

# THE CANADIAN PRISONERS OF WAR RELATIVES ASSOCIATION

## NEWS

## SHEET

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## VICTORY IN EUROPE

In September 1939, Europe was plunged into a war of unprecedented destruction and brutality. A war fought not between armed forces alone but bringing devastation and death to civilians and unprotected cities.

To combat an enemy such as Germany, prepared for war in every phase both material and mental, the Allied Nations were forced to reconstruct in the shortest possible time their production programmes, their economic system and the entire point of view of their peace-loving populations. During this period of change-over, many European countries were over-run and dominated by the enemy. Then, the Allied war machine started moving, relentlessly, resolutely and undefeatable it assaulted the fortified European shores; France, Belgium, the Netherlands were freed and our victorious armies moved forward into Germany. Today their task is done, in the midst of ruined cities that once were proud European capitals, Germany lies, defeated — utterly and irrevocably.

What does Victory in Europe mean to the world? It means the end of the first phase of World War II, the liberation of hundreds of thousand of Allied prisoners of war and civilian internees; it means the end of fear and anxiety for the families of these prisoners; it also means the tragic realization that thousands of Canada's finest young men will never come home. It means a moment of jubilant rejoicing before the full Allied recourses are brought into force in the Pacific area to crush the Japanese with the same unconditional thoroughness. Mr. Churchill has told us that "this is only time for a momentary pause" which is an apt reminder of the task still ahead of us, for no Victory can be complete until our men in the Far East are restored to their homes and World Peace is no longer a dream but a reality.

## EDITORIAL NOTES

All Correspondence to the Association should be addressed to the Secretary, Mrs E. I. Barott, C.P.O.W.R.A., 150-A Sun Life Building, Montreal. Relatives are invited to submit their problems and difficulties which will receive prompt and sympathetic attention.

IN MEMORIAM

With the death of President Roosevelt which came as a tragic shock to the world, the United States has lost a great leader, the Allied Nations a great champion of the cause for which they are fighting, and Canada a well-loved friend.

To the family of the late Franklin Delano Roosevelt and to the American people, we offer our deep and sincere sympathy.

R.C.A.F. TO WELCOME LIBERATED  
P.O.W. AIRMEN IN ENGLAND

According to a Reuters despatch, when the 2,500 Canadian airmen who have been prisoners of war in Germany are released, they will find a warm welcome waiting for them in England, organized by the R.C.A.F., a forerunner of the one they will receive in Canada.

They will be provided with a double ration of food while convalescing in Great Britain as well as new clothing.

Entertainment will not be lacking at the south coastal town of Bournemouth, the headquarters of the "Welcome Project".

Liberated prisoners will recover their personal belongings at a reception and distribution centre, and finally they will be given two weeks furlough with free rail transportation to anywhere in England, Scotland or Northern Ireland.

CANADIAN PRISONERS FREED

All Canada rejoices at the news of the liberation of Canadian prisoners of war in Germany. The number of freed prisoners increases daily until now almost all camps have been heard from either through individual prisoners escaping or the entire camp being liberated.

The total number of Canadian prisoners freed by May 1st was over a thousand but this number is growing so rapidly that it is reasonable to hope that before long all allied prisoners of war in Germany will be free men.

The Department of National Defence has announced that all available information is wired to next of kin within a matter of hours after it is received at Defence Headquarters but that since all information is carefully checked before being relayed to relatives there is in some cases an unavoidable delay and the prisoner himself is able to communicate with his family before the Government has sent an official notification.

There are still many Canadian prisoners who have not been heard from and to their families we would point out that as the number of freed prisoners increases the transmission of news becomes slower.

PRISONERS OF WAR AT DUNKIRK  
RECEIVE SUPPLIES

On the 26th of March, during the fighting around Dunkirk, a truce was arranged, with a delegate of the International Red Cross as intermediary, so that supplies of food, medicine and clothing could be sent to 105 civilian allied prisoners of war in that city.

Canadians numbering 48 were amongst the prisoners; parcels were distributed to all allied prisoners without discrimination and sufficient supplies were sent in to last until the end of May.

## ASSEMBLY CENTERS

Many prisoners evacuated from camps in eastern Germany have already reached Stalag VII A. This camp and Stalag XIII D, near Nurnberg, appear to be two of the main points of assembly for prisoners of war evacuated along the central route. The prisoners moved along the central route were from camps in the Leipzig-Berlin-Dresden areas. Stalag VII A is accordingly being used as an assembly center for Red Cross supplies going in by train and truck convoys from Switzerland, whence it is planned to transport them by truck to camps and hospitals throughout south central Germany. Each American truck carries approximately 6 tons of food packages, medical supplies, soap, and shoe repairing materials.

All shipments of prisoners of war relief supplies into Germany in the past (except those warehoused in Lubeck) have been specifically earmarked for particular camps, as well as for prisoners by nationality. Under the conditions now prevailing, however, this method of operation is no longer possible. In camps and on the roads, Allied prisoners are now all mixed up, and the impelling need is to get food and medical supplies to them as promptly and in as large amounts as possible, without regard to nationality. All Allied governments and Red Cross societies, as well as the Swiss and Swedish authorities, are cooperating wholeheartedly in meeting the emergency.

## GERMAN RECORDS SEIZED

On April 19th it was announced through the Associated Press that the American Third Army had captured the complete records of all Allied prisoners taken by the Germans since the outbreak of the War.

The records contain the latest whereabouts of Allied war prisoners, their dates of capture and other data. Prisoners who have died in camp are listed as are those wounded when taken.

At the time of going to press, the list was still in Europe and had not yet been made public.

## STALAG LUFT I

## "THE EASIEST CAMP IN GERMANY"

According to a prisoner of war recently repatriated from Stalag Luft I, this was the easiest camp in Germany. Thanks to the Red Cross, all the prisoners at Luft I were adequately clothed, having winter underclothes, shirts, uniform and an overcoat. The food situation was also good, again thanks to the Red Cross.

Living quarters were cramped but even so conditions were better than in most camps. Clean sheets and pillow cases were issued about every three or four weeks.

The Library, containing both fictional and technical books, was constantly being augmented from personal book parcels which, owing to the ease of censorship, got through fairly regularly.

The biggest grouse in the camp was over the length of time mail took to get through. The average being 8 to 12 weeks, with 12 to 16 weeks not uncommon. Personal parcels and cigarettes also took a long time, but quite a large proportion did finally arrive.

## PROPAGANDA BROADCASTS

The closing of camps in eastern Germany and Poland since the middle of January has revealed that broadcasts from Berlin of messages from American prisoners of war are, in many cases at least, collected several weeks before broadcasting. Many messages from American prisoners of war in Oflag 64 were broadcast from Berlin late in February, although the men from that camp were moved on January 21. None of these messages gave any indication that the camp might soon be closed.

Any next of kin receiving a broadcast message, therefore, should assume that it was written by the prisoner at least a month or six weeks before being put on the air. It is also well to keep in mind that these messages are broadcast for propaganda purposes.



## MEMORIAL AT STALAG LUFT III

By  
P. Lt. John R. Mann

Since my return to Canada from Stalag Luft III last February, I have learned of the many articles written about the "big break" in that camp little more than a year ago. These who read the articles seem to have had first-hand information; they may have been participants, probably by number. What information I could glean came from those who had planned and worked on this, I could get it only with much reticence on their part.

Having been part of this gallant gesture, their reticence here was not confined to forget their own roles but carried their names to posterity in a very oblique manner. In the accompanying photographs you will realize the amount of work and skill that entered into this feat. The rollers standing on top of the wire have the names of each of these heroes of Stalag. I was unfortunately unable to take down the story from the beginning but fortunate enough to see the wire being cut. The names carved into it were of the rank of the moment; followed later by a very impressive memorial service.

Every man in camp wanted to be present but only few were privileged to attend the service. Seven officers from British, seven from the United States, and sixteen from the Merks compound including the Senior British officers, the Senior Canadian officers, two Poles and a single man from France. The cemetery is about 1½ miles from the camp and the parade marched there after assembling from the various compounds. The procession moved into the cemetery, around the circular path and passed before the memorial, where after a service by both the Church of England and the Roman Catholic Priests, and the playing of the last post, the three Group Captains placed wreaths. A rubber shoe gesture was that by a member of the Swiss Legion who also placed a very large wreath on the Column.

Up to this time the entire camp had been in mourning and only men carried a black sash draped on his sleeve. After the ceremony these were removed. This was December 16, 1944.

## NEWS FROM ENGLAND

We are indebted to the Scottish Depot B.R.C.F. and the B.P.O.W.F.A. for the following information.

POW'S WELCOME R.A.F. BAYN  
"SWEET MUSIC"

A picture of how our prisoners of war feel to Allied bombing of Germany is given by a captured New Zealand pilot, Flight-Lieut. Wally Mulligan, in an interview in the New Zealand Free Press.

"The boys get a terrific kick out of it," was the young aviator's description of hearing our bombers roaring past Stalag Luft III, where he was imprisoned. "Actually the first daylight bombers are not ours. Americans. And how the boys cheered as they swept by to attack a nearby Peenemünde factory! They did a beautiful job on it, too."

"Stalag Luft III is in an area approximately a hundred miles from the German capital," continues the Free Press interview, "and Wally Mulligan told me that in the big night-bombing raids by planes of R.A.F. Bomber Command the prison here would shake and rattle, and millions dance, from the vibrations as up in Berlin crumbled under the terrific hammering it received. "And you can guess how the boys just heard that," grinned Mulligan. "It certainly was sweet music to our ears."

Speaking of the road to Berlin, which he saw on his way home, he described scenes of devastation. "There's not much of the city left to watch. Ruins and miles we are watching less complete devastation, just piled heaps of rubble, and we didn't go through the worst parts. You could practically walk in a glass city."

## MORE PENICILLIN FOR POW'S

Further supplies of penicillin and blood transfusion apparatus are now being sent by the Red Cross and St. John to prisoners of war camps in Germany (Latin Prisoner of War News). The Penicillin packs and blood transfusion sets, including plasma, are supplied by the Medical Department of the War Office, and are forwarded by the Invalid Convalescence Section of the Red Cross and St. John Prisoner of War Department. As far as possible, the supplies are sent to those hospitals which are believed to contain newly-arrived men, who would be likely to require the greatest benefit from the boon of surgical treatment.

SUPPLEMENT TO RUSSIA FOR  
LIBERATED POW.

It was announced in the House of Commons in London that, some time ago, preparing for the commencing of British prisoners of war being liberated by the Soviet armies, the British Red Cross War Organization sent supplies to Russia. Upon their arrival in Russia from German camps, British liberated men were consequently provided with clothing, medical supplies, cigarettes, etc., from home. Similar supplies were also sent to Odessa, where a party of Red Cross War Office Workers went to meet the freed prisoners.

"WELCOME HOME" FOUND  
TARGET DISRUPTED

To have raised £1,200 in one day is the achievement of Richmond (Sussex) POWR.C., which held a lecture recently as part of a three-month drive to raise funds out of which each returning prisoner of war could be given a money gift with which to celebrate his release.

The target was £1,000, but this was more than doubled by the end of the period, £1,245 being raised by a variety of schemes organized by members.

## AMERICAN RED CROSS NEWS

We are indebted to the American Red Cross Prisoners of War Division for the following information.

## LATEST INFORMATION ON CAMP MOVEMENTS

(By cable from Geneva)

Red Cross trucks operating out of Lubeck in the north and Möncheng in the north included during March, in getting substantial quantities of food packages to the prisoners of war evacuated from camps in the area who were still holding areas Germany. These marching columns were scattered over very wide area, in the middle of March, for example, an advance group from Stalag 344 was 10 miles east of Carlsbad while the rear of the column was in the vicinity of Bohemish Laysa — the distance between these two points being nearly 40 miles. Likewise, the Stalag VIII D column was spread from Siedau, near Mielok, in the Hainburg region — a distance six days' 75 miles. British prisoners constituted a large part of the marching columns, but they also contained Americans.

Similar situations existed in southern Germany, where about 100,000 American and Allied prisoners evacuated from camps in the second military district (particularly, in the area of Americans from Stalags II B and II D and Stalag Luft IV) were walking across Germany to camps in the tenth military district. It was reported at the end of February that these men "were grouped in the vicinity of the business Hotel, where they will be conducted to Stalag 343 (at Fischbach), Oflag 32 C, (at Lubeck), and Stalag X B, (at Bremerhaven)."

The Red Cross trucks delivering supplies to the marching columns had to search for the men not only on main highways but on secondary roads. The trucks operated under German escort and, considering the chaotic transportation conditions which exist now even inside Germany, the authorities there have manifested a cooperative spirit in getting food, medicines, and other relief supplies

to the men. It is an entirely new development in warfare to have Red Cross trucks supplied and escorted by our intelligence, operating for and with the members of an enemy intelligence.

Articles from the Dushy Lutz column camp area are now being assigned to the new Stalag Luft at Möncheng-Langensien," according to a cable received in the middle of March. This new Luft Stalag has not yet been designated by number.

Stalag Luft III at Sagan was evacuated on January 27. The men were given Red Cross food packages and were furnished some additional food by the Germans in transit. The men were marched for three days, on secondary roads, to Spremberg — a distance of about 40 miles. They slept in huts along the roads. At Spremberg, the prisoners from the north and center camps were divided into groups of 2,000 and sent by train on February 1 to Möncheng (Stalag VIII A), except for a few who were sent to Stalag IIIA at Lubeckwald. Americans from the west camp were dispatched by train from Spremberg to Möncheng, and thence to Stalag XIII D, about eight miles from the city, which is probably "the new Stalag Luft" previously referred to. All train mail from airmen, however, should continue to be addressed to Stalag Luft III and new directions to given.

A cable from Geneva on March 19 stated "Oflag 54 according by rail crossed Hainburg." An earlier message had reported that about 300 (ground force) officers from Oflag 54 "traveling by rail, were sent Prudenz (eastern of Wismar on a line between Wismar and Berlin), awaiting transport for Hainburg." Oflag XIII B and Stalag XIII C are the only prisoners of war camps known to be in the vicinity of Hainburg. Several hundred American officers formerly at Oflag 54 were liberated by the advance Russian armies and are removed to the United States.

## EAST NEWS

## CAMP STANLEY

According to an address given by Mr. DILL, Middlesbrough, Netherlands, Command General, who was present at the tail of Hong Kong, the policy of internment of civilians as practiced by the Japanese in Hong Kong, the Philippines, Malaya and the Netherlands Indies is something quite new. They have interned all white nationals of countries that have declared war on Japan, China, India, Java, Australia, even Danians though nationals of belligerent countries were left alone. This mass of people is seen as a logical consequence of the anti-foreigners, that is anti-white movement of Japan in their so-called "Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere"; "Asia for the Asiatic" is the slogan that calls for them the place of war "Fights for Democracy".

Nations such as Java, China and Indonesia, however, have not been interned. The food situation for the interned civilians soon became so bad, that many several nationalities and European fled for admission to the Civilian Internment Camp, which applications, I believe, were all refused.

The Allied Europeans were crowded up and interned in Chinese boarding houses, awaiting removal to the proper internment camp at Stanley. Stanley is a peninsula, a sort of appendix of Hong Kong Island. On it are situated Fort Stanley with long range coastal artillery, an English post-war boarding school, an excellent modern prison and warlike quarters. The military barracks and the prison building were not used, but the 1,000 internees were divided over the schools and warlike quarters.

The location of the camp is not bad. It has plenty of sun, air and room between the buildings. The buildings themselves, however, are tightly crowded. People are practically packed together with hardly enough room to stretch out at night. Ventilation is particularly poor during the day.

Fortunately there is water electricity and a good sewage system. The buildings are few and

well built but built for maybe one third of the number of their present occupants.

The food situation is definitely bad. As you know, an internee which receives supplies 3,000 calories a day. The food supplied to the civilian internees was according to the Japanese a substantial value of 2,000. European doctors among the internees, however, maintain that not more than 1,500 calories are supplied. The food is moreover often of bad quality and it lacks variety and vitamins. It is very hard to convince the Japanese on this point, as they feel very badly themselves.

## HONG KONG CIVILIAN CAMPS

On December 12nd the Civilian Internment Camps at Hong Kong were visited by Mr. Zindel, International Red Cross Delegate. Mr. Zindel reports that the general conditions at Shamshuipo Camp were much the same as his preceding visit on August 19th, 1944. Of the many hundreds now interned in this camp, 100 were hospitalized in the eight barracks which serve as a hospital. An adequate medical staff was in attendance, including 10 British doctors. Internees had particularly been receiving pigs and poultry, but this has had to be curtailed due to the lack of food with which to feed the animals.

Camp "A" where prisoners from Aggle Street Camp were transferred to in May 1944, has been improved by the building of additional barracks. The vegetable garden was enlarged but here also the housing of poultry was curtailed.

The Military Hospital at Shekwan Road contains at 100 patients at the time of the Delegate's visit the medical staff consisted of about 60 doctors and nurses. Patients were not serious cases, most of them suffering from weakness. In general the Delegate reports that the state of health in these three camps is improved although the lack of vitamins and of food containing protein and fat is still felt.

## INTERNMENT CAMP LIBERNAU

by  
SONJA BOWEN

The following article was written for the *Mean Street* by a young Polish woman who recently returned to Canada and often, with her father, mother and many friends, visits the site in a new scenery. During her time spent in internment at Camp Libernau, Miss Bowden learned English from the British women who were her comrades in captivity.

I was only half awake when they took my journey car group, consisting of 50 women and children, arrived at the first station of Muckenhausen about 11 miles from the Lake of Constance and only 2 miles from our final destination. It was a cold but sunny morning of New Year's Day 1943. In my complete exhaustion following the three diary weeks I had spent in the second German jail at Garmisch, and in a particular state of mental anxiety which usually accompanies the feeling of being sold and bought, I had an eye for the beauty of our new surroundings — the snow covered pine-trees and meadows in our feet, the majestic Swiss Alps in the background.

Suddenly my consciousness was roused by a man's rough voice — it appeared to belong to one of our escorting guards — explaining to some of my companions that in our new place we would find food as home, as it was an internment camp for British and American women. "You are people who will take care of you," he concluded with a mocking smile, "and I hope you will like the change."

"You are people..." These words stirred something in our hearts some secret words which had lain there uncollected and unexpressed throughout the misery of the past three years. What is possible that the camp we were going to was not just another of the concentration camps where innocent people were being killed daily by the thousands but a place offering a chance of survival? Was it really true that in a couple of hours we would meet Americans and British women?

After a short while we were loaded on to a large horse car, including our meagre food-supplies (all we were allowed to have according to the German order on the day of our internment) and drove in the direction of Libernau. It was noon and the snow was dazzling white under the bright sun, when we arrived in the village in the middle of which was a block of two storied buildings and a double-towered church which was separated from three neighbouring cottages by a high stone fence. An iron gate was being open by an elderly German policeman, and two women called past in their guards' house to come to a wooden hut in front of one of the three buildings.

In a second we found ourselves surrounded by a large group of women of all ages, whom I first mistook to be in a women's workshop and whose numberless questions, asked in about ten different languages, we in vain tried to answer. All we gathered from the chaotic conversation was that we had nothing to be afraid of any more, that in subject of camp conditions we fell under Geneva Conventions which secured protection for prisoners of war and civilian internees on German territory, and that, though life was pretty tough and miserable in camp at times (which we would find out comparatively soon), the worst part of our treatment was over. The appearance of the woman who was gathered around me and comforted their wandering words — they were looking about them to remind us of the battered looks of all those many thousands of uncollected and persecuted beings we had known so well in Poland, their clothes consisting in most cases of shabby and thick woollen pull-overs, were in a truly good condition and except for a trace of bitterness in their voices when they spoke about "being locked up in a cage" they did not seem ill-disposed.

It was only in the evening when, after my first bath and supper I lay down in the first clean bed I had known for many a month, that I became aware of the change in my life. "However hard a day it is to live for months and perhaps years under a lock," I tried to myself, "however gloomy and monotonous it may become as I lived with different people under the same roof, I shall

try to make the best of it; the main thing is that my mother, sister and myself are alive and that we shall now know the fate of a German, killed, the day which became a part of me later when in Poland, say now."

It took me about a month to become acquainted with the daily routine of camp life, to learn something about my fellow internees and to come into close contact with some girls of my own age. In another few weeks' time it seemed to me that I had been there for many years — as familiar appeared every face, every voice, every room.

Libernau became an internment camp for men, British and American prisoners who happened to live in various European countries before the outbreak of the war. Originally an asylum for mentally defective (British children and grown-up, with an adjacent convent of German nuns in charge of the sick, it consisted at the time of my internment over 600 interned women and children — a number which by far exceeded the usual capacity of the place. The mentally deficient Germans (so "bricks" in the slang of the internees) still occupied a few wings of the camp buildings. Employed by the German men at field and garden work, they were a constant sight within the camp boundaries, their dilapidated bodies and faces did not make the prison atmosphere any brighter.

In the three years previous to my arrival, the camp had gradually developed into a fairly well organized community, in order to keep the necessary discipline and to carry on all the official requirements, a camp-captain had been elected. This 60 year old Englishwoman, who enjoyed the greatest respect and confidence of all the internees, performed her duties with less energy and unerring efficiency. Miss Violet Prosser, camp captain, was always ready to solve difficult problems, to give advice and to step in whenever intervention was necessary. Assisted by six floor captains, each chosen by the members of her floor, she ran the administration, registered newcomers, reported them to the Swiss Liaison — the Deutsche Post — over all the Allied prison camps in Germany — and arranged the distribution of Red Cross food

and clothing parcels. It was due to her great character, broad-minded attitude towards all the problems of the world and to her sincerely demonstrated ideas that a couple of hundred women, of coming from different countries, speaking different languages and having different backgrounds of their own, could live a relatively peaceful community life under extraordinary circumstances.

The floor-captain's main duty was to keep order on each floor. An internee was supposed to perform all the floor's tasks within the camp; they completed special working lists, all the maintenance of which had to be followed exactly. The harder jobs, such as cleaning corridors, carrying food from the German kitchen, and being in and working in one of the fields, were done by young and strong girls, others had to keep things clean and neatness tidy, to wash up dishes and attend to the toilet — our only source of hot water. Some of the most reliable and the professionally trained internees were given more responsible work; they became the organizers of schools and educational centres, shows and other small entertainments, discussion circles, and groups of interested ladies.

The head of the camp's Educational Committee was another English woman, Mrs. Vlatkovic, formerly a professor of English at the University of Belgrade, Yugoslavia. With the help of a large group of voluntary workers and librarians, united in her efforts to give every internee the possibility of studies and mainly interested in each individual case, she was the soul of the spiritual life within the camp — the inspiration of various courses in English and other languages, the supervisor of the library and the adviser in all matters concerning general education.

The most vital part of the administration was carried out by the Germans. The six German guards gave an exact note of his parcels and German newspapers (the only source of our political information); every evening they made roll-calls in all the rooms supplied by the internees who were not allowed out of doors after 4 p.m. They executed the daily afternoon walks in the surrounding fields. An old German physician who had his office in one of the camp buildings dealt with

money questions, national rationing policies and in-lieu-of all kinds of goods as well as those who took "the law". A staff of Germans was employed to feed the food.

It is when speaking about the food provided by the Germans that I am approaching the subject of the most important factor in our camp life. Though our living accommodations and sanitary conditions were a great deal better than those in other prisoner-of-war and civilian internment camps in Germany, the food received from the Germans would not have been sufficient to prevent us from starvation. Breakfast consisted of a slice of rye-bread and coffee made from yeast and an absolutely unpalatable potato substitute made of three cups and some vegetable flooring in a dark grey, shape of a few potatoes, the same rye-bread and an identical "coffee".

This is where the Red Cross comes in. Big consignments of Red Cross parcels, British and American, would arrive in the camp in frequent intervals, where they would be unloaded and repacked with enthusiasm by the inmates. Their regular weekly distribution by the camp captain saved our food situation and averted the danger of hunger. British food parcels the Red Cross provided in such various desirable articles. Many an English or American woman who had been dragged out of her home by the Germans as a domestic's helper without being allowed to take almost the most essential items, was also very disappointed from top to toe in clothes sent by the Red Cross. The foundation and constant success of our liberty was rendered possible by Red Cross food supplies. The food for the 58 interned children could function systematically and successfully thanks to the Red Cross delivery of new books and newspapers, games and toys for the kindergarten and various incentives, besides for the teachers of the camp. Shows and other performances could be put up from time to time to see more than primitive dance halls, because the Red Cross always responded to our artists' requests for their usual costumes, paints for the scenery, and treated instruments. Many women who not having anything particular to do, would have broken down

as a result of boredom and lack of occupation, were kept busy knitting and doing all kinds of other handicrafts, working in the Red Cross delivery of knitting wool, cotton and embroidery kits. Health services in the camp, entirely handicapped by shortage of trained nurses and the utter ignorance of the old German doctor, would have been even more inadequate had it not been for the regular supply of Red Cross medical outdoor parcels and all the medicines required.

The two years which elapsed between my arrival in Liebenau and my final release from the camp were marked in the history of the place as outstanding in happenings and extraordinary events. In fall 1943, when the monopoly of camp life was becoming unbearable and when phrases like "I'm fed up", "I am bored stiff," and "I wish to God there something would happen" were inseparable from our daily vocabulary, a great change took place. An Department of the German Foreign Office arrived in the camp, where it made its permanent residence.

The newly-arrived officials who had fled from Berlin when they were exposed to the death danger of becoming the victims of Allied bombs and who had shamelessly under the protection of inmates who were relatively safe from the last, took possession of one of the buildings by removing all the contents from it. We were shaking with helplessness and indignation when, after being crowded in our small rooms more than ever before, we began to get busy at the operations made by "Berlin" across the garden path, as an instantly acknowledged Foreign Office. The small amount of furniture which had been our greatest treasure up to that period was considerably cut down; two gardens, one behind and the other in front of the camp buildings, were closed to the inmates, only three walks weekly were permitted: cross streets, stepping of mail, and cross departments to the camps because a frequent consideration for crimes like picking apples on outside roads, writing in the Allied police, firing over Liebenau, arranged in order a package of cigarettes to Serbian prisoners who were taking to the village, or not greeting the German guards.

General Depression and even feelings of hopelessness reached their climax in 1944 when the pick-up exchange manager in a bitter cold began to leave the camp.

The first one to take place was an American spy-ship mission, in February 1944, including about 80 U.S.R. prisoners from our camp. Another

speculation and wild rumors as to what was going to be chosen — the usual symptoms in every internment and P.O.W. camp whenever "something is in the air" — were put an end to by the publication of the official list of names, accompanied by a notice signed by the departmental chief of the Foreign Office in the effect that the names listed had been received from Washington. How great was our indignation when, about half an hour after the publication of the first one, another list of about 30 names was added! It was then that we realized how great was the power the Germans had over us, for it was the German Foreign Office that had selected the people for exchange, and from which the repatriation of each one of us depended. Complete attention to the Swiss Legation in Berlin was accorded by the German authorities and it is deplorable of their contents, our letters ended in the newspaper files.

During the most time repatriation attempts to which took place successively throughout the same year we had to experience not another in event. Whenever a number of repatriates, whether in England or in the United States, was about to leave the camp, only a very few of our inmates were included. The Germans complicated the routine they were supposed to give to exchange for their own prisoners by taking people from outside the camp, people who had been free all during the time the 500 Liebenau inmates were losing their physical and mental strength in the long years of captivity. A few days before the departure of a transport destined of those "candidates" would arrive in and by a special order of the Foreign Office they had to be treated like guests, much more than they were ever from all the times we had to perform and not compelled to obey the regulations we were subjected to.

At the close of the year the atmosphere in the camp became gloomier and our spirits lower than ever before. As there was a big American exchange in sight, and the small rooms could not hold any more persons, all the dining rooms where we used to gather for meetings, so usual, and so talkative meals, were turned into bedrooms for the "guests"; so account of had industry construction within Germany and the Allied nations (transferring the Baltic climate, the great supply of coal was cut down, so that we were forced to pick wood on our walks in order to have heating water at least one daily; a few weeks running not one letter reached the camp, and even the German newspapers stopped appearing regularly. The whole situation was half-crazy in the camp as for adults' attentional power; the inmates, for many of whom it was the fifth Christmas away from their homes, had all their

dearly for the continuation of their studies and their power of concentration over books.

It was soon after New Year 1945, that the rumours about a great repatriation transport to the U.S.A. which had been very persistent for some weeks past, were officially confirmed. On January 1945 a list of about 115 persons included in the exchange was put up on the notice board. Three days later, just before the transport was about to leave Liebenau to go via Berlin-Liebau in Düsseldorf and had been there on the "Columbia" as additional list of names was published, my mother's, sister's and my own names among them.

The happiness which filled my heart at the moment I saw my names on the list was beyond account. All jobs that remained to be done in the last day of my internment, the hectic packing, sending my luggage to some of my remaining friends, taking my things down to the camp, to be searched and sealed, I performed without being conscious of what I was doing. My heart was singing with glad joy while I was trying to myself, "It is really, amazingly true, it is true that in a month's time I shall be in a free country which does not know the Germans and the German methods of cruel persecution, it is true that all the misery of these last half years is over in the land and the two years of internment are over; it is true that our family has been spared the happenings of war-torn."

Even all British women have remained in Liebenau. It was a lovely scene trying together to their last belongings (made of things left in the camp that I suddenly knew my happiness would never be complete until they were finally released, yes, it was that that I felt with an intensity I had never known) before I was finally allowed to leave. It had meant to each one of them, how much their friendship had meant to me in the period of my greatest need for human understanding.

We board the *Complanche*, which we reach in Manchester and where we met American and Canadian wounded soldiers being, like ourselves, on their way home after long years of captivity. I once exchanged my experiences with a Canadian ex-prisoner-of-war. "I don't agree with those who maintain that happiness makes you forget your miseries and sorrows," he said. "Happily I am glad to have left the gloom and hardship of my prison since behind me, and to go back in the sun. I have, I know that you are long with me, I shall not be able to see the members of the camp, not at my mind and heart. Only when I have seen all my fellow-prisoners, who will have to go through the ordeal of this final test camp in Germany,

have safely reached the shores of Canada, will these survivors give way to an unbridled optimism of my own kind?"

The Canadian landed in New York on Jan. 21st, on the day following her disembarkment. She finally arrived in Canada in the first six weeks which I have spent in this splendid free country, the breadbasket, gunpowder-barrel people of which I have already learned to love. I have since metted the souls of that wounded Canadian soldier. All I can add to them is that though I am sergeant Camp Liberman belongs to the past, I shall always remember the lesson I was taught there that — in order to become a useful member of our community we have to develop an attitude towards our fellow-citizens based on understanding and goodwill, not on selfishness and prejudice!

#### P.O.W. AT HOME By War Prisoners

As War Prisoners have been taken at the Prisoner of War Hospital in Baku, in Japan, which was visited by the International Red Cross Delegation on 18th August of this year. The report of the Delegation's visit has just reached Australia.

The hospital is situated in the Ochiai Group of camps on the main island of Japan, Honshu. At the time of the visit there were altogether 300 patients, of whom 15 were Australians and there were three Australians on the Hospital, but not Medical Staff.

Location is said to be on a quiet, scenic hillside in a well-forestry-arch wooden building with steel roof. Ventilation, drainage, water supply are reported to be adequate.

Building consists of three rows on a wooden floor with five blankets for each patient, and prisoners. Food consists mainly of rice, barley and vegetables, with very little meat and fish. There are no eggs, milk, fat, cheese, sweets, coffee or canned foods. The kitchen equipment consisted of a pot, a spoon, a knife, a tin, a stove, a coffee or canned food. The kitchen equipment consisted of a pot, a spoon, a knife, a tin, a stove, a coffee or canned food, but there was no refrigerator or ice-box.

(Australian P.O.W. Magazine)

#### AID FOR BRITONS IN FRANCE

A new Red Cross and St. John Ambulance has been set up in Paris to take the British-Germans, particularly children and the sick and aged, who

need help in France. A considerable number of Christiana patients in need of clothing and blankets have already been treated.

Persons eligible to receive relief include all children under 18 with British fathers and dependants of all men killed or captured while serving with the British forces. Distribution arrangements for the children include a system whereby they can be referred in the out-patient department of the Hottel Hospital, Paris, for future preventative treatment against such diseases as tuberculosis and typhoid. This hospital, which will shortly be reopened by the Red Cross and St. John, will receive supplies for this purpose of red cross oil and Antacetic from Great Britain. The British Consuls in Lyons, Bordeaux, Nancy and Nantes have been asked to supply lists of all British subjects in their care, especially of children and aged and sick persons, so that appropriate supplies can be sent for distribution. Relief parcels have already been sent to Marseille and Nice.

Colonel Guyard, who has a long and intimate knowledge of the country, is at present touring France in the hope of tracking down all British subjects in the country who may be in need of help. Opportunities for extending this relief work for the British in France are also being examined.

A similar organization to help Canadian citizens has been set up in Paris by the Canadian Red Cross, which derives from other donations and Collette will come within the scope of the British scheme.

#### NEWS FOR PRISONERS OF WAR WORK

Mr. H. B. Bunkle, who is the chairman in Honorary subjects at New Zealand University, has written to London saying:

"I am in the middle of my University exam, marking again. Carefully enough the last year I am getting no coming from members of the armed forces. They further that I had towards the end of last year from prisoners of war camps in Germany were all of high quality, some very good indeed."

(Oswestonian South B.R.C.C.)

#### QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

**Question** — Would you please tell me what the reports of Japanese camps have been and how they are relayed?

**Answer** — Reports on Japanese camps are written or called in Geneva by International Red Cross Delegates in the Far East who have visited the camps. It is well to remember that these reports are sent in writing and are subject to Japanese censorship, whereas reports on camps in Germany are made verbally by the delegates who have personally visited the camps and talked with the prisoners.

**Question** — My son is a prisoner of war in Germany and his wife lives in England. If he is liberated, will I be notified?

**Answer** — Only the sort of his prisoner receive official notification of your daughter-in-law has happened in your son's case of his and has been notified Government takes his personal parents, the well-wishes of notification from the Governments. We believe, however, that by applying to the Director of Records, Ottawa, it is possible for a close relative to obtain such information as is available regarding a prisoner of war.

**Question** — Is there an ordinary mail and parcel service established in the Channel Islands?

**Answer** — The United Kingdom authorities have been trying for some time, through the International Red Cross, to arrange for Red Cross parcel messages to go to the Islands, but the Germans cannot arrange for forwarding of incoming mail as a temporary office in the Channel Islands and it is therefore necessary for all the Red Cross postal messages which the United Kingdom authorities hold to be sent to Geneva so that the International Red Cross Committee can arrange with the German Government for forwarding them to in Germany. This, of course, makes the process rather slow, and as far as we know has been received of any of the Red Cross messages which the United Kingdom author-

ities started sending to Geneva last year, having been held by the Red Cross relief ships. These difficulties apply to ordinary mail and parcels, and there appears to be no hope of an ordinary mail and parcel service being established.

**Question** — I heard on the radio that the camp where my son is has been freed. How soon will I know whether my son is free?

**Answer** — It is impossible to give an exact length of time, but in many cases relatives have received cables direct from their prisoners in England or France, approximately a week or two days after the terms of the camp liberation. There is no time for anxiety if the news takes longer to come, since the number of liberated prisoners is reaching large proportions which will of necessity delay the transmission of messages.

**Question** — Is the C.P.O.W.R.A. circulating lists and reports of other in bulk arrangements to its individual prisoners in Germany?

**Answer** — No. The last regular shipment of documents made by the Association was sent in March, since when conditions have made it impossible to continue shipping to P.O.W. Camps. Should the situation change, the sending of documents will be resumed.

#### REMITTANCES BY POSTAGE STAMPS VIOLATE POSTAL LAWS

Contrary to postal regulations, postage stamps are continually being used as substitutes for small amounts. We receive these daily at the Headquarters office of the Association. The postal authorities point out that Post Office Money Orders, Postal Notes and Postal Scrip are provided at all Post Offices for just this purpose and the public is urged to make use of these facilities, the intention of which are guard against loss.



## PROVINCIAL HEADQUARTERS

BRITISH  
COLUMBIA

Ms. R. Thiele  
1815 Government St.  
Vancouver, B.C.

## MANITOBA

Ms. W. S. King  
Parks Building  
Winnipeg, Manitoba

## ONTARIO

Ms. Gordon Wile  
Bank of N. Scotia Bldg.,  
79 Queen St. East,  
Toronto, Ont.

## QUEBEC

Ms. R. E. Plant  
718 Sun Life Building,  
Montreal, Que.

## NEW BRUNSWICK

Ms. George Miller,  
68 Parkside Ave.,  
Moncton, N.B.

## NEWFOUNDLAND

Ms. A. C. Holmes, M.B.E.,  
Carlton Hlts.,  
St. John's, Nfld.

## NOVA SCOTIA

Ms. W. A. Black,  
35 Franklin Street,  
Halifax, N.S.

## SASKATCHEWAN

Ms. C. S. Coasting,  
303 McCallum Hill Bldg.,  
Regina, Sask.

## ALBERTA

Ms. H. Thom,  
1121-111th St.,  
Edmonton, Alta.

## NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

1054 Sun Life Bldg.,  
Montreal.

## MANITOWA BRANCH

The March meeting of the Manitoba Branch was attended by approximately 180 members. The Chairman announced that twenty-two new applications had been approached since the last meeting and welcomed any that might be present.

Two sponsored prisoners, F. L. Bony (M.C.) and Pte. Bud Moody, spoke to the members and answered questions.

## MONCTON BRANCH

At the March meeting of the Moncton Branch a heavy snow was announced by the president. A number of new prisoners of war from New Brunswick were reported and their next of kin were written to and sent copies of the News Sheet.

It was decided not to ship medical parcels from this district until such time as the situation became more clear.

ONTARIO PROVINCIAL BRANCH —  
TORONTO

The following slate of officers of the Ontario Provincial Branch for the coming year, was recently elected:

President: Ms. Gordon Wile  
Vice-President: Ms. Wilton Floyd  
Vice-President: Ms. R. E. McLennan  
Vice-President and Treasurer: Ms. E. A. Laidlaw  
Honorary Vice-President: Ms. W. E. Sprague

## PROCLAIMING COMMITTEE

Ms. W. E. Floody  
Ms. A. Howard

## WRITERS COMMITTEE

Ms. E. A. Laidlaw  
Ms. Kate Roberts  
Ms. Amy  
Ms. Norman Copeman.

## OTTAWA BRANCH

At the April meeting of the Ottawa Branch, it was agreed to send \$50.00 to National Headquarters for the General Fund.

Guest Speakers at the meeting was Ms. M. H. Gattin O'Leary, well known newspaper man, who was a prisoner of war in Germany.

Ms. T. Campbell-Rogers was elected Chairman.

## SASKATCHEWAN BRANCH

Fifty-five members attended the March meeting of the Saskatchewan Branch. The Food Committee reported having packed and sent 49 parcels of food for next of kin throughout the Province. The Welfare Committee reported having sent 4 personal parcels, 2 medical parcels, 2 sports parcels and some cigarettes direct to prisoners on the full of their next of kin. Several parcels were returned, having been discovered in a fire on board ship last December and the Association is paying the cost of food items in the returned parcels.

## VICTORIA BRANCH

At the April meeting of the Victoria Branch the sum of \$100.00 was raised to be sent to the Association Headquarters to be used as the President's donation for the benefit of prisoners of war.

It was reported that since the beginning of the year, blankets, clothing and food parcels to the value of \$240.00 had been sent to war prisoners.

Mr. W. C. Moore, who was sponsored last September, spoke about life in a German prison camp.

## VANCOUVER BRANCH

Monthly meetings of the Vancouver Branch held in March and April, at the Forum, Cap-Bell Bldg., recently sponsored from Building 331, spoke on his experiences while, as the latter Col. Scott, Canadian Red Cross Commissioner, addressed the meeting. Both meetings were well attended.

## NEW WESTMINSTER BRANCH

The regular meeting of the New Westminister Branch was held April 26th. 23 members were present. The meeting, which \$100.00 was to be sent to Ms. J. G. Smith to be used as the district here for the war being in Canada, also \$500.00 to be sent to W. A. McKinnon, Agent General at C. House, London, to be used for R.C. bags arriving in London from the prisoners of war camps in Germany.

Plans were made for a Tag Day to be held April 28.

## LETTERS

In former issues of the News Sheet, only letters from the Far East and most cases from Germany will be published. With the mass movement of prisoners in Europe, it is felt that letters received from camps which no longer exist will not be of special interest to our readers. We will be glad to publish any letters, however, that contain news of health or temporary camps which would be helpful and interesting to other prisoners' families.

## GERMANY

## DELAG VII B

December 16th, 1944 (Sat) February 24th, 1945.

Firstly, many thanks for your letters of Sept. 21, and Dec. 17 & 18. All very welcome indeed. Recently, we are not allowed copying pencils more. I am writing you this letter with your customary acute provision of information, you would justify the change, and wonder. There is nothing I want in the food or clothing line, we are limited by the Germans in the amount of clothes and food we can have in our quarters.

New Year's Day 1945. Sat'd March 26th, 1945.

When I look at the date above it gives me a lot of water I expect you, 1945 and the shades of Pines. While still around us and the shadows of stars disappointed, and "Banned OFF" Kellogg's salt compresses by their presence. I might say the main 15 which has been lost or was on the W. and being over. Here personally never been one of the operators, so my looking of the Super D's, but we, most of us, hoping the my next birthday out of the "Shack" (Kriegsgefangenschaft) as we call it. However as I told you in what must have been a most confusing letter, we have had a excellent period of "Working" (good things) due to C.I.W.C. order (British) matters. It really has been terrific and as far as that goes we are right on the top of the world and if the Germans live up in their promise of supplies to us and I believe they will, a parcel a week, we will be O.K. Told this weather has enabled us to get some Hicks. A lot of the old good gone and not much coming either way to replace it. A lot of fun tho'. We mail records. By the way we have practically a language of our own here and in the next will be I find it better than ever in

## STALAG LUFT III



above — representatives of 1000 P.O.W.'s lined up to the food speaker to translate the news.



right — Sports Day.



Which Day — the cat on the end of a stick is the more modern working machine.

## THEATRICALS AT LUFT III



Scene of books for the show go over the table.



Orchestra



One of the best plays the best in Pigeonhole.



"Thank" by Ben Trank

explain myself in plain English. Trust you got off well and celebrated New Year's properly. It was atop by 10.30 but drinking all year. Remembering the work we do in India half's better spirit's than ever before and half of the old and others, so look after yourselves because this is the year.

January 16, 1945. Raul February 26th, 1945.

Many thanks for letters Oct. 24 and Nov. 5, 7 and 14. Yours came after mine than from England. Thanks very much for map, you look well. Starting to going along as the moment. I have been reviewed. Party at Canada House have been interesting. The Germans made us out our members of hand over. Xmas. Am I feeling fit?

January 24th, 1945.

Most enjoyable. We are now without prisoners. Lacks of goods I will tell you how this came about. Last Monday we had the usual check parade at 9 a.m. and while in the middle of it a large number of Germans were marched into the camp and surrounded the parade. We, of course, thought it was just another dirty trick and were told that the S.B.D. (Senior British Officer) wanted to address the parade. He started by reading out a German order which was that — owing to the fact that German prisoners of war in Egypt were living in more without any maintenance in this way — we were to be made able to live like our own before army. The S.B.D. then went on to make some very appropriate remarks which he later let us hear. This is my first bit of English here in Poland, then Chinese and now this. From mainly my own side to see the funny side of it and having made all the time in at least a change and never leaving the table for meals. I have seen in other parts of pushing. As we are now in our mess it is much easier to divide things into meals and eat a meal for the crew part. It adds great enjoyment to the meal.

ETALAG II D

December 21th, 1944.

I've put this letter off a week so I could write it tonight and let you know how we spent Christmas. You're welcome I'll not forget for a long long time. We always a Santa Card with the names of the day on the inside and the photographs of you in our tent. Besides, I'll put it being for you if this was last for another five years but don't worry about that. I honestly don't expect to see another Xmas here. The Christmas dinner was lovely, the was something being among money was a real treat and play the first money of us here had in 2 1/2 years. I also have a photograph for you, it soon as I can get it returned I'll send it, which shouldn't be more than a week or two. The Red Cross are

as I think Xmas dinner so we've got the same looking quite nice. There's about 3 lbs of Canadian chocolate in being per person, but we haven't received that yet. Hope you all had an enjoyable Xmas.

January 1st, 1945.

Well we've had Christmas and New Year again, they sure seem to slip by fast now, don't they? It's a good thing you say. I imagine it would go pretty dull if it didn't. Well I think you got the picture you've been waiting for in being, you can see by it that this life isn't doing me any harm. I hope you enjoy it always. Well I've a very good Xmas, one of the things accomplished was the top of it in our mess here played in here a party session, each year it being in a different way. There are two (Tom Whelan, two from Toronto, two from Winnipeg, and one from Hamilton. This is the best bunch of fellows I've ever been with and we really have some real fun.

ETALAG IV A

November 26th, 1944.

How nice letter finds you all well, as it leaves me quite well. We had a little snow storm the other day, but you people haven't had too yet. Although I suppose it's quite cold. The working table as I don't mind it much. I'm expecting a lot more dry day, now, and it's been a very long wait. We haven't started getting ready for Xmas yet, suppose you have your looking all alone. Well as you now fall anyway, if not before, so hope this letter arrives alright, and the others. We got Steve Caplan's card, this week from the Red Cross. Hope everybody's well.

December 19th, 1944.

Haven't received any letters yet. Hope to get some soon. Hope you've got all of my letters. It's quite odd how, now, but very little money. Hope you people are all well. And also enjoyed some Christmas, which I expect to. Guess I'll be home for next Xmas if everything goes well. They isn't much to write about, just now. So will close until I get a letter.

December 11st, 1944.

Hope this card finds you all well, as it leaves me quite well. Expecting a letter or two. Hope you all enjoyed your New Year. Will be writing you soon.

January 11th, 1945.

Just a few lines to let you know that I'm well and on the beach. Hope you and the crew are all well. I hope to hear from you soon, and better still be back with you all again.

ETALAG IV B

December 12th, 1944.

Christmas certainly came early to Stalg IVB in the form of your Christmas shipment of chocolate. With the thought of Red Cross parcels this chocolate has certainly put a very different outlook on our Christmas here. Now I can not really know what we appreciate this gift and the other excellent work you have been responsible for. Thank you very much and our best wishes for the coming year to you and your fellow mess mates. Any ship who goes out on a working boat, made before Christmas will receive chocolate and cigarettes, before it leaves this Camp, as a gift from the Canadian Club. It is cigarettes as a mark of a collection from the ships who have received parcels from home. All in all it should be a fairly decent Christmas. The next we had home should mean that make up for what we have missed in the past few years. May the day really be enjoyed with good and good things to be served on. For New's sake and some of the gifts in one single all we get home.

January 1st, 1945.

Greetings and best wishes for 1945 to you and the Canadian people. The Canadian Club, 480 along with the message on behalf of its members. Christmas in our Stalg went off with a bang. It started on the best of the great gift of chocolate, of which we were able to make do with here in each location. This, as a boy from the line and in the rank of time, American Xmas

parade arrived at home for the first of four between 1st, over and after had parade. Many Canadians received personal parcels in the same week, as you see, there is a fairly clear. Now old "Kriegler" consider to the best Christmas spirit it is, really. Not to mention entertainment would be in nature an incomplete picture of our Christmas celebration. The number and variety of projects were made as were never seen before. The division for Theatre and Art presentation were in evidence the whole week. They included drama, comedy variety, musical, dance, pantomime, and radio plays (played over loud). Many more of our members were occupied in other places or local but activities, we engaged in on holidays in a Club. Let's keep our hopes pinned for all you and we hope in this new 1945 of ours. No more. Many thanks. Good Luck!

January 1st, 1945.

Happy New Year! and may the new year find us making you all the best, etc. in person. Now before I begin to let know all you wish we had for Xmas dinner. Xmas week we got 1 Can. parcel between 1, 2 American between 1 and 1 Yank. Xmas parcel between 10. Fifty of variety between 1 Our Xmas dinner consisted of turkey, ground potatoes, dried carrots, peas, string and onions, with much more starting things off. For dinner we had our own main pudding with thick cream and chocolate sauce, followed by coffee and biscuits. Pretty good, what? The pudding was really pretty good, it took about 12 hours boiling to get to that way. The ingredients were



Group taken at Stalg 144, The B. C. Troop, is marched with B. Blythe last by Mrs. Bruce Turner of Montreal.



the thing is there is a lot you don't really understand. I suppose D. and you are getting along alright. The dog should be fairly well grown by the time I get back. I certainly will be home by July, you will see how close I have got. Dad I will do my best hoping for the best, putting my trust in God.

January 24, 1945.

Another issue of paper is well worn every time they come through with it. Here under the weather for the past few days has made better today. Got a Red Cross box from the New Year. I could use one pair of socks as I've been using the same pair since coming here, almost afraid to wash them as they may fall to pieces. I often wonder if you have my first letter, yes. It will be three months on the 18th, since being trapped. No use in taking you to write as I know you do. Please send out. Maybe I'll be out of here by the time they get. but in case not could you see them.

#### STALAG 137

January 17th, 1944.

I received five parcels today. I received and a cigarette pack. The personal one was last June and was in perfect order; everything clean and undamaged. The cigarettes were soiled, dried from frost.

#### STALAG LAUF III

November 6th, 1944.

Well, here's my first letter for this month and you're interested since several in Europe. Since the boys nothing to home a couple of letters and a card per month for the last couple of months. Got it quite a lot of mail lately, later around mid-September. Got all OK, at home and that my weather getting some what damp and cold, and I feel winter is almost upon at once more. Got back lots of maps now — they're always welcome. Thank you for writing for me. Received book parcel lately, also parcel from Barbara, etc. Also clothing, cigarettes, Stimpex, soap and a toilet set (I could use it very much). If sending resources, make them too much on available stuff, as I have here a down line and make back type, plus.

November 24, 1944.

I really feel ashamed of myself. For three years I have felt as though I have let you down very much and this is the first letter I have written to you. In the winter of 1941, my Canadians were very short of food, blankets, clothing and sports equip-

ment. Due to your remarkable efforts in organizing the POWs, we were saved well ahead of time when materials. For the past 3 years, I have seen thousands of Canadian Red Cross boxes arriving, as well as all kinds of sports equipment. You can well imagine the effect of all this work upon the morale of the "Kanpans". The fact that we are allowed food for our thinking periods is an achievement in itself. Group-Captain Neyer of the R.C.A.F., who was here last summer, was very impressed and immediately dispatched a letter to the POWs, and Red Cross has since contacted us and then the German Legation also put an order in and — money, many thanks for everything.

November 26th, 1944.

One month to go to the third Christmas of the Captivity, that's what there is to go to. This year, to continue to list, when I become quite put out at the prospect, and wrote a letter quite recently at the end of One Brave Day — I am permitted to attend a philosophical Christmas course but must attend and when it comes it brings a "hand" if it is possible. We are possible here that despite every obstacle the Red Cross Christmas Fund parcels may arrive in time, and something will be seen when the Canadian Government's Christmas Card was sent out — "a small Christmas present for your personal use." Now, so you think that would be something to see? Like here a lettering. I am back in the tramper again. I remember I don't think of the moral I make during periods at being glad to see any other sign, my own, no matter how many words of Luke Simon should be between. I have a very small part (Paul, Wilford), and a great interest in the Grand production of Thornton Wilder's "Our Town", with an all-Canadian cast. I am a book reviewer for "The Canadian". — And I am busy the public program of musical being and last night.

November 26th, 1944.

This is a nice P. S. to the letter written a couple of days ago, provided by the receipt of 3 letters from your mother — including one of Oct. 17 — the latter in a long time. "The usual" being it headed by your receiving the July letter.

December 6th, 1944. Red March 15th, 1945.

Received a couple of September and October letters from you. As you can see about page 1 am definitely biased all the while of spending my fourth Christmas here and I have started receiving against working me — "Miss Christmas" — will be far from merry. However, once it is over, we can always get optimistic again and welcome the cry home for Christmas 45-46. The main thing I want to tell you is that, on December 4th, there

was a dedication service at the new memorial for the... (statement)... It is in the fifth century about 150 miles from the main camp. Seven officers were allowed to go from the compound, the bus, and motor from the North including the two Poles, and the English. I was one of the seven from here. The memorial is in the form of a large zinc table with three scroll-like stones wrapping up at the back under the... names and. We all lined up around it while the R.C. and C. of A. police used a loudspeaker, and the last position establish the stone Group-Captain put words on and then the German Legation also put on quite a long one. It was well done and the memorial is really very nice.

December 17th, 1944.

Delighted to receive your two letters of August 14th and September 19th. Once again, we were warmed to the heart by the news of all you are doing for us. It makes us feel very humble, but it is that humblest form of pride. You make us realize how glorious a heritage it is to be a Canadian, and remember we are here to become more aware of what that really means to us. Out of this experience we will return to Canada far better citizens than we was, for we have really learned to what we previously took very lightly for granted. I imagine, our Canada has far more to offer all other countries the help we are in. D. O. W. and we regard you as responsible for a great part of that. The winter weather has made life slightly less pleasant here, and the reduction

of our Red Cross food by half has we are getting by cheerfully and not too unpleasantly. Important, certainly, but always hoping that you return to you in just around the corner. Our chance is averaging one parcel per every 18-21 days, each running for 7 days, providing us with excellent entertainment. International program is going very strong and I am sending you under separate cover a complete report on that branch of our activities. The health of the camp, generally, has been excellent, really amazingly so. Regular buses are probably very good for us, although we do prefer the a little of the bus regular. First Christmas has arrived so hope remainder will be here in time. A thousand thanks, a great Santa gift for us. All have been saying a bit here and there for months for Christmas — we are eager to have a good day of it. We will be thinking of all you at this time particularly and wishing in spirit our dearest greetings. From all the lads and myself our thankful thoughts and regards to you.

December 18th, 1944.

Received five letters from you to-day the two from friends. These are the first received in six weeks. Many thanks for them. Very sorry to hear about P.D. being about up but I suppose it is much better than being shot down. I have been a little under the weather for a few days but am O.K. now. There is a touch of "flu" in the camp but nothing serious. We had a big hot work which was a big event in the camp. It was called "The Squares", a whooping, roaring, gold-rush



Group photo at Stalag Luft III showing amongst others: P. Le G. W. Batters, D.P.R. (Pete Henry, C.O.), P.D., R. B. Smith, P.D., (Stanley), P. J. B. Jones (Stanley), P.O. H. Adams (Stanley, Mack), P.O. W. S. Bannan (Stanley), P.O. T. E. Jack (Stanley), P.O. J. A. Brown (Stanley), P.O. J. G. Gardner (Stanley, C.O.), P.O. R. B. Hamilton (Stanley, C.O.).

plains and every one enjoyed it very much. We had a plan called "The Importance of Being Earnest" by Oscar Wilde. The boys did very well. The local situation is about the same as the camps and we are enjoying it. I am afraid we must have a Xmas in 1 day for year. The people there (meaning in home for 6 1/2 months) were very good to me. The Germans are giving us potatoes, cabbage and swedes as presents, which are very helpful. This holiday was not really enjoyed as the houses they all the year is ready made here in this cold weather. To think that I was not very happy when I received it that day! I am still making but am afraid I am the strongest here unable to concentrate on the subject for long.

December 19th, 1944.

My ankles arrived a few weeks ago and it is very good for. Thanks very much. It was really a good idea sending it here instead of London because it could so easily have been lost and anyway I might not have been able to use it before getting you into it. No! I still think that we will not be here that long. Mad has been pretty good lately. I'm still doing a little work that I have finished all the books from the Canadian Legion (British Royal Service which you so did not). Neither of the ones on the new base on hydrocarbons have arrived yet but I am looking forward to their arrival very much now. It's a little late for Xmas greetings but nevertheless Merry Xmas to all the family.

December 11th, 1944.

Mad is coming in fairly regularly, later around Christmas. Had to receive these things. This morning was surprised to receive an old lady letter but it was extremely welcome, consisting as it did, soap. All D.R., here and glad to hear that part of it is on the way. I've been very fortunate in that line so far and haven't missed any. Could no garments and various underwear items to next parcel — but no Red Cross soap or whatever they've been so far. There were far too large. Jacket shorts if possible, if not, the broadcloth type, but please a medium size. Also could use a bath towel, preferably a large and heavy type, like those we used to have at home. I've mentioned slippers already. I think, also shoes.

December 16th, 1944. Red's March 24th, 1945.

Two more days until Christmas. About all Christmas means here is an extra hot big lunch table. We have been on reduced rations for a while, having food for Christmas day, when we are going to have a particular meal, or rather a meal at all. We have made a Christmas cake from ground biscuits. We have also decorated the room

with painted table paper streamers and colored and colored paper faces against packages — it looks quite gay — we only wish the news was as cheerful. Have not had had since the beginning of the month. Am awaiting for a parcel from home — hope they remember to send — particularly chocolate — worth its weight in gold here — and upon which are valuable to retain the storehouse of our life. Will be able to get to home on Christmas day.

December 21st, 1944.

The women you a previous letter earlier this month, but haven't received much mail since that time, only a couple of slightly longer September letters. Bill D. & Ann, but the weather's getting really cold so the last week or so. The German papers came out with it that (except a few weeks ago), producing the coldest winter in the last century, and it seems to be coming true. A good point about it, however, is that it guarantees a certain amount of skating and hockey, something that was altogether missing last winter, which was rather mild. There isn't many skaters around, and they are mostly the cheap type, but I've been out a few times already. Xmas was featured by American Christmas parties, quite a large batch of food reaching the camp, and a certain amount of slightly dried and artificial gifts, which was altogether fairly useful. No Xmas leaves this year, as I think I've already mentioned, some talk to wish the Merry Xmas was more pronounced, the Happy Xmas, meant it and represented in more brightly words. The Canadian chocolate was received — many thanks to the C.I.W.O.F.R.A. I've already mentioned receiving shoes, my eyes, particularly lately, heady put and brushes as well as shoes, not necessarily Mad, also gym shoes. By the way the receipt is a great thing these days.

December 21st, 1944.

A. Happy New Year to you my friend.

A. Happy New Year to you all at home. I received your letter of Sept. 21st and the message also from other letters. We had a very nice Christmas indeed. The American Red Cross parcels are good and they were very good. We had turkey, some pudding, stuff and stuff and it was very good looking to get so fully satisfied for once. In fact some of the boys did the message so do so. We received the Canadian chocolate from the P.M.W. & Ann, and it was very much appreciated by all the boys. Please thank them from me all. The Canadian and English Xmas parcels did not arrive in time but will probably arrive any day now. Hope you all had a happy time together. My love to all friends.

December 26th, 1944.

"Was the nice little Xmas, everyone well but — some one will be — thanks to the American Red Cross, Can. Red Cross, Can. Red Cross (I'm not sure on his organization) and their efforts on our behalf and we really do appreciate it. Xmas day was quite a success in that we got concerned in these circumstances — day yes — but it made an impressive display of effort of our own means. The more we are having a cold season but it is excellent for us skating — already we do well today and have opened the season with two good games. Our opponents a good thanks to Can. Red Cross. Unfortunately the equipment is, but you have not missed up but we do appreciate your efforts and know what must have happened to it. The boys you all enjoyed a good time and so did that it just may be one last (and that now five times) but still one must be right some time if one tries often enough. The pay me own heavy support to the above mentioned organizations — they have certainly earned our respect. My love to all and surely — do do do them on water — getting that last thing with so far it's real coming in. Please are more than welcome.

December 28th, 1944.

Christmas has come and gone again without the fire of us being together, but I do hope you were all here and carried on as usual. I'm curious to know when Mad got the rest of her from me. The dry before Christmas, a Singapore island arrived. Haven't got any mail since November 21st as Mad's Christmas 1st is my letter. It has

been told here for the last fortnight, so we have been able to have a good holiday and skating rink. It's fun watching those who have never seen us, listening to them. Hope my shoes get late in time. It was very thoughtful of you to think of sending them. Our Theatre is peevish. The "Dreadful" more and so is excellent. The American Christmas parcels arrived in time, so we had turkey and pudding for dinner. The Canadian chocolate also came in good order. You're no idea how we all appreciate the work you folks are doing for us. I only wish I could thank everybody personally. Perhaps some day I can. Well, with a bit of luck and hard work, we will be together at this time next year, but in the meantime, don't be things you do come and take good care of yourself. I may be going on land (might not) but you will think you have a fifteen year-old or more hands when I get going. I have just found out that we do not have a rest camp in London now. It's still in good health and spirit, but I do get somewhat tired in a while, about every 15 days.

December 29th, 1944.

After Christmas has come and gone, and here's hoping it is the last one here. Our Christmas was not too bad considering the circumstances. We had turkey, plum pudding, etc. from the Red Cross parcels. I might mention sometime the work before, and we will have some of his home made mince pies to eat. We had intended having mince pies if our Christmas dinner, but after the plum pudding, we found we couldn't eat anything more. We have had some cold weather lately, and we



Group photo of 1944 (left) (11. P.O. L. L. McPherson is seated with S. Wainly next by him, J. McPherson of America 2nd Co.)

were able to have an exhibition hockey match on Christmas Day. We were all able to get a share of skating also. There was also an English vs. Russian hockey game, and there was a big "Yankee" in the centre on one occasion for one minute. Our room covered a "barrack" in the house, and we were able to have fifty cigarettes for each of the two articles in our room. I have been out skating the last time on Eve alone. A hockey schedule is being drawn up and I am looking forward to a few games. I have been going skating almost to the colony in our room, who are all English, with the exception of me. I am only allowed three hours and four good cards a month, so this is the last time this month. I have been sending my post cards to the camp.

December 28th, 1940. Sat'd March 14th, 1941.

Sunday evening, church service just over and 4 1/2 letters sent. Received two letters this week and a Christmas card from Father Maurice McKeown King on behalf of Canadian everywhere — a very kind and appreciated gesture. I am doing a bit of writing in our Quill club we have organized on the camp. Received parcel of goosepore, tooth-brush, Gladys and T. Downey — a very good selection, and I am very grateful. Please thank the folk POW Relief Association for sports material which was useful and practical. We play a bit of hockey and some badminton. There's hoping '41 will be an all winter over here.

December 29th, 1940. Sat'd February 16th, 1941.

We were quite busy Xmas week — grinding biscuits and hedges for them, making potato dumplings to use the little bit our ails. There must have weighed about 50 lbs which a chocolate thing. We also had from American Christmas and one ordinary parcel as we had a big letter but I am sure made and probably had it. Seems to be the coldest winter in 100 years or so here made a good hockey rink and three other rinks for skating. We opened on the 24th with three vs. five Canada game. I played and we won 4-0. I wished I had known we would be here this winter. I'd have asked for my skates. We have about 180 for 2,000 men. Clump on skates. A few private jobs, but we manage. There been fairly warm at times with socks on and trousers over head. Don't know why the R. C. would be I, and Military too late now. I really have no complaints!

December 31st, 1940. Sat'd March 16th, 1941.

I guess Happy New Year will be late but I can't remember that it takes a couple of months for these things to get home. We had a magnifi-

cent "kick" over Christmas — thanks to the American Red Cross Christmas parcels. They had rubber, glass paddles, tennis etc. We were hoping the British or Canadian ones would arrive in time to play on a big field on New Year but we will have that to look forward to. Incidentally we Canadians in the camp are nearly proud of the Princess of Wales Relief Association and the Canadian Red Cross. They have done so very much for us. Had a letter from you today with stops enclosed — they were really useful to get. We are having cold weather here and the skating is really good. It is all over on the same hockey line and the games are a riot. I'm one of the strongest players in you can give the standard of the team. Thanks for the monthlies.

#### STALAG LEST VII

Christmas Day 1940.

The day started at 8:00 with a parade. We are having only one today. Chief interest is eating the Red Cross food that we have received. Much food still in a normal diet. Church services and social singing are a priority, next to White Christmas party last night. Big snow game also observed. We have snow, pushing, city raffles and bread. All in good spirit. Red Cross Xmas parcels not here yet. Hope you aren't worrying about us.

#### MARLBOROUGH MILITARY

December 26th, 1940.

Things are pretty quiet tonight — some of the boys from our room have gone to see the Football "Redemptor Cross", so I'll take advantage and sleep a few lines. Well, we begin with our Xmas here wasn't bad. I think we all managed to get the mail I needed to the home before tomorrow and on the whole spent a fairly successful day before the war. I think the odds are in favour of spending the new year at home — what do you say? I want to the Military Play, Card Service and Washington Service and it was very well done. It is the first time I have seen such a service — because it is one of the regular services. The R. C. also held their regular service and started the service in our hall a show on Xmas Day. We're going to proper Xmas, but several of the old "guys" — make them out of old hangers and one piece of soap metal they could get their hands on. I really is funny to see them — all shapes and sizes. We make our water ponds, which the men over here in state of flux. It's such a long trip like. Had a good body — some of the boys getting five or six letters at a time. Last letter in November.

January 1941.

This is the letter I promised to you Jan. 4-41 (did not fit date) and without further preamble, would say that the Merchant Navy and Marine of the Royal Navy in the camp which is located in country district in N.W. Canada. In former companies, a small town in staff, very few apparatus, we have everything a commandery should have (see below) and many things it should not. It has mentioned them in Administration from Chief Constable Miss (Meyer) right down to Sunday, and what about. Good things (produced from here in light spirit) "Prize of Victory" — Christmas attraction — 4 day run — Canada, English and German films (Boney — school — U.S.A. and R.L. Chicago, all sports, football, football, hockey, indoor, outdoor, tennis, tennis, golfing). Our present population is 2,500 — mostly U.K. men, 180 Canadians, 70 M.C. and Americans, Poles, Indians, etc., represented. Colours, white, black, brown, red, etc. Opposition interests begin and ends in helping to make. Administration, all activities, and even work. Set "To go before was made last order — became understood in and led — in city reported Sept 1940 from 13 men — good number visited up last Mar 25/41. By permission, many and varied. Interest — Lt. 9 Air — Government social reform. Now reading

up Mills' "Political Economy". Life helping others but resources limited. Dream dreams for in this materialism would mean go unfulfilled. Above reality. Would in case accordingly, national reform. International viewpoint necessary to meet good social peace. Future in lap of Luck but before prospects good.

December 26th, 1940. For 4 March 14th, 1941.

I guess Happy New Year will be late but I can't remember that it takes a couple of months for these things to get home. We had a magnificent "kick" over Christmas — thanks to the American Red Cross Christmas parcels. They had rubber, glass paddles, tennis etc. We were hoping the British or Canadian ones would arrive in time to play on a big field on New Year but we will have that to look forward to. Incidentally we Canadians in the camp are nearly proud of the Princess of Wales Relief Association and the Canadian Red Cross. They have done so very much for us. Had a letter from you today with stops enclosed — they were really useful to get. We are having cold weather here and the skating is really good. It is all over on the same hockey rink and the games are a riot. I'm one of the strongest players in you can give the standard of the team. Thanks for the monthlies.

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