

The kitchen used by the Americans was suitably equipped, and the German rations were used to the best advantage. The extreme shortage of fuel hampered the preparation of the food, but after the wood-forage details were formed, this situation was improved.

The normal daily menu consisted of one-tenth of a loaf of bread, one cup of ersatz coffee, one bowl of barley soup, and one serving of a vegetable a day. About three times a week a small piece of margarine was issued, and occasionally a tablespoon of sugar. Toward the end of March, many officers were in a dangerous condition due to malnutrition, and the SMO credited the generosity of the Serbian officers with the saving of many lives.

Health

The health of the officers was not good. Many of the men arrived at the Oflag with wounds from the battlefield. Nearly all of them had been marched many miles in bitterly cold weather with insufficient food and rest. Few PW arrived at the camp in vehicles. The lack of a proper diet prevented quick recoveries from such minor ailments as colds, dysentery, trench feet and influenza. Therefore, men with serious wounds and illnesses had little chance of recovery without the assistance of the Serbian compound.

When the 27 medical officers of the compound were captured, their equipment and supplies were confiscated. However, some few drugs and instruments had been concealed and were smuggled into the camp. The 20-bed dispensary was on the second floor of a good brick building which also housed the medical personnel and the first-aid room. All of the rooms were well-lighted and clean. Every effort was made by the medical personnel to make the patients as comfortable as possible. The men who were seriously ill were treated in the adjoining lazaret which was a part of the Serbian Oflag. The Serbian lazaret contained 450 beds, and although there too the equipment was not good, the Serbian doctors had been in prison for about four years and were experienced in successfully treating a variety of "kriegy" ailments with makeshift medicines and equipment. Fortunately, surgical equipment was quite good; the head of the staff was a famous surgeon of outstanding ability.

Soon after the Americans arrived, the SMO of the Serbian compound assigned 60 beds for the exclusive use of Americans, and since "invalid" rations were issued there in addition to the other advantages offered, the men who were admitted to the lazaret had a better chance for recovery.

Clothing

There was no German stock of clothing and no Red Cross clothing was received while the camp was in operation. In the beginning, most of the men had complete uniforms, but lacked extra socks, sweaters and jackets. Shoes were in need of repair at all times and no repair equipment was furnished. Because of extreme cold and lack of fuel, the clothing shortage became a bitter hardship for everyone, and life at Oflag 13 B was reduced to getting enough food to keep well and finding ways and means to keep warm.

Work

The officers performed no work except camp details assigned by the SAO.

Pay

At the time the men were captured, their money was confiscated and a receipt given to each individual. Since there was no pay scale worked out, the men purchased supplies from the canteen on a debit and credit system, using their receipts as collateral. Prices in the canteen were exceptionally high, but by clever manipulation the officers were able to purchase adequate amounts when items were put on sale.

Mail

The outgoing mail was satisfactorily handled, and the usual three letter forms and three post cards per month were issued. However, no incoming mail was received during the camp's operation.

Morale

Morale at this camp was not high. When compared with long-established camps, there was little semblence of organization. The extremely bad conditions seemed to create a feeling of futility and carelessness. Several officers reported that this situation was improved after the arrival of the evacuees from Oflag 64. The example of military discipline, courtesy and personal cleanliness displayed by men who had been forced to march 345 miles through sub-zero and zero weather did a great deal toward raising the morale of the other officers. However, the complete lack of mail and the almost certain knowledge that their families had not been notified of their safety due to the large number of captives, contributed a great deal to the low morale of the PW.

Welfare

The first visit of the Protecting Power was made by accident. The Detaining Power had not notified the Protecting Power of the existence of the camp but on 22 January 1945, representatives of the Swiss legation arrived to inspect Stalag 13-C, and the adjoining Serbian compound in accordance with previous arrangements. When informed by the commandant of the Oflag 's opening, the representatives' request to visit the camp was approved. At that time there were many shortages. Many requisitions were made on the International Red Cross, but supplies were not received prior to the liberation of the camp. Another visit of the Protecting Power was made on 25 March 1945 when acute shortages were reported to the Red Cross again. No YMCA or Red Cross equipment was received by the camp, and the only benefits were received through the courtesy of the Serbian compound.

Religion

There were seven Protestant chaplains and two Roman Catholic priests in the camp, but since the room provided by the Germans for religious services was not heated attendance was small. Religious articles necessary for Catholic services were not available until the last of March.

Recreation

There was one room set aside as a "day-room", but again the lack of heating facilities prevented its becoming popular. The Serbians donated two ping-pong tables, cards and checker-boards while a small group of Australians located nearby donated a piano and some muscial instruments. The "jam-session" became the only form of amusement which stimulated morale. For outdoor activity, there was room for only one sport...horse-shoe pitching, and this had few devotees. The lack of books, theatrical equipment, sports kits and art equipment made the dullness of captivity a constant source of discomfort.

Evacuation

On 27 March 1945, the SAO was notified that the camp would be evacuated that afternoon at 1600. At 1300, American tanks appeared and after a short consultation with the German officials, the SAO decided to surrender the camp to the task force. This force was 50 miles ahead of the main body of American troops and there were no facilities to transport the PW from the camp except on the tanks. The SAO divided the men into three groups: those who were not physically able to make the trip; those who would be able to walk beside the tanks; and those who would have to ride. Out of about 500 who tried to march, only 30 got through to the American lines. Those who rode on the tanks ran into strong enemy opposition, and all were either killed or recaptured. The following day some 500 were moved out by train to Nurnberg. All of the remaining able-bodied men were marched the 90 miles to Stalag 7A, Moosburg. The men who were sick in the lazaret and the infirmary along with the medical staff, remained behind.

Liberation

After the main evacuation from Hammelburg, the Germans left only a token guard around the camp to pick up the American stragglers from the first "liberation", and to guard the Serbians who were not evacuated. The guard company that had made the march from Schubin, Poland, with the members of Oflag 64 was used for the movement of the troops to Nurnberg. The remaining guards were all Volkssturm, and were responsible for gathering the American stragglers together in a compound adjoining the main American compound. As soon as they collected a group of 50 or 75, evacuation marches would begin.

On 3 April 1945, a German hauptman arrived at the camp, and asked the SMO for four of the most seriously wounded prisoners to be designated for transfer to the town of Bad Kissengen where the Germans had supposedly converted 23 resort hotels into 500-bed hospitals. The German officer reported that Bad Kissingen was to be made an open city because Frau Goebbels was living in the town. The SMO protested the movement of these men because it might impair their chances for recovery. When this protest was over-ruled by the German officer, the SMO requested to be permitted to go to the American lines and inform the commanders that the city was "open". This permission was refused, and at midnight four wounded men were taken in a truck to the resort town. The following day, two more evacuations took place involving about 20 sick and wounded officers. After the second trip that day, the driver evidently became nervous over the proximity of the American troops and failed to return to the camp although he had been ordered to evacuate at least 20 more PW during the day.

On 6 April 1945, the 14th Armored Division entered the town of Hammelburg in great force and fired on all remaining buildings, carefully avoiding the camp. However, two large shells believed fired by the Germans did explode in the camp area. There were no casualties during the entire liberation, and the evacuation of the PW was arranged for in an orderly way. By this time only a handful of German guards remained, and they were turned over to CIC units which had accompanied the spearhead.

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STALAG 17B

(Air Force Non-Commissioned Officers)

Location

Stalag 17B was situated 100 meters northwest of Gneixendorf, a village which is six kilometers northwest of Krems, Austria (48°27' N - 15°39' E). The surrounding area was populated mostly by peasants who raised cattle and did truck farming. The camp itself was in use as a concentration camp from 1938 until 1940 when it began receiving French and Poles as the first PW.

Strength

On 13 October 1943, 1350 non-commissioned officers of the air forces were transferred from Stalag 7A to Stalag 17B, which already contained PW from France, Italy, Russia, Yugoslavia and various smaller nations. At the time of the first Protecting Power visit on 12 January 1944, the strength had increased to 2667. From then until the last days of the war a constant stream of non-commissioned officers arrived from Dulag Luft and strength reached 4237 in spite of protestations to the Detaining Power about the over-crowded conditions.

The entire camp contained 29,794 prisoners of war of various nationalities.

Description

The Americans occupied five compounds, each of which measured 175 yards by 75 yards and contained four double barracks 100 by 240 feet. The barracks were built to accommodate approximately 240 men, but at least 400 men were crowded into them after the first three months of occupancy. Each double barrack contained a washroom of six basins in the center of the building. The beds in the barracks were triple-decked, and each tier had four compartments with one man to a compartment, making a total of 12 men in each group. Each single barrack had a stove to supply heat and cooking facilities for approximately 200 men. The fuel ration for a week was 54 pounds of coal. Because of the lack of heating and an insufficient number of blankets, the men slept two to a bunk for added warmth. Lighting facilities were very poor, and many light bulbs were missing at all times.

Aside from the nine double barracks used for housing purposes, one barrack was reserved for the infirmary and the medical personnel's quarters. Half of a barrack was the library, another half for the MOC and his staff, a half for the theater, a half for Red Cross food distribution and a half for the meeting room. In addition, one barrack was used as a repair shop for shoes and clothing. Four additional barracks were added in early 1944, but two others were torn down because they were considered by the Germans to be too close to the fence, thus making it possible for PW to build tunnels for escape purposes. One of these buildings had been used as a gymnasium, and the other as

a chapel. Latrines were open pit-type and were situated away from the barracks.

Two separate wire fences charged with electricity surrounded the area, and four watchtowers equipped with machine guns were placed at strategic points. At night street lights were used in addition to the searchlights from the guard towers to illuminate the area.

U.S. Personnel

Staff Sergeant Kenneth J. Kurtenbach was MOC from the opening of the camp until its evacuation. Major Fred H. Beaumont was the SAO and the medical officer, but took no active part in the camp organization. Captain Stephen W. Kane was the only chaplain and acted in an advisory capacity whenever called upon. There also existed a security committee. Sgt. Kurtenbach carried on the administration with the following organization:

S/Sgt. Charles M. Belmer	Adjutant
T/Sgt. Alexander M. Haddon	School Director
S/Sgt. David H. Woo	Mail Supervisor
S/Sgt. Gerald H. Tucker	Mail Supervisor
S/Sgt. Samuel E. Underwood	Theater Supervisor
S/Sgt. Edward W.Weisenberg	Sports Supervisor

The medical staff consisted of:

Major Fred H. Beaumont
Captain Garrold H. Nungester
Captain Thomas E. Corcoran
Captain Paul G. Jacobs

German Personnel

The German personnel changed somewhat during the camp's existence, but for most of the time, the following men were in control in the positions indicated:

Oberst Kuhn	Commandant
Major Wenglorz	Security Officer
Major Eigl (Luftwaffe)	Lager Officer
Oberstabsarzt Dr. Pilger	Doctor

The blame for the bad conditions which existed at this camp has been placed on Oberst Kuhn who was both unreasonable and uncooperative. Four months elapsed after the opening of the compound before the MOC was granted an interview with the commandant to register protests, and weeks would pass before written requests were acknowledged. Frequently, orders would be issued to the MOC verbally and would never be confirmed in writing. Some cooperation was obtained from Major Eigl, but since there was friction between him (Luftwaffe) and the other German officers (Wehrmacht), his authority was extremely limited.

Treatment

The treatment at Stalag 17B was never considered good, and was at times even brutal. An example of extreme brutality occurred in early 1944. Two men attempting to escape were discovered in an out-of-bounds area [illegible]

adjoining the compound. As soon as they were discovered, they threw up their hands indicating their surrender. They were shot while their hands were thus upraised. One of the men died immediately, but the other was only injured in the leg. After he fell a guard ran to within 20 feet of him and fired again. The guards then turned toward the barracks and fired wild shots in that direction. One shot entered a barrack and seriously wounded an American who was lying in his bunk. Permission was denied the Americans by the Germans to bring the body of the dead man into the compound for burial, and medical treatment for the injured man in the outer zone was delayed several hours.

One PW was mentally sick when he was taken to the hospital where no provisions were made to handle cases of this type. In a moment of insanity the PW jumped from a window and ran to the fence, followed by a French doctor and orderlies who shouted to the guard not to shoot him. He was dressed in hospital pajamas which should have indicated to the guard that he was mentally unbalanced even if the doctor had not called the warning. As the patient climbed over the fence the guard shot him in the heart.

There were about 30 recorded cases of guards striking PW with bayonets, pistols and rifle butt. Protests to the commandant were always useless. In fact, on one occasion the commandant is reported to have stated that men were lucky to get off so lightly.

On another occasion an order was issued that all PW take everything that they wanted to keep and stand on the parade ground as if they were leaving camp. Nothing was touched in the barracks during the search that ensued. The same procedure was followed on the next day, and still nothing was touched. The third day, most of the PW left behind many articles of food, clothing and comfort equipment. On this occasion, German troops entered the compound with wagons and took away any and all articles left in the barracks during the parade. The Protecting Power described this act as plunder to the German commandant who finally promised to return the items, but this proved to be an almost impossible task.

Food

The normal ration issued to a PW for one week was as follows:

Bread	:	2425 grams
Fat	:	218 grams (68 grams were cooking fat. The remaininder for spread.)
Potatoes	:	(Vary up to 2800 grams. For the decrease in potatoes another leguminous plant was substitutded.)
Beets or raisins:		1750 grams
Starch foods	:	150 grams

Cottage cheese	:		94 grams
Sugar	:		175 grams
Marmalade	:		175 grams
Ersatz coffee	:		12 grams
Vegetables	:		450 grams
Salt	:	(approx.)	140 grams
Raisins	:		120 grams
Dried Vegetables	:		43 grams

An average daily menu would contain the following:

3 potatoes
1 cup of soup
22 grams of bread
½ cup of ersatz coffee
3 grams of margarine

Vegetables were issued only when available and within the limits of the quanities available to German civilians.

When reserve supplies of Red Cross parcels were received in the camp, the German authorities reduced their issue ration. Even though protests were made to the commandant by the MOC and the Protecting Power, this practice continued. As soon as the Red Cross supplies would be exhausted, the normal ration would again be issued.

For the first three months absolutely no eating utensils were supplied. At the end of that time, one bowl and one spoon were given to each third man. PW were able to make bowls and spoons from Klim cans, which also served as drinking mugs.

On 17 October 1944, some one broke into the kitchen and stole 275 packages of cigarettes and 35 standard Red Cross parcels complete. Since the keys to the kitchen were held by the Germans it was obvious that they were responsible for the theft. However the commandant did not satisfy the MOC with his report of the investigation.

Toward the last of September 1944, the MOC received a telegram from the International Red Cross that three carloads of food, clothing and comfort supplies would arrive in a few days. These cars did in fact arrive the first of October, but the commandant neither notified the MOC nor had the cards unloaded. Instead, the cars were rerouted to another city where the contents were stored in a military park. Representatives of the IRC arrived a few days later and informed the MOC that the commandant had orders to reroute the shipment for "military reasons." Upon inspection of the cars in the nearby town, only a few of the cases proved to have been pilfered. Although there were only 3000 parcels on hand in the camp, the delivery of these cars was delayed two weeks. On 9 December two more carloads arrived and the shipment was 13 cases short. On 13 December four more cars arrived, of which one car was sixteen cases short, nine other cases pillaged, and one car with two cases missing. Seals on all four cars were broken.

Except for these incidents, the Red Cross supplies arrived in good condition.

Health

In general, health of the PW was good. They maintained their weight until the last month or so before the evacuation; they were active in games and sports, and stayed mentally healthy by keeping busy. Approximately 150 attended sick call each day with skin diseases, upper-respiratory infections and stomach ailments. About 30% of all cases at sick call were for skin diseases attributed to the conditions under which they lived. The acute shortage of water (available four hours each day), lack of hot water, lack of laundry facilities, and over-crowded sleeping conditions created many health problems, but improvements were always noticed during the summer months when the men could be outdoors a great deal of the time.

The average daily strength of the revier was 70, while the adjoining lagerlazaret cared for approximately 40, who were victims of the more serious cases of shrapnel, flak and gun wounds. Conditions there were very satisfactory in equipment, medical, clinical and surgical attendance. X-ray and consultation services were available, and were supervised by very competent medical officers who were prisoners of war of nationalities other than American.

The revier originally consisted of two ordinary barracks and two sectional "knock-down" temporary buildings. These also housed the medical personnel as previously stated. The construction was not weather tight and heating in cold weather was impossible. During most of the cold weather the water pipes froze, but the installation of a new stove in one of the buildings enabled the hospital staff to furnish an invalid diet to each patient and sufficient hot water for a bath on admission and discharge as well as once a week during his stay. The fuel supply was inadequate for these standards, but supplementary fuel was supplied by men who volunteered for wood forage details.

The two temporary buildings were set aside for isolation wards of infectious patients, but because of their poor condition, they were used only in cases of dire need.

The management of the revier was solely in the hands of the American medical PW without any interference from German authorities. A German medical officer was assigned to supervise the revier, but his daily visits concerned administrative problems only.

Clothing

The clothing condition in the camp was not unsatisfactory in the beginning because most of the men had received adequate issues when they passed through Dulag Luft. However, after the confiscation referred to in the paragraph on "Treatment," shortages became acute.

There were never sufficient blankets. The two thin cotton blankets issued by the Germans were described as "tablecloths" by many repatriates, and although the Red Cross furnished many American GI blankets, the strength increased so rapidly that only two-thirds of the men were fortunate enough to be issued one.

As in other camps, the leather flying jackets which most of the men wore at the time of their capture were taken away, but after repeated protests, some of these were returned. Shoes were a problem in the early stages, but the repair shop operated by PW alleviated the condition to some extent. The Serbian shoes issued when GI shoes were not available from the stock Red Cross supplies proved to be inadequate in quality to withstand the cold and mud.

Work — Since all of the men at this camp were non-commissioned officers, they were not required to work.

Pay — The monthly rate of pay for the PW was RM 7.50, or approximately $1.63. However, the men received this money in cash only on a few occasions. The Germans stated that the pay was to reimburse the German government for the razor blades, soap, matches, pencils, paper, etc., which were sometimes available in the canteen.

Mail — The number of mail forms issued to each prisoner varied at different times from two mail forms and two postcards to four mail forms and three postcards. There was no record of mail forms being withheld for disciplinary reasons, and apparently no check was made on the number of communications written by each PW. However, on one occasion, forms were not issued, reportedly because the printer had been bombed out. Two weeks later, a Protecting Power visit was announced and 10,000 forms were issued immediately.

Incoming mail was very irregular and considered unsatisfactory by the PW. Since all of their mail had to be processed through Stalag Luft 3, censorship often delayed it four and five weeks. Surface letters required an average of four months for delivery as against three months for air mail. Surprisingly enough, personal parcels often arrived in two months, but the average time in transit was three to five months. In August 1944, no parcels arrived in the camp, but the following month 685 were received.

When parcels were delivered to the camp, a list of the recipients was posted in the barracks. These men were required to line up outside the delivery room. Before the PW could take possession of his parcel, the German guard would open the parcel, take everything out, and punch holes in any tinned foods. PW were permitted to keep the containers however. No items were ever confiscated from these parcels as far as could be ascertained.

Morale

The morale of PW at this camp was good as a result of two factors: the successes of the Allied armies in the field, and the recreational and educational opportunities within the camp. There was no serious trouble among the PW, and the unimportant fights and disputes which occasionally occurred seemed to spring from a desire to break the monotony. These incidents were quickly over and forgotten.

The leadership of the MOC and his staff is credited with the maintenance of high morale throughout the existence of the camp.

Welfare

Representatives of the International Red Cross Committee and the Protecting Power visited the camp approximately every three months, and always transmitted the complaints of the MOC to the German authorities in a strong manner. On many occasions, the Representatives reported unsatisfactory conditions at the camp to the State Department, and made every attempt to correct such conditions at the time of the visits.

The dispatch of Red Cross parcels to the camps was prompt, and all delays in supplies reaching PW was blamed on the German authorities. On several occasions insufficient clothing supplies were dispatched, but this was usually due to an increase in the strength after the requisition had been received in Geneva.

Requisitions to the YMCA for sports equipment and books were always promptly filled. The only delay incurred on the requests was in getting the approval of transmission from the German commandant.

Religion

Even though repeated requests for additional chaplains were made to the German authorities, Captain Stephen W. Kane carried the full eclesiastical burden for the camp. The PW cooperated with Father Kane in converting a barrack into a chapel for the religious services. Father Kane held daily services for the Catholics of the camp, and offered additional services for the Protestant PW. His untiring efforts in behalf of the men contributed a great deal to the good morale and discipline of the camp.

Recreation

The large recreation area in the camp to which the men had access during most of the daylight hours permitted them to enjoy a number of sports. Basketball, volley ball, baseball, boxing and track meets were among the favorite outdoor exercises. In addition, some enterprising PW built a miniature golf course and used hockey sticks and handballs as equipment. Competitive spirit was high after barrack leagues and teams were formed. In addition to these activities, the PW took great pride in the excellent band which gave frequent concerts and which played for the theatrical efforts of the "Cardboard Players." During the colder months,

the PW depended a great deal on card games, checkers, chess, and other indoor games, as well as reading material from the well-stocked library. A complete public address system with speakers in each barrack inspired the organization of a "radio station" (WPBS) which furnished scheduled programs of music and information.

The most outstanding effort in field of recreation was the educational program organized by T/Sgt. Alexander M. Haddon with the following aims and objectives:

(1) To keep men mentally alert
(2) To offer accredited instruction
(3) To help men to plan for post-war educational and vocational activities.

Sgt. Haddon was assisted by a staff composed of instructors, librarians, a secretary, and office help. Classes in Mathematics, Law, Photography, Music, Economics, American History, Shorthand, Auto Mechanics, English, Spanish, German and French were given to the students. The school was held in a building containing the fiction and technical libraries. Six separate classrooms accommodating 40 men were used for instruction, and furniture consisted of benches, tables and blackboards. Because the limited supply of technical books prevented a check-out system, tables and benches were furnished for reference work.

Interests which were not handled in the scheduled classes named above were provided for in evening discussion groups. These were usually journalism, farm management and live-stock farming, and were directed by men who had had successful experience in the fields. These evening discussion groups were particularly popular during the spring and summer months when they could be held outdoors after the supper hour.

When the school was first started, attendance registered 1389, but gradually enthusiasm dropped until the average attendance was 980. This was the average attendance figure during the school's operation.

Evacuation

On 8 April 1945, 4000 of the PW at Stalag 17B began an 18-day march of 281 miles to Braunau, Austria. The remaining 200 men were too ill to make the march and were left behind in the hospital. These men were liberated on 9 May 1945 by the Russians.

The marching column was divided into eight groups of 500 with an American leader in charge of each group guarded by about 20 German Volkssturm guards and two dogs. Red Cross parcels were issued to each man in sufficient amounts to last about seven days. During the 18-day march, the column averaged 20 kilometers each day. At the end of the day, they were forced to bivouac in open fields regardless of the weather. On

three occasions, the men were quartered in cow barns. The only food furnished to PW by the German authorities was barley soup and bread. Trading with the German and Austrian civilians became the main source of sustenance after the Red Cross parcel supplies were exhausted. The destination of the column was a Russian prison camp 4 kilometers north of Braunau. Upon arrival the PW cut down pine trees and made small huts since there was no housing available. Roaming guards patrolled the area and the woods surrounding the area, but no escape attempts were made because it was apparent that the liberation forces were in the immediate vicinity.

The day after their arrival at the new site, Red Cross parcels were issued to every PW. A second issue was made a few days later of one parcel for every fifth man.

Liberation

On 3 May 1945 the camp was liberated when six men of the 13th Armored Division arrived in three jeeps and easily captured the remaining guards who numbered 205. Other units of the 13th Armored followed shortly and organized the evacuation of the PW by C-47 to France on 9 May 1945.

-XXX-