

Butch Geetter and the Hot Rock



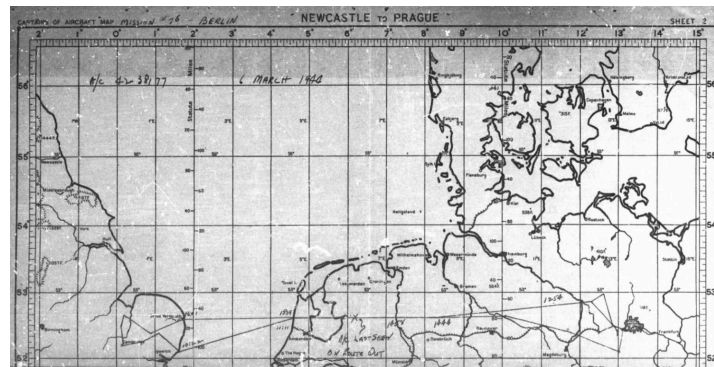
A POW Love Story

Part 3: Prisoner of War 1944-45

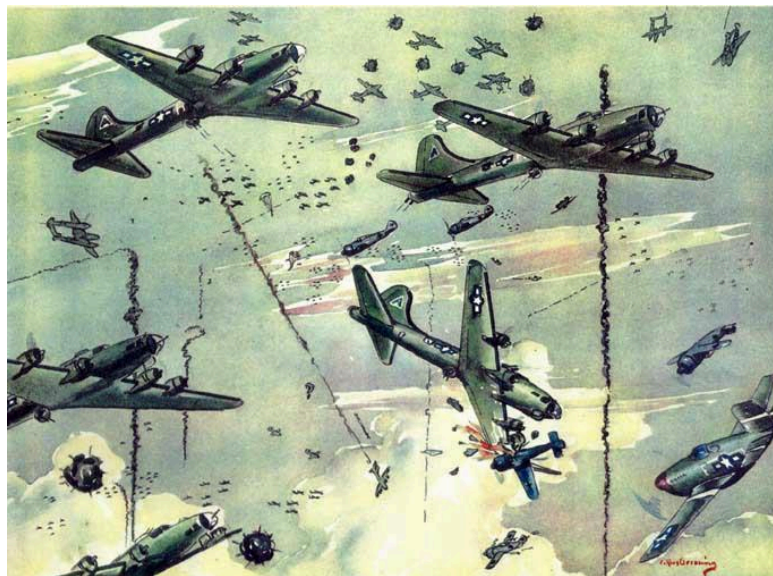
by Sylvia Geetter Levy and Lt. Leonard Levy

Edited by Alan Neal Levy

After taking off from RAF Knettishall [England], B-17G 42-38177 *Shack Rabbits* of the 561st Bomb Squadron, 388th Bomb Group flew the same direct route to Berlin. The aircraft was carrying the usual crew of ten.



The formation followed the route over the IJsselmeer and southeast Drenthe and, despite several attacks by German fighters, successfully arrived at Berlin. Due to these attacks, A Group lost four aircraft on the outward journey. The first group (B Group) dropped its bombs at 1:47 PM and hit Oranienburg, a northern district of Berlin. The second group (A Group) waited a little longer; they dropped their bombs at 2:07 and hit Wittenberg, northwest of Berlin. After completing their mission, the formation flew back towards England.



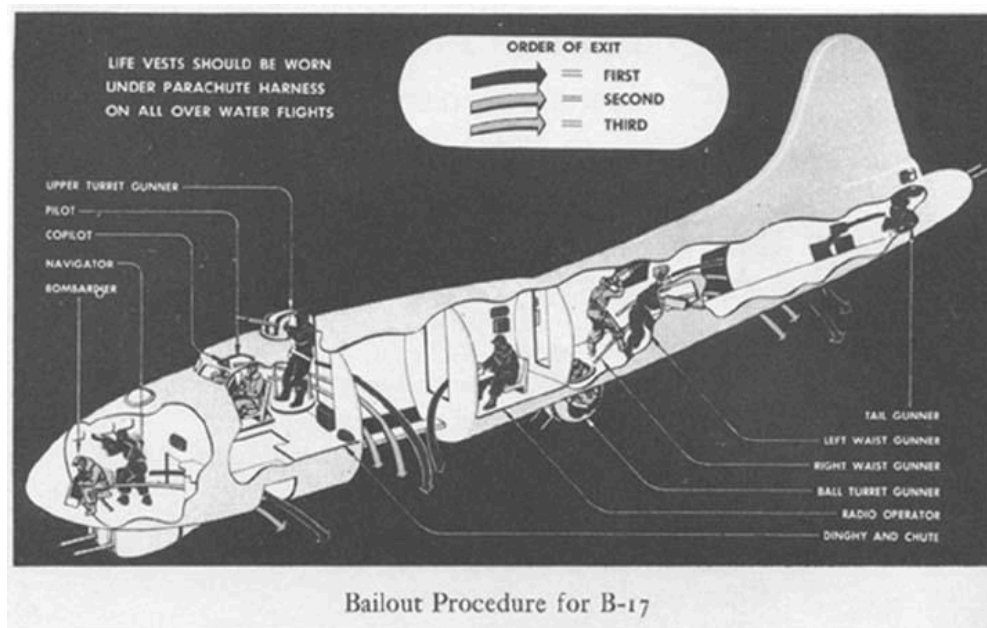
Art by Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening¹'s

Berlin Battle

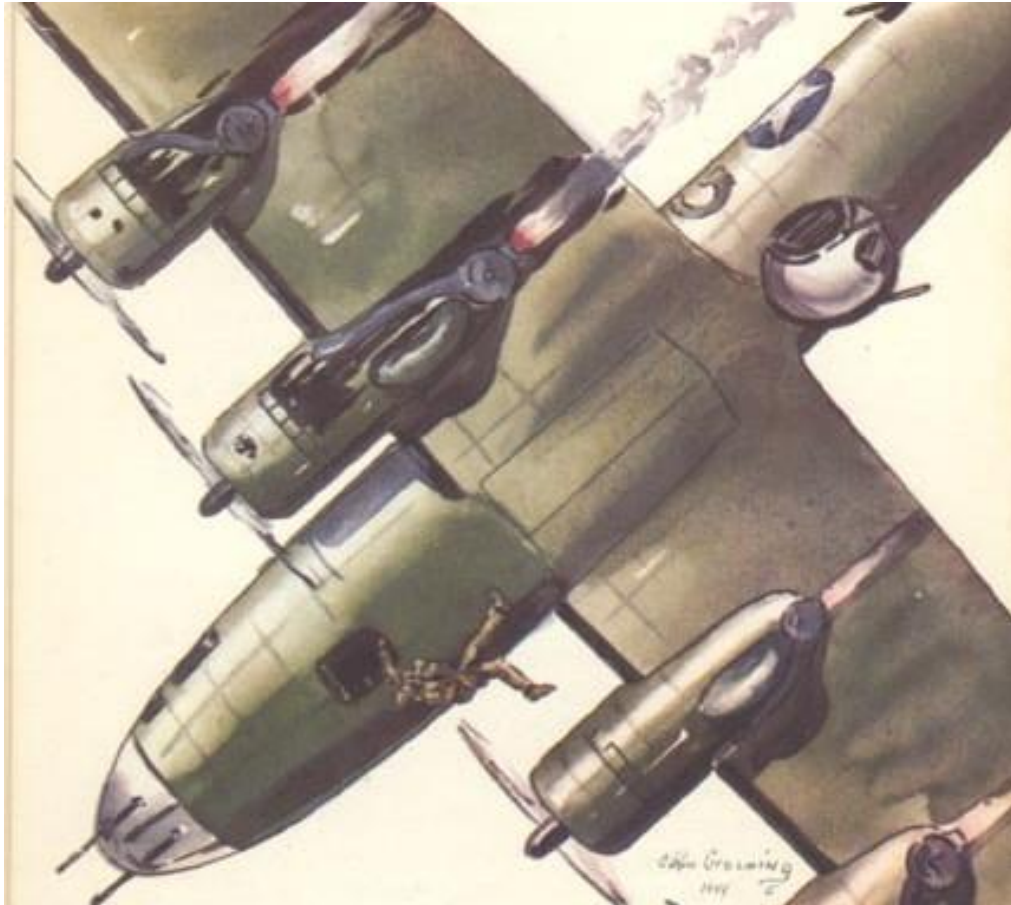
¹ Charles Ross Greening was the second highest ranking American officer at Stalag Luft 1. His Log was recently discovered and published.

In addition to B-17G 42-38177 *Shack Rabbits*, other aircraft crashed in the border area on 6 March 1944. At seven of these, Stichting Luchtoorlog Onderzoek Drenthe has placed a Lost Wings information panel. [Three of the aircraft were B-17s from the 561st Bomb Squadron: B-17G 42-37886 *Blitzing Betsy*, B-17G 42-31135 *Suzy Sagtits*, and B-17G 42-38177 *Shack Rabbits*"]

On the return flight, close to the Dutch border, navigator Lt. Leonard Levy informed the crew that they were approaching the Zuider Zee. The crew responded with a cheerful attitude, and began to eat Mars bars as a sign of relief. Immediately after this, at around 14:50, B-17G 42-38177 *Shack Rabbits* was attacked by a number of Focke Wulf Fw 190s and Messerschmitt Bf 109s which attacked out of the sun, making them difficult to spot. During the first attack, Lt. Rock Newmark, manning the two Browning M2 .50 caliber machine guns in the chin turret, was hit by the 20+30mm shells fired by the German fighters. He was wounded in the arm.



The inner left engine was also hit, and a hit to the oxygen tank turned it into a fire-breathing entity. The plane was beyond saving, so Lt. Leonard Levy decided to open the escape hatch. Before he and Lt. Raymond R. Newmark left the plane, they saw pilot Lt. Augustine B. Cristiani and co-pilot Lt. Clarence D. Farrington preparing to leave the plane as well. As they looked toward the tail of the plane, they saw flight engineer and dorsal turret gunner Sgt. Salvatore Ciaccio trapped in his turret, "*his clothes burning from head to toe.*"



Art by Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening²'s

Navigator Bailing from a B-17

Of the ten crew members, five managed to parachute to safety: Lt. Raymond R. Newmark was the first to leave B-17G 42-38177 *Shack Rabbits*. He was found shortly afterwards in farmland near Neuringe. He was briefly cared for by a farmer and his family...

² Charles Ross Greening was the second highest ranking American officer at Stalag Luft 1. His Log was recently discovered and published.



Art by Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening³'s

Bailing Out

Lt. Leonard Levy was the second to leave the plane. He also landed near Neuringe. William A. Pope and William N. Kline then left the plane. They were housed overnight in a Neuringe barn by a farmer.

Pilot Lt. Augustine B. Cristiani was the last to exit the B-17. He also landed safely at Neuringe and spent the night in a barn. The five surviving crew members who bailed out turned themselves in by walking to the police station in Lingen.

³ Charles Ross Greening was the second highest ranking American officer at Stalag Luft 1. His Log was recently discovered and published.



Art by Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening⁴'s

Running

Both wireless operator Sgt. William B. Mayne and ball turret gunner Sgt. Rupert G. Smith were hit by 20mm rounds from the German fighters, mortally wounding them. They soon succumbed to their wounds. Salvatore Ciaccio jumped out of the plane without a parachute, still burning.

Tail gunner Sgt. John C. Griscom soon radioed to abandon the plane. However, he was found dead at Georgsdorf. The cause is unknown. The same goes for Lt. Clarence D. Farrington; he also managed to leave the plane with his parachute but was also found dead at Neuringe. Crew members say that he was either injured and therefore failed to open his parachute, or that his parachute was damaged by the fire, causing him to fall to his death.

The shooting down of B-17G 42-38177 *Shack Rabbits* can most likely be attributed to Hauptmann Hugo Frey, flying Focke Wulf Fw 190A-6 Wnr. 470083. Hauptmann Hugo Frey also crashed with his aircraft on 6 March 1944, after having shot down a total of four B-17 Flying Fortresses, at Erm. It is unknown whether the gunners of B-17G 42-38177 *Shack Rabbits* were the cause of its crash.

⁴ Charles Ross Greening was the second highest ranking American officer at Stalag Luft 1. His Log was recently discovered and published.



Shack Rabbits Lost Wings information panel, Twist⁵, Germany

*B-17G 42-38177 'Shack Rabbits'*⁶

Stichting Luchtoorlog Onderzoek Drenthe
Drenthe Air War Research Foundation

⁵ 52°37'21.2"N 7°02'55.9"E

⁶ <https://www.slodrenthe.nl/b-17g-flying-fortress-42-38177-shack-rabbits/>

Hauptmann Hugo Frey

(14 April 1915 – 6 March 1944)



The industrial areas of Berlin and Genshagen, Germany are the primary targets for Mission [250.] A combined force of 730 heavy bombers are dispatched from 1st, 2nd and 3rd Air Divisions... A total of 69 aircraft Failed to Return, a loss rate of 9.452%. While that loss rate was considered very high, the strategy of attacking high profile targets in order to draw up the Luftwaffe does pay benefits with 179-36-93 of German aircraft claimed. It is not the loss of aircraft that is so devastating to the Luftwaffe but *the loss of pilots*.

8th Army Air Forces Mission 250⁷
American Air War Museum in Britain

Hugo Frey was a Luftwaffe ace and recipient of the Knight's Cross of the Iron Cross during World War II. On 6 March 1944, Frey was killed over Sleen, the Netherlands after attacking a formation of Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress bombers. He was posthumously awarded the Knight's Cross on 4 May 1944. During his career he was credited with 32 aerial victories including 25 four-engine bombers, all on the Western Front.

- Wikipedia entry

⁷ <https://www.americanairmuseum.com/archive/mission/8th-air-force-250>

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B-17G 42-38177 'Shack Rabbits'⁸

Stichting Luchtoorlog Onderzoek Drenthe
Drenthe Air War Research Foundation

⁸ <https://www.slodrenthe.nl/b-17g-flying-fortress-42-38177-shack-rabbits/>

Bronze Medal

March 10-11, 1944

2nd Lt. Leonard (Lenny) Levy is awarded a Bronze Medal for completing his fifth combat mission over enemy territory. Despite being injured inside the *Shack Rabbits* while it was under attack by German ace fighter pilot Hauptmann⁹ Hugo Frey, this is the only medal ever awarded to Lt. Levy.



Lt. Leonard (Lenny) Levy saved at least one person on *Shack Rabbits* while it was under attack by Hptmn. Hugo Frey. After leaving his Navigator's station, he opened the Escape Hatch and checked on the pilot and copilot, who were still in the cockpit.

As he tried to get Lt. Clarence (Red) D. Farrington ready to bail out, he was shot by a single bullet in the right bicep which lodged in Lt. Levy's arm and left Lt. Farrington free from any physical wound. Although Red appeared uninjured, he may have been in shock.

Pilot Lt. Augustine (Chris) B. Cristiani was operational, but the *Shack Rabbits* was not. He quickly decided to save the crew and not to save the B-17. Lt. Chris Christiani gave the order to bail out.

As the freshly injured Lt. Leonard Levy prepared to bail out, he saw that Bombardier Lt. Raymond (Rock) Newmark was severely injured, but still manning a machine gun turret not

⁹ Hauptmann is an officer rank in the German, Austrian, and Swiss armies, typically translated as "captain." It is equivalent to the rank of captain in the British and US Armies.

assigned to him. Lt. Leonard Levy guided his friend Rock from the turret, adjusted his parachute, tapped him on the shoulder and watched him jump.

Oh God, Lt. Leonard Levy thought. I'm next. As he checked his parachute he tried to remember his training. I have to count 1 to 10 before I pull the ripcord. Remember to count 1 to 10. Count 1 to 10.

After ensuring the safety of the bombardier and potentially saving the life of the co-pilot, Lt. Leonard Levy stepped out of *his* Flying Fortress, rapidly counted **1, 2, 10**, pulled his ripcord, watched the parachute unfurl and landed *safely* in Neuringe, Germany.

LEVY		LEONARD		(NMI)	T-61298		Flt. O.		
Organization		388th Bomb Gp (T)		Foreign		Others			
Headquarters		8th AF		Station or AFQ		G.O. No.		Date	
Type of Award		AM		034		149		11 Mar 1944	
Circ. Leaf Clusters		Number		Posthumous		No		DO NOT WRITE IN COLUMN BELOW	
By Command of		Maj Gen DOOLITTLE		Amended		Revoked			
CITATION									
For exceptionally meritorious achievement while participating in five separate bomber combat missions over enemy occupied Continental Europe. The courage, coolness and skill displayed by these Officers and Enlisted Men upon these occasions reflect great credit upon themselves and the Armed Forces of the United States.									
Home address: Hartford, Conn.									

Sgt. Salvatore Ciaccio

(July 7, 1921 – March 6 1944)

Salvatore Ciaccio was born on July 7, 1921, the son of Ignazio and Adela Ciaccio. Salvatore had two younger brothers: John P. Ciaccio (1923) and Joseph Ciaccio (1925). Little is known about Salvatore and the family, but they lived in Brooklyn, New York, [where he] worked at Acme Air Appliances Company.

At the beginning of the war, Salvatore applied for the American Air Force. Salvatore was accepted and... [started] his training as a flight engineer and gunner.

After completing his training, Salvatore was assigned to the 561st Bomb Squadron, 388th Bomb Group, which was stationed at RAF Knettishall in England. From there, Salvatore flew seven missions against Germany.

During Salvatore's last mission, his clothes caught fire. Distraught, Salvatore jumped out of the plane without a parachute and died.

In 1947, the Roman Catholic Church of Ascension, 86th Street and 55th Avenue, dedicated a shrine and flagpole to the parish's victims, including Salvatore and his brother John (who also died in 1944).

B-17G 42-38177 'Shack Rabbits'¹⁰

Stichting Luchtoorlog Onderzoek Drenthe
Drenthe Air War Research Foundation

¹⁰ <https://www.slodrenthe.nl/b-17g-flying-fortress-42-38177-shack-rabbits/>

Lt. Clarence Darryl (Red) Farrington

(1917 – March 6 1944)



Clarence Darryl 'Red' Farrington was born in 1917 in Lenox, Madison County, New York. He was the son of William Mortimer Farrington and Mary Jane Sollitt Betsinger. Red had two older brothers and one older sister; William, Frederick and Alice. He also had two younger brothers; Adrian and Harry.

Red attended Canastota High School. After that, he joined the New Process Gear Corp. Syracuse. At the beginning of the war Red enlisted in the United States Air Force. His basic training was at Enid, Oklahoma and he was later stationed at Victory Field, Vernon, Texas. Red received his wings at the Twin Engine Bomber Training School at Pampa Texas in June 1943. After completing his training, Red was assigned to the 561st Bomb Squadron, 388th Bomb Group, which was based at RAF Knettishall in England. From there, Red flew six missions against Germany. During Red's last mission, he was unable to exit the plane in time and was killed in the crash.

Red was awarded the following awards: Air Medal, Purple Heart, United States Aviator Badge Army, World War II Victory Medal, American Campaign Medal, Army Presidential Unit Citation, Army Good Conduct Medal and European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign.

B-17G 42-38177 'Shack Rabbits'¹¹

Stichting Luchtoorlog Onderzoek Drenthe
Drenthe Air War Research Foundation

¹¹ <https://www.slodrenthe.nl/b-17g-flying-fortress-42-38177-shack-rabbits/>

Staff Sgt. John Clayton Griscom

(April 29, 1922 – March 6 1944)



Staff Sgt. John Clayton Griscom was born on April 29, 1922, the son of Clayton Denn Griscom (originally from Salem, New York) and Jeanne Marie Zielinski (from Paris). The family lived in Paris, where John was born.

The family left Cherbourg for New York on July 9, 1932, aboard the SS Leviathan. They arrived there on July 15, 1932, after which they settled in Salem, New York. After a few years, John went to work for the US Department of Defense. Not long after, John signed up for the US Air Force. John was accepted and he started his training as a gunner.

After completing his training, John was assigned to the 561st Bomb Squadron, 388th Bomb Group, which was based at RAF Knettishall in England. From here, John flew 25 missions against Germany. During his last mission, he was unable to exit the plane in time and was killed in the crash.

B-17G 42-38177 'Shack Rabbits'¹²

Stichting Luchtoorlog Onderzoek Drenthe
Drenthe Air War Research Foundation

¹² <https://www.slodrenthe.nl/b-17g-flying-fortress-42-38177-shack-rabbits/>

Sgt. William (Bill) Burtle Mayne

(May 26, 1920 – March 6 1944)



Sgt. William Burtle "Bill" Mayne was born on May 26, 1920, to William Burtle Mayne and Selina Griffith in Mayfield, Pennsylvania. Bill had one older sister, Evelyn Grace Mayne. Bill's father, a World War I veteran, died on December 24, 1922.

Bill attended Mayfield High School, graduating in 1938. He then went to work as a brakeman on a locomotive.

On December 19, 1941, Bill enlisted in the United States Air Force. Bill was accepted and he began training as a radio operator.

After completing his training, Bill was stationed with the 11th Bomb Group in the South Pacific, specifically Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands. Here Bill flew as a wireless operator on B-17E 41-9227 'Yankee Doodle Jr.'.

From Guadalcanal and the Solomon Islands, the crew flew missions against Japanese shipping and bombing raids on Japanese targets. The crew of B-17E 41-9227 'Yankee Doodle Jr.' was responsible for sinking at least two Japanese ships (a cruiser and a transport) and shooting down at least six Japanese aircraft.

After completing his tour, Bill returned to America in 1943. Here he decided to sign up for another tour. This time Bill was assigned to the 561st Bomb Squadron, 388th Bomb Group, which was stationed at RAF Knettishall in England. From here Bill flew eight missions against Germany.

B-17G 42-38177 'Shack Rabbits'¹³

Stichting Luchtoorlog Onderzoek Drenthe
Drenthe Air War Research Foundation



The crew of B-17E 41-9227 'Yankee Doodle Jr.' at Guadalcanal,
Sgt. Bill Mayne is marked with the arrow

¹³ <https://www.slodrenthe.nl/b-17g-flying-fortress-42-38177-shack-rabbits/>

Sgt. Rupert Garland Smith

(May 28, 1919 – March 6 1944)

Sgt. Rupert Garland "Snuffy" Smith was born on May 28, 1919, to Claude Alexander Smith and Mary Leona Madewell. Rupert was an only child. The family lived in McIntosh, Oklahoma.

Rupert married Gertie Marie Winkle in 1935, and together they had one daughter: Patricia Louise Smith.

In August 1942 Rupert enlisted in the American Air Force. Rupert was accepted and given identification number '18096277'. After this he could start his training as a gunner.

Rupert was nicknamed 'Snuffy' by his crewmates because he was the smallest of the bunch, but also the smartest.

After completing his training, Rupert was assigned to the 561st Bomb Squadron, 388th Bomb Group, based at RAF Knettishall in England in 1943. From here, Rupert flew seven missions against Germany.

During Rupert's seventh and final mission, he was seriously injured and was unable to leave the aircraft. He died in the crash.

B-17G 42-38177 'Shack Rabbits'¹⁴

Stichting Luchtoorlog Onderzoek Drenthe
Drenthe Air War Research Foundation

¹⁴ <https://www.slodrenthe.nl/b-17g-flying-fortress-42-38177-shack-rabbits/>

Wednesday night
March 8, 1944

Darling ~

Libby¹⁵ called me earlier this evening to go to the movies with her. I would have gone. I had just been to the movies last night and not getting to sleep until very late, I decided I'd go to bed early tonight.

Tomorrow night I am going to your mom's for supper and of course, knowing mom - she'll have everything I like.

I'll stay in this weekend as Sadie¹⁶ is going to New York for the weekend. She has a friend there and I guess they'll take in a few shows. She doesn't see that fellow she used to write me about when we were in Alexandria¹⁷. He is younger than she, and he was getting too serious and because of the age difference, she decided to call it off. However, he still writes to her every week and she does likewise. I guess it would be called a platonic friendship now. He's living in Chicago now - what he's doing there I don't know - but I gathered that from the postmark on his envelopes.

I received the letter long overdue from Frances - she told me Chris¹⁸ had a good time in London, and she's happy about the fact that you and Chris get along so well. She just began to work recently as she was expecting her sister-in-law from Australia to come to the States, but her brother is back in Australia so she's not coming now. She wrote a very nice letter and I was glad to hear from her.

I am sending you three different kinds of pipe tobacco - small packages - not knowing what you preferred. Let's see there's Briggs, Bond Street and Union Leader -I hope you will like one of them. Darling, is there anything in particular you would like to have me send to you? I know you haven't received any of my packages yet - but you'll get them eventually~

¹⁵ Libby Handler graduated from Weaver High School in Hartford, Connecticut in 1938 with Sylvia and they have remained close friends.

¹⁶ Sadie Geetter is Sylvia's oldest sister. Like Sylvia she is a working woman and they both pay rent for a shared bedroom in their mother's house at 148 Marigold St. in Hartford, Conn.

¹⁷ Originally known as Alexandria Army Air Base, the base was opened on 21 October 1942 and during World War II performed Boeing B-17 Flying Fortress aircrew training. It was placed on inactive status on 23 September 1946, although a small cadre of Army and Air Force personnel (331 Comps Squadron) remained assigned to Alexandria Municipal Airport throughout the late 1940s. Located 5 miles northwest of Alexandria, LA, about 170 miles northwest of New Orleans, LA.

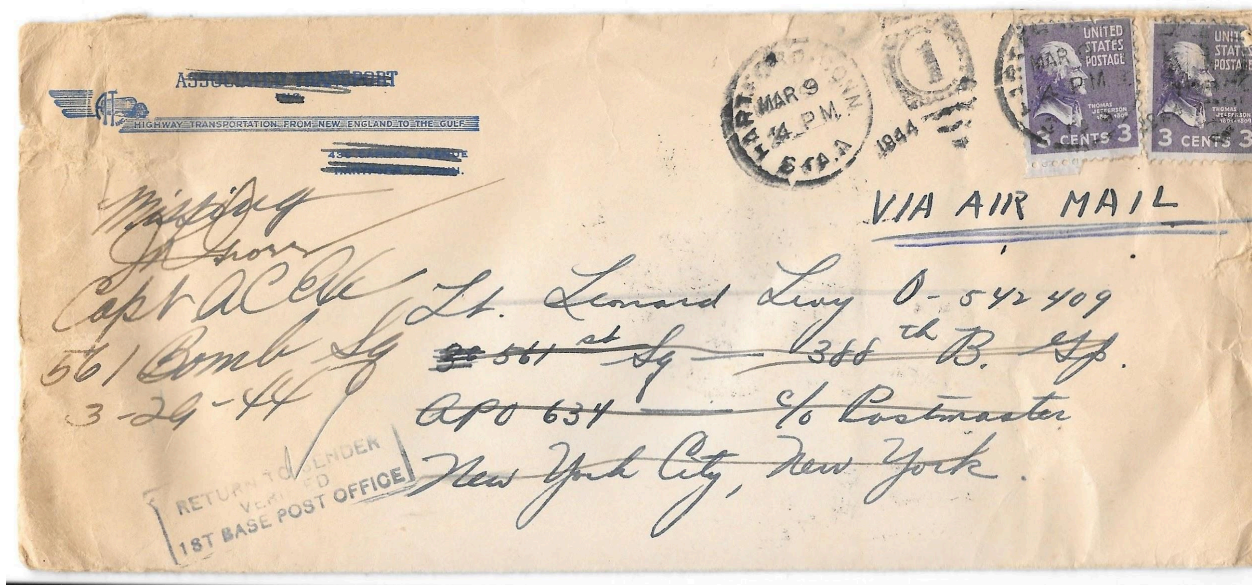
¹⁸ Augustine (Chris) Benedict Christiani is the Pilot of Lenny's crew. Frances is his wife.

You asked me what I thought would be a good name for your ship – Hon - I thought you were going to name it "The Hot Rocks" - I thought that was as good a name as you could have. I don't think I could give a better name.

I'm hoping tomorrow will bring a letter from you. There's one good thing about Tomorrows - there's the chance your wishes will come true. Of course my biggest wish for the tomorrows to come is that you will be home soon - I do miss you so much and with all my heart -

I love you
Sylvia
XXX

The envelope was from Sylvia's employer, Associated Transport Inc. With name and address crossed out but legible: 436 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, Conn. The logo and slogan were not crossed out: AT Inc. Over a speeding truck "Highway Transportation From New England to the Gulf"



Letter marked "Missing" below the return address, by:

J. P. Gross [Signature]
Capt. AC Exec
561 Bomb Squad
3-29-44

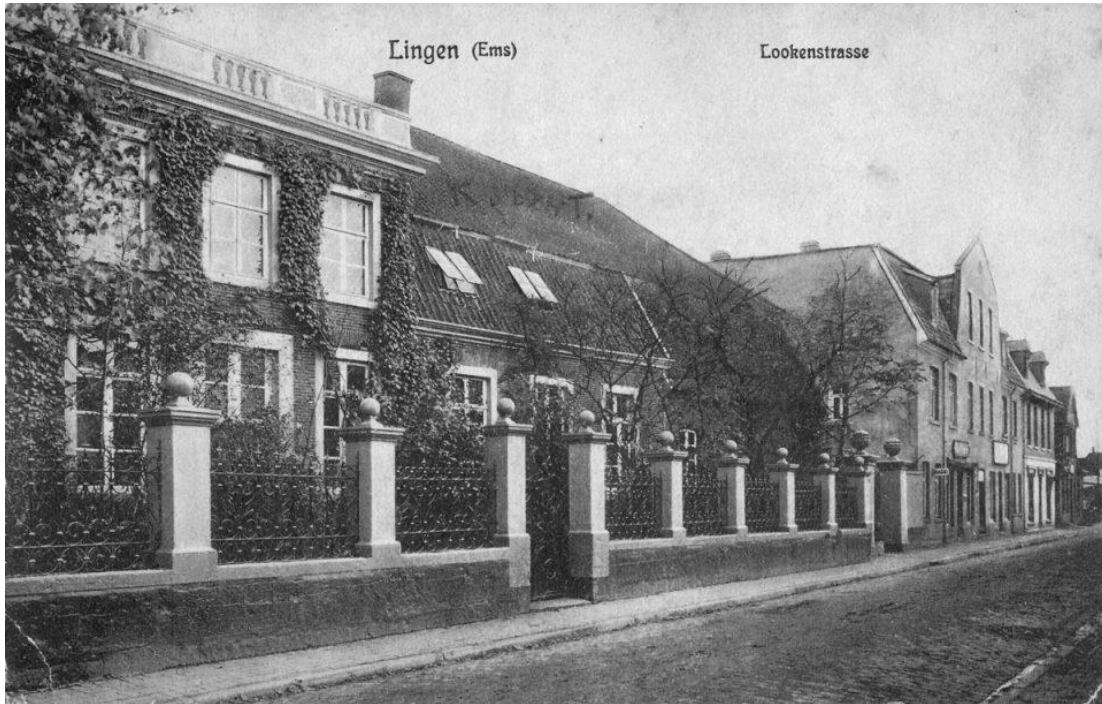
Stamped "Return to Sender Verified 1st Base Post Office" below postage, and cancellation stamp on reverse dated Mar 31, 1944 by the US Army Postal Service



Life Magazine 02-28-1944

Lingen Police Station and Plantlunne Air Base

(March 7, 1944)



The five surviving crew members¹⁹ of *Shack Rabbits* turned themselves in at the police station in Lingen. They were shortly turned over to soldiers from the nearby Plantlunne Air Base in Germany. Sgt. Pope Jr. and Sgt. William Kline were processed, interrogated and sent to Dulag Luft for further interrogations.

The officers and good friends also had to complete Missing Crew reports on the five crew who perished. Due to his serious injury, Bombardier Lt. Rock Newmark received a typist to complete his Casualty Questionnaire. Pilot Lt. Chris Christiani and Navigator Lt. Lenny Levy completed their Casualty Questionnaires in pencil.

¹⁹ The surviving crew included Pilot Chris Christiani, Navigator Lenny Levy, Bombardier Rock Newmark, Waist gunner William N. Kline, and Waist gunner Bill Alfred Pope Jr.

Thursday night
[March 9, 1944 undated]

Darling ~

I was anxiously looking forward to coming home this evening as I found out that there were three letters from you. However, I didn't go directly home as I went to [your] mom's for supper. Yes, I had a truly delicious meal and my one regret was that you couldn't be with me to enjoy it too. I'm sure, however, that when you do come home, Mom will make a meal that will put this one to shame.

I added something else to the furnishings of our home-to-be. Mom gave me a very big bath towel - one that you can wrap around yourself. I know it is one you will enjoy using and I remarked about that to mom.

Everybody is fine and we had a pleasant evening just talking. I came home with her a while ago and I have just finished reading your letters.

Darling I guess I'm a bit slow-witted but I can't get the connection of "Shack Rabbit" as the name of your new plane. Yes, I know what rabbits are known for but I still can't see what that has to do with the plane. You'll just have to enlighten the subject somehow in one of your letters. Maybe, if I think about it, it will come to me - so I'll think about it.

I found your enclosed ring size in one of the letters and I intend to see Mr. Kurland Saturday. Thank you for trusting my taste in selecting your ring. I will try to get you a ring you will like. I am going to get a plain gold band - and it won't be a wide one. I always thought a man's wedding ring should be plain and not decorative or showy. It will be engraved with our initials and date of our marriage - does that sound all right, darling?

I was surprised when I read about your Co-pilot's intentions to get married. He certainly is just bound to get married. Yes, darling, I agree that at the present he can have a laugh on folks like us [with] just a Picture and memories to keep us happy. But, when the time comes for them to part - which is inevitable in wartime - will his love be deep enough so that memories and just pictures keep him happy? That will be the time for him to know whether he can have that last laugh.

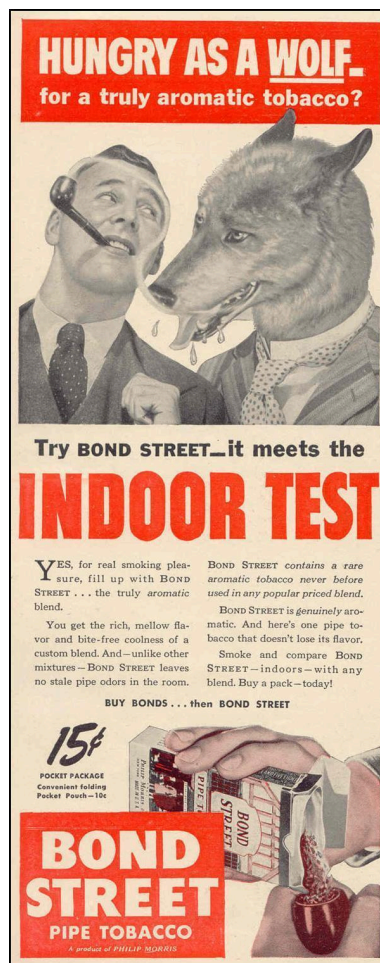
Darling, I wish I were in your arms right now and I could tell you how much I love you. I wouldn't have to tell you then how much I miss you because I'd be so happy. I do miss you so much darling and I love you so much. Take good care of yourself and remember that with all my heart -

I love you
Sylvia
XXX

Letter marked "Missing" below the return address, by:

J. P. Gross [Signature]
Capt. AC Exec
561 Bomb Squad
3-26-44

Stamped "Return to Sender Verified 1st Base Post Office" below postage, and cancellation stamp on reverse dated Mar 27, 1944 by the US Army Postal Service, and Second cancellation stamp on reverse dated Mar 28 1944 by the Control Section.



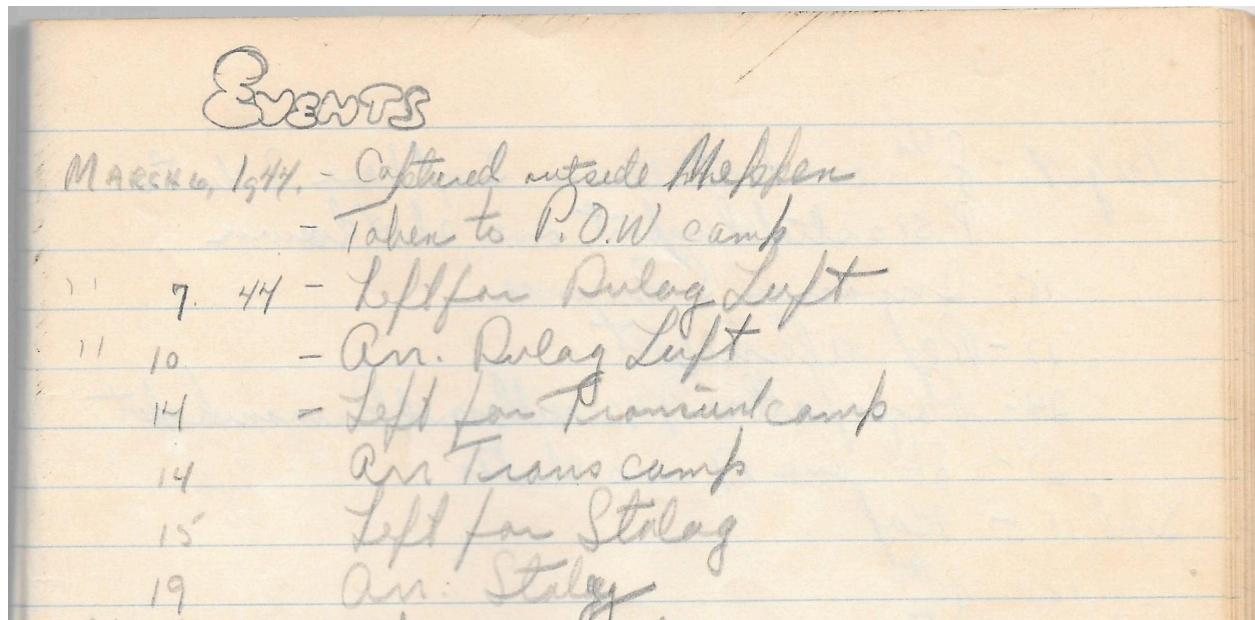
Life Magazine 02-14-1944 page114

Lenny's Logbook²⁰

March, 1944

Events

- March 6, 1944 – Captured outside Merkken
- Taken to P.O.W. camp
March 7, 1944 – Left for Dulag Luft
March 10, 1944 – Arr[ived] Dulag Luft
March 14, 1944 – Left for Transient Camp
March 14, 1944 – Arr[ived in] Transient Camp
March 15, 1944 – Left for Stalag [Luft 1]
March 19, 1944 – Arr[ived in] Stalag [Luft 1]



²⁰ Among supplies shipped via the International Red Cross to U.S. prisoners of war in Germany during World War II were blank composition books supplied by the YMCA. Lenny did not return with any hardcover Logbook or Diary. This document comes from a blue, paper covered composition, more than half filled with blank pages, and measuring 6.75" by 7.875."

Remains Buried - Fallen Crew

March 10, 1944



The fallen crew members of **B-17G 42-38177 *Shack Rabbits*** were temporarily buried at the cemetery in Lingen. [Raymond] Rock Newmark was present when Salvatore Ciaccio and Rupert G. Smith were buried on 10 March 1944. Although they were badly burned, Robert R. Newmark was shown the legible dog tags of his two comrades. The ceremony was performed by a captured French priest. The fallen crew members were repatriated after the war to the Ardennes American Cemetery and Memorial in Neupré or back to the United States.

Flight engineer/top turret gunner: Tech Sgt. Salvatore (Sal) Ciaccio (Killed in Action)

Co-pilot: Lt. Clarence (Red) Darryl Farrington (Killed in Action)

Tail gunner: Staff Sgt. John Clayton Griscom (Killed in Action)

Radio Operator: Technical Sgt. William Burtle Mayne (Killed in Action)

Ball turret gunner: Sgt. Rupert Garland Smith (Killed in Action)

*B-17G 42-38177 'Shack Rabbits'*²¹

Stichting Luchtoorlog Onderzoek Drenthe
Drenthe Air War Research Foundation

²¹ <https://www.slodrenthe.nl/b-17g-flying-fortress-42-38177-shack-rabbits/>

Friday night ~
March 10, 1944

Darling ~

I am getting to be a regular Friday night member of services at the Emmanuel²² I went again tonight. I enjoy going to the services and I hope to go every Friday night in the future.

In your letter yesterday you mentioned the good the American Red Cross is doing. We are having the Red Cross Drive here at home this month and I'm so glad you told me how much you thought of the work they are doing. I always knew that they did so much for the men in services and their families but hearing it from you makes me feel all the more anxious to give - and when I do darling it will be as you put it - "till it hurts."

You were worried because you have received no mail from me in several days. Darling, there is nothing wrong at home - I have been writing to you daily and above all things, I am not keeping anything from you. There is no need to - everything is coming along fine at home - I'm in the best of health and your folks are fine - so darling - you see - there is no need to worry. When you don't get mail for several days just try to think of the jackpot you will get when the mail does arrive - because I know there will be one at the end of each wait.

Sadie left for New York today and I hope that the weekend will be as nice as it has been today.

Ebner²³ is now in the hospital at Bradley Field. I spoke to his sister tonight and she said he's perfectly all right except for the fact that he gets severe headaches every now and then and they are keeping him under observation to find out what is causing them. I've been calling his folks pretty often and his mother told me how happy he was because his sister named her new son Leonard. Mrs. Glooskin tells me that Ebner thinks so much of you that I had better watch out. I must admit that I am happy knowing you have a true friend because true friends are few and far between.

Well my darling - there's not much more I can say tonight. I'll say goodnight for now and until tomorrow with all my heart -

I love you
Sylvia
XXX

²² The Emmanuel Synagogue in the North End of Hartford (Greenfield St.)

²³ Ebner Glooskin graduated in the same Weaver High School class of 1938 as Sylvia. Ebner has become friends with Lenny since Lenny and Sylvia began dating.

Letter marked "Missing" below the return address, by:

J. P. Gross [Signature]
Capt. AC Exec
561 Bomb Squad
3-26-44

Stamped "Return to Sender Verified 1st Base Post Office" below postage, and
cancellation stamp on reverse dated Mar 27, 1944 by the US Army Postal Service, and
Second cancellation stamp on reverse dated Mar 28 1944 by the Control Section.

Saturday night ~
March 11, 1944

Darling ~

Here it is Saturday again. I mailed your kit this afternoon and I made a prayer that you would get it soon.



This afternoon I had a spaghetti dinner at DePasquale's on Front Street with Rosalynn and her mother and kid brother. It was very good, but when I had finished I was so full. After dinner I went to Mr Kurland for a ring and I found one I thought you would like. It's a plain one as I said I wanted to get, but it has ridging on the edges which gives it more of a flat look. I think you will like it.

Expect to get it about Thursday as it is being initialed and it won't be ready until then. Mr Kurland said that it is very difficult to get an accurate ring size by measuring the finger with paper or string as paper and string stretch. However, he gave me a size he thought would be most accurate. But, if it is too large or too small the only thing you can do will be to take it to London with you and get a guard put on it if it is too large or have it stretched if it is too small. I'm keeping my fingers crossed that it will fit you darling.

Rosalyn²⁴ and I went to the movies this afternoon. We saw Paulette Goddard And Fred McMurray in *Standing Room Only*. It was entertaining and we enjoyed it. She came home with me and we had supper here. We didn't do much, just talked and had a quiet evening. She left about 15 minutes ago and for no reason I am sleepy now. I saw Margie²⁵ downtown this afternoon with Helen. They had been to the movies too



²⁴ Sylvia's friend from work.

²⁵ Sylvia's sister-in-law Marjorie (Margie) Levy is married to N. Norman Levy, is pregnant with twins and living with her in-laws.

and were on their way home. Our buses came along as soon as we met, so it was hello and goodbye at the same time.

I have a book I've been intending to read. I think I'll take it to bed with me and make my intentions good. I can't help but think how different Saturday nights are from what they used to be.

Well darling, I'd better get to bed. I wish I could tell you how much I love you but no matter how I try - I just can't. I guess saying "I love you" we'll have to do it darling - at least until you are home once again.

Goodnight darling
I love you
Sylvia
XXX

Letter marked "Missing" below the return address, by:

J. P. Gross [Signature]
Capt. AC Exec
561 Bomb Squad
3-26-44

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Dulag Luft

March 10-14, 1944

Events

March 10, 1944 – Arr[ived] Dulag Luft

March 14, 1944 – Left for Transient Camp [Auswertestelle West]

Lenny spends four days at Dulag Luft. He does not see any of his fellow *Shack Rabbit* crew .

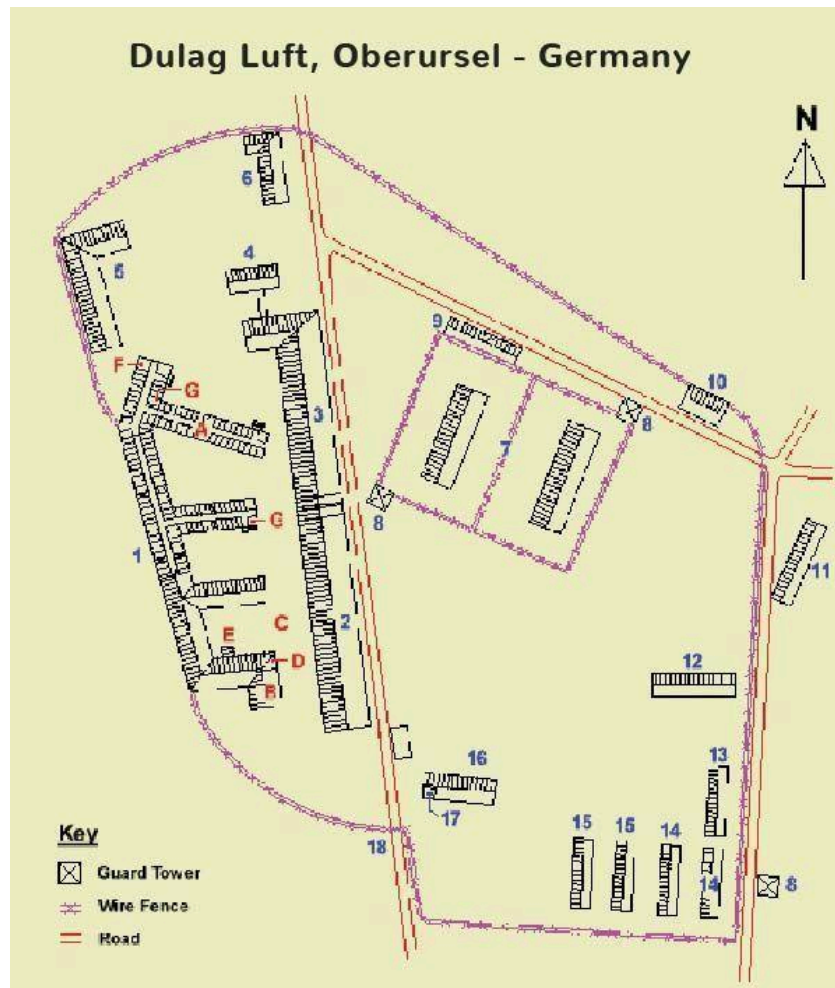
Dulag Luft, is the German prison camp through which thousands of Allied airmen captured in western Europe passed. An extremely efficient interrogation center, Dulag Luft was composed of three locations: the **Interrogation Center** at Oberusal; the hospital at Hohemark; and the transit camp Auswertestelle West (evaluation Center West) which was off the main Frankfurt-Homburg road and near the trolley stop of Kupforhammer.



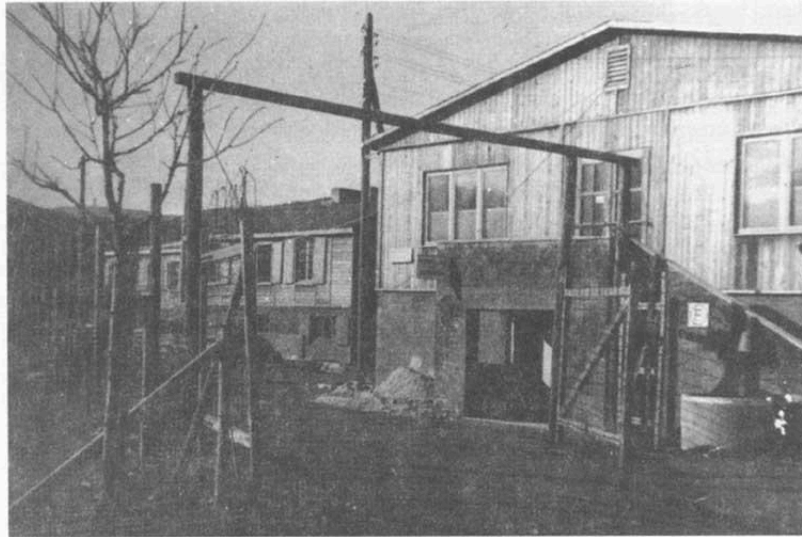
The camp's purpose was to prepare prisoners for transfer to a permanent camp. This involved helping them to adjust to life in captivity, began with the interrogation center, where a variety of means were used to extract any useful information from them. Every prisoner was presented with a questionnaire, ostensibly from the German Red Cross, which asked a wide range of questions, many military in nature.



Dulag Luft (the word is a corruption of the German *Durchgangslager Luftwaffe*, or air force transit camp) was near the town of Oberursel, about 10 miles (16 km) northwest of Frankfurt-am-Main in western Germany. It occupied a large, pleasant-looking farmhouse that had once been part of an experimental farm.



Upon arrival at Dulag Luft, prisoners were undressed and their clothes searched. They were then put into individual cells described as solitary confinement. They were there visited by a reception officer and sometimes by an interpreter as well if the reception officer was not fluent in the language of the prisoner. The reception officer would endeavor to persuade the prisoner to answer all the questions on the form.



THROUGH THESE PORTALS . . .

Some of the finest fighter and bomber crews of the Allied forces passed through this gateway to the cooler at the interrogation center based at Oberursel.

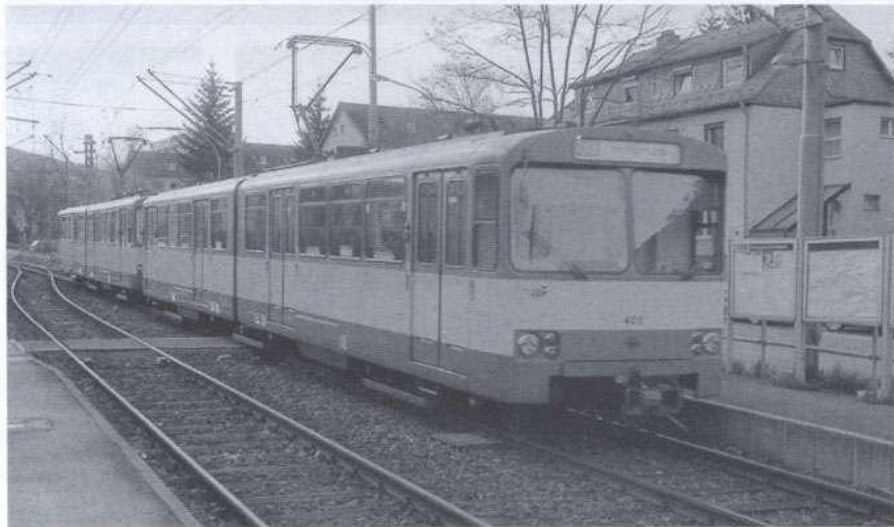
These interrogations were sometimes held in the cells, but more often in the rooms of the officer detained. Usually such interrogations were quite short, as, for instance in the case of an air gunner, who would have little information; but sometimes in the case of a pilot or prisoners who were particularly security minded, the interrogations might continue for three or four days, often twice per day.



Auswertestelle West (evaluation Center West) was situated 300 yards north of the main Frankfurt-Homburg road and near the trolley stop of Kupforhammer. (this was) the third-stop after Oberusal (50-12 N - 8-34E). Oberursel is thirteen kilometers northwest of Frankfort am Main.



Above: 'Kupferhammer — all change for Dulag Luft.' From here prisoners would cross the road (Hohemarkstrasse) to walk to the camp. Note that these POWs are in fact leaving Dulag Luft and about to board the tram for Frankfurt. (Bundesarchiv)



In early 1941, the interrogation center, comprising 129 solitary confinement cells, was opened. The center designated “Auswertestelle West”, or Evaluation Center West, later grew to about 200 cells, many equipped with electronic listening devices.

Sunday night ~
March 12, 1944

Darling ~

What a morning we had! About nine o'clock the doorbell rang and rang - I was sound asleep but I just jumped out of bed, put on my robe and went to see who it was. It was Issie²⁶, he came in last night and he was making his rounds early. He asked about you, and told me he wrote to you this week. He looks fine but I still can't get used to seeing him in his Navy uniform. He left about 10:00 and I ate my breakfast and began to clean the house. The telephone rang and it was my cousin Evelyn who was here with her boyfriend and she wanted to bring him up to meet me. So I put aside my dust cloth and had my visitors. He seems like a very nice fellow and he has a good sense of humor. I couldn't help but think of the time you were doing the same thing - making the rounds and meeting the family.

They stayed for about an hour. He is going to be in this country for about 12 days. He goes back and forth but just what he does, I don't know. When they left, I made a date for the future to meet them in New York some weekend and have a real good time - by the future - I mean when you are home and this is all over.

After we had our dinner - just Mom and me. Sadie²⁷ is still in New York - Mom went downstairs for a walk. It was really beautiful outdoors today and it felt as though Spring can't be very far away.

I was just thinking about what I did to my dress at work Friday. I had on my light green gabardine dress - you never saw this dress and I dropped my fountain pen in my lap and my dress was all spotted with ink. I let out a scream and I scared everybody in the office. Well, I have a right to scream, I ruined my dress - and just before it happened a girl was complimenting me on the color of the dress - and then that had to happen. It's the first time I ever did that - but I hope it is the last.

Claire²⁸, Moe and the children were here this afternoon. They walked here instead of coming by their car - and they all were exhausted. Moe almost fell asleep on the chair.

²⁶ Rebecca (Babe) M. Geetter married Sylvia's oldest brother Isidore (Issie) S. Geetter and had five children: David Maranski, Albert Leonard, Thalia, Harold and Suzanne. They were ten, eight, five, three and one at the time this was written. Isidore left his job as a physician at the Mt. Sinai Hospital in Hartford to enlist in the US Navy. He is finishing his training in New London, Connecticut.

²⁷ Sadie Geetter is Sylvia's oldest sister. Like Sylvia she is a working woman and they both pay rent for a shared bedroom in their mother's house at 148 Marigold St. in Hartford, Conn. She is also the primary caregiver for her ailing mother.

²⁸ Claire Kaplan Geetter married Sylvia's second oldest brother Maurice S. Geetter and had two daughters: Beverly and Marilyn, who were ten and nine at the time this was written.

Do you know what today is? It's been nine months now since we were married. The months seem to be flying by. However, if we put the actual time we were together it would make us just newlyweds - I pray darling that the time when you will be home will be soon so that we can go on where we left off. However, until that day comes - be it sooner or later - I'll love you more everyday. So in memory of this day - a very special "I love you" -

Goodnight darling,
I love you
Sylvia
XXX

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J. P. Gross [Signature]
Capt. AC Exec
561 Bomb Squad
3-26-44

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Monday night ~
March 13, 1944

Darling~

I went to sleep very early last night and I was awakened about midnight by the pounding of the rain on the roof. Yes rain still has its effects on me - and as I listen to it I begin to think about you and me, and how much I love you. I finally fell asleep once again into such a beautiful slumber only to be awakened by that darn alarm clock. I still think the man who invented alarm clocks should have been hanged. It's been raining all day - and from what one of the girls in the office said - it looks like spring will be here soon.

This evening when I came home from work I was happy to find a letter from you. Now you have five missions and naturally as they begin to add up I can't keep but think it won't be long before you will be home²⁹ telling me all about them. And you are going to get your first metal soon. You asked me what I think of my husband - well - I'm very proud of him and I love him with all my heart.

Did the candy in the packages stay fresh? You mentioned that you saw the picture *Assignment in Brittany* the other day - and for the life of me - I can't remember definitely if that's the book I sent to you. Is it? If it is - well - it's just a co-incident. Do you have the time to read books - and if so, would you like to have me send you one every so often? If there is anything you would like in particular you won't forget to tell me so will you darling?

The girls in the office³⁰ tell me I have a way with the Irish. What makes them say that is the fact that my two fat and [age] forty bosses seem to like me and their names are Shea and O'Day.

The other day Mr. Shea came over to my desk and under his breath - which is his usual manner in speaking to me - he said he would like to put his arms around me and hug me with all his might. He no sooner said that than he was on his way down the aisle, as though he had said nothing.

Sue, she's the girl who sits next to me, looks at me and I look at her and we don't know what to make of him. What I can't understand is that I never look at him, speak to him, or smile at him - but he always has something to say to me. As far as Mr. O'Day is



²⁹ Sylvia Geetter Levy knew that 25 combat missions would complete Lenny's assignment in England - and free him to return home. He completed his first five in one week. At that rate, he would be home in another four weeks.

³⁰ Sylvia Geetter Levy was a bookkeeper at Associated Transport. 436 Capitol Ave., which was one of the largest Transportation Companies in the country at the time.

concerned, he's very conservative but every time he passes my desk he always gives me a big smile and asks me how his "Brown eyes" are today? Darling, with such keen killer-dillers around... Sue and the rest will have a laugh out of it. I told Sue that Mr. Shea's beer-belly is so big, he could never even get his arms around me. But if he even tries...



This evening Roz and I stopped in Sage's³¹ to look at the exhibition of painting and sculpture work of the high school students that have won Scholastic awards. Some of them showed real talent and it's a shame that perhaps they won't be able to go on with it. By that I mean the boys who are just 17 will be going into the service soon.

Ida asked for a release today as her dad is very sick and she has no mother, she has to stay with him until he is back on his feet. But they won't give it to her as there will be no releases until April 1, so she said she will just stay out of work and when April 1 rolls around she will come in for her release. One of the girls in my office got a release two weeks ago as she was going back to Vermont - which is her home. Well, something happened... so she didn't go back. She wanted Mr. Watley - he's the personnel director, to change her release so that she could get another job but he refused to do it - so she has to wait 60 days before her release becomes void. Yes, hon, the girls are all angry in the office but it isn't doing them any good. It doesn't bother me because I like the girls with whom I work and I enjoy my work even if it is hard at times. It keeps me busy, yet we have fun and that's really why I want to work. I'm not working to make a career of it.

³¹ The Sage Allen Department store on Main St. was considered a smaller but respected rival to the larger and dominant G Fox & Co. store a block away

The career I want is to have you home, have our own place and raise a family. I still want sons. I told Margie³² she should have the daughters, so that Mom will have her granddaughters. Mom wants her to [have] a girl so very much.

Did Mom tell you that Norm³³ is going to Indiana to start his training all over again? It seems as though the fellows didn't do very well on their last maneuver so they have to train all over again. Mom and I had to laugh when we both had the same thought - that they would keep up the good work and make a career of taking their training over and over again.

Knowing how much you enjoy your sleep darling, I do feel sorry for you when you get so little of it. Well, darling, when you come home, I'll let you have breakfast in bed on Sundays so that you can roll over to go back to sleep. Of course, you'll have to move over - because I'll be right there with you. *Smah!*

I'm looking forward to the pictures you are going to have taken of the crew. I hope you will get them soon as I am anxious to see it.

Darling, I guess I've said about all there is to say for tonight. So, in closing let me tell you that I'm thinking of you constantly, loving you deeply and missing you terribly. Take good care of yourself.

Goodnight darling,
I love you
Sylvia
XXX

[Color "Crippled Children" stamp on rear envelope]

Letter marked "Missing" below the return address, by:

J. P. Gross [Signature]
Capt. AC Exec
561 Bomb Squad
4-4-44

Stamped "Return to Sender Verified 1st Base Post Office" below postage, and cancellation stamp on reverse dated Apr 7, 1944 by the US Army Postal Service

³² Sylvia's sister-in-law Marjorie (Margie) Levy is married to N. Norman Levy, is pregnant with twins and living with her in-laws at 108 Colebrook St. in Hartford, Connecticut.

³³ N. Norman Levy is Lenny's younger brother who enlisted in the US Army and hoped to join Lenny in the Air Corps. He was found to be medically unfit for overseas assignment. He is now a Private and assigned to Basic Training in Indiana, reasonably close to his wife in Hartford, Conn.



Auswertestelle West

March 14-15, 1944

Events

March 14, 1944 – Left for Transient Camp [Auswertestelle West]

March 14, 1944 – Arr[ives in] Transient Camp [Auswertestelle West]

March 15, 1944 – Left for Stalag [Luft 1]

March 19, 1944 – Arr[ives in] Stalag [Luft 1]

Lenny spends one night at Auswertestelle West, which is the transit camp (translated as Evaluation Center West.) It was located in the Botanical Gardens, just north of the main Frankfurt-Homburg road and near the trolley stop of Kupforhammer.



The camp's purpose was to further prepare prisoners for transfer to a permanent camp. This involved helping them to adjust to life in captivity, another interrogation and arranging travel to Stalag Luft 1. *Auswertestelle West* grew to about 200 cells, many equipped with electronic listening devices. The camp was destroyed in Allied bombings between 22 & 29 March.

March 15, 1944
Wednesday night ~

Darling ~

I'm enclosing a letter I received from Tubby today. As you will note - it took quite a while to get to me. Instead of sending you the address - I thought you'd get the same kick out of reading his letter as I did. You'll have to tell him all the news since you left Grand Island because I told him I was leaving it all to you.

I called Ebner³⁴ last night and his sister told me he came home from the hospital and he's fine. He wasn't able to answer the phone when I called - he was taking a nap. But I'm certainly relieved that he's all right again. I really was worried about him. Today I hit the jackpot, I received 4 letters. One from you - that was the best one - one from Eleanor³⁵, the enclosed letter and a letter from Frieda Jacobs. Sam will be going overseas soon. I guess because Eleanor is back in Cleveland again and she's going back to work. She's still the same comical Eleanor. She had to tell me the good news - no twins this month. Freda wants me to come to Leominster for a weekend. I think I'll go there again when it gets a little warmer. Last night I visited Libby³⁶. She had a get-together and I didn't get home until after eleven. When I did get home, I suddenly got a terrific headache and after several attempts to write to you - I just had to give it up. So darling you'll have to forgive me but I'm afraid I wouldn't have written a very intelligible letter.

Mom asked me to come over for supper tomorrow night. Ebner is dropping in later on in the evening so he'll see us both at the same time.

Friday night the girls in my section are going out to dinner and the movies at a get-together before the department breaks up. Of course, I'm going too because it seems as though I get into more trouble in the office and that makes me eligible to be one of the gang.

I've come to the end of another letter. Darling, until I write again tomorrow ~ with all my heart I love you and miss you. Take good care of yourself -

Goodnight darling,
I love you

³⁴ Ebner Glooskin graduated in the same Weaver High School class of 1938 as Sylvia. Ebner has become friends with Lenny since Lenny and Sylvia began dating.

³⁵ Eleanor (Kohn) Ellison is a childhood friend of Sylvia's whose husband Sam is also trained with Lenny at Selma Field, Monroe, Louisiana.

³⁶ Libby Handler is one of Sylvia's closest friends. She also graduated in the same Weaver class as she and Ebner and has stayed in Hartford, Conn. and remained good friends.

Sylvia
XXX

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J. P. Gross [Signature]
Capt. AC Exec
561 Bomb Squad
4-4-44

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Enclosed letter:

Sunday 13 1944

Hello Duchess,

How's every little thing in the best state in the Union? This is "Tubby" talking (at least that's probably what you'll remember me by.) I'm writing because I'd like to get in touch with Len again. Last I saw him was in Grand Island, Nebraska. From there my crew flew a B-17 over to Italy (where I'm now stationed) by the South Atlantic Route. Believe me the more you see of the world the more you appreciate the U.S. After the war I guess I'll get married and settle down, so if you know of any available beauties tell them to write. I'd appreciate it if you'd send Len my address, also I'd like to have his and Joe Levine's (if you know it) if it isn't too much trouble.

My address

Lt. Fred Leiby
347 B. SQ 99 B. GR
APO 520 New York New York

Notice I'm using Lieutenant although I didn't get it yet but I'm expecting it any day.

Thanks ever so much.

yours very truly
Lt Fred Leiby (formal)
Tubby (informal)

Fred Leiby rose to the rank of Colonel before his B-17 was also shot down. He was a POW in Stalag Luft III in Sagan.

Thursday night ~
March 16 1944

Darling,

I didn't go to [your] mom's for supper tonight as I had planned. Sadie³⁷ had to go out this evening, and one of us usually stays with my mom as we don't like to leave her home alone in the evening – so I had to call off my visit.

I was speaking to Margie³⁸ and everybody is fine at home. They are expecting Ebner³⁹ to visit them tonight. Walt Schecter – who was in Italy until now - is in England. Ruth received a letter today which is the first one she had in a while - it was a surprise to her that he should be there – it seems rather sudden.

I am reading a book that's quite different from the usual trend of novels. It's about the life of a Jewish rabbi and his family. It's very interesting and, of course, being Jewish it is so much more enjoyable because a good deal of it has expressions in Yiddish.

I made a date with Margie to meet me downtown Saturday afternoon and we'll go to a movie. I expect to pick up your ring then as it should be all engraved by then

Tomorrow night, the gang is going to the Seafood for dinner and then we're going to the movies.

Ruth Schecter just called me. She told me she received six pairs of silk stockings from Walt. Hon, if you ever see silk stockings well, I wear size 10. Is that hint enough? He's with a new crew and his APO is 638 – now I'm wondering if that's anywhere near you.

Tomorrow is St. Patrick's Day and I guess I'll see plenty of the "Wearin' of the Green" in the office. Some of the girls were going to buy green carnations but when they found out they were thirty-five cents each, well they decided green ribbons will serve the purpose as well.

³⁷ Sadie Geetter is Sylvia's oldest sister. Like Sylvia she is a working woman and they both pay rent for a shared bedroom in their mother's house at 148 Marigold St. in Hartford, Conn. She is also the primary caregiver for her ailing mother.

³⁸ Sylvia's sister-in-law Marjorie (Margie) Levy is married to N. Norman Levy, is pregnant with twins and living with her in-laws at 108 Colebrook St. in Hartford, Connecticut.

³⁹ Ebner Glooskin graduated in the same Weaver High School class of 1938 as Sylvia. Ebner has become friends with Lenny since Lenny and Sylvia began dating.

They are drafting quite a few fathers now. Of course, when Gladys⁴⁰ and Claire⁴¹ get together they talk about what they will do when Moe and Ben are taken. They certainly get themselves all hepped up -

By the way hon, I'm curious to know just what your Co-pilot⁴² is doing about getting married. Is he really getting married?

Today when I passed the Internal Revenue Office it was funny to see it so empty. Up until yesterday it was jammed with people filing their returns. Sadie took care of mine so I didn't have any trouble filing mine and it is a good feeling knowing it's taken care of.

It's been raining all day today - that makes the second day in a row it seems more like the month of April - we have more rain than the customary March winds right now.

Right now, there is an Operatic version of *Mares Eat Oats* on the radio and it sounds so funny. The fellow singing it has a beautiful Operatic voice - deep baritone - and it sounds ridiculous because the words are so silly.

Darling, I bought a roll of green toilet tissue to give as a gift to Sue for St. Patrick's Day. I might as well be practical. We are always pulling jokes on each other. Today she gave me a gift. She said it was a keepsake - as somebody had given it to her - and she had been saving it for years waiting to give it to someone who deserved it as much as she did. Well it is the cutest little skunk. I nicknamed it *Suzie-Q* after her.

Well sweetheart, I guess I haven't another thing to write tonight - at least as far as news is concerned. However, as always, I want to tell you that I love you very much.

Goodnight darling,
I love you
Sylvia
XXX

⁴⁰ Gladys M. Geetter married Sylvia's third oldest brother Benjamin G. Geetter and had a daughter, Lorraine and Allan Joel, who were seven and two at the time this was written.

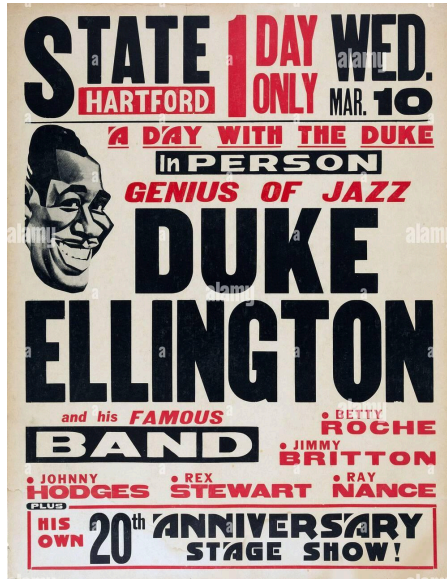
⁴¹ Claire Kaplan Geetter married Sylvia's second oldest brother Maurice S. Geetter and had two daughters: Beverly and Marilyn, who were ten and nine at the time this was written.

⁴² Clarence (Red) Darryl Farrington was the Co-pilot of *Shack Rabbit*. In his missing crew report, Lenny states he, "may have been wounded after leaving [the] cockpit to bail out and [his] parachute may have been slightly burned due to fire through the entire aircraft."

Friday night ~
March 17 1944

Darling ~

This morning I was given a green bow by the Irish girls in my department, as they call me "Abie's Irish Rose – Mrs. Levy." Some of the girls brought in green balloons and we each had one tied to our adding machines. It's a good thing the boss in the department is Irish because nobody else would have tolerated such nonsense.



We went to *Seafood* for dinner this evening and we had a very good dinner. After dinner we went to the *State*⁴³ [Theatre.]

Duke Ellington⁴⁴ is there this week and he was good but very loud. I believe all of Hartford was there and they certainly were an appreciative audience - I never heard such applause and carryings-on.

This afternoon a girl showed Sue a typed copy of definitions of words - and of course, the definitions aren't like the ones Webster has in his Dictionary. Some of them were really raw although they were funny. Sue copied them on a piece of our office stationery and just for fun she

wrote one of our terminals' address on the top left of it. Well, when five o'clock came around she had quite a few letters she had to mail so she hurriedly put them in envelopes and addressed them to the proper terminals. Well, without looking - she picked up the sheet of stationery she had written those definitions [on] and she just glanced at the top [and] seeing the name she had jokingly written on the top - she put it in an envelope - addressed it to that terminal and mailed it. Well, this evening at supper she remembered the paper and then she realized what she had done... . She addressed it to one of our branch offices and the man in that office stands for no foolishness. We laughed so much - but it's not funny. I guess any day now, we'll see the head boss charging down the aisle demanding my boss make an explanation for such goings-on during working hours. Sue said that when she does get it back from the branch office, before he comes down to fire her - she'll bet he makes a copy of it to put in his wallet. So Darling, from this little episode you can well imagine how much is accomplished by us on a working day. No wonder my department is in receivership by the bank and 100 girls are being dismissed April 1.

⁴³ The State Theatre was the largest performing arts venue in Hartford at the time with 3880 seats and was at 70 Village St. It opened in 1926 and was demolished in 1960.

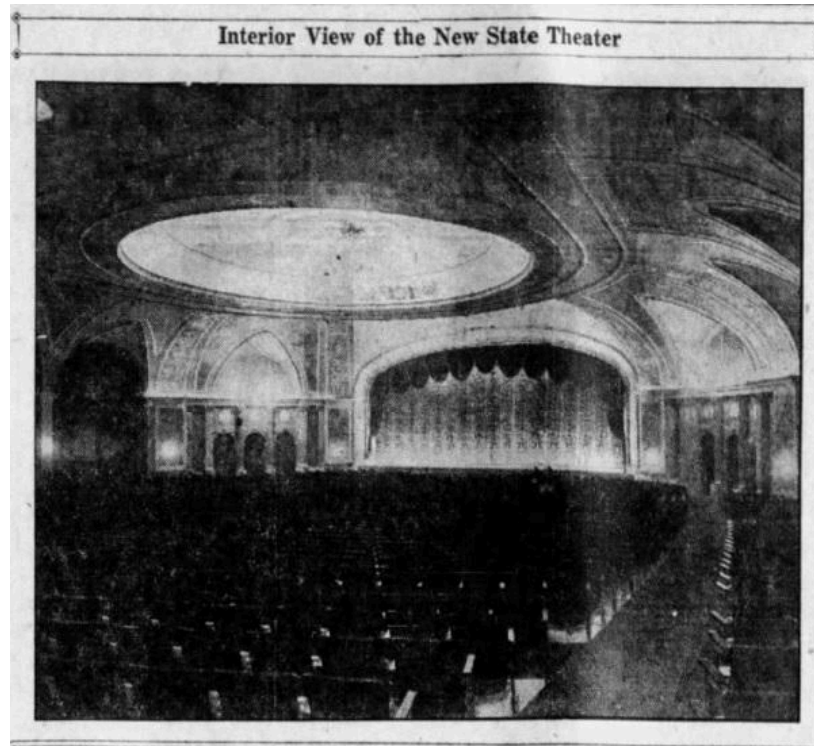
⁴⁴ The ad on the left is from the single show performance given the year before.

Your check arrived today and mom told me the postman kept ringing the bell as he did not want to leave it in the mailbox - that was considerate I thought because so many things can happen to a check. I certainly do appreciate you sending it home, darling. Most of it will go into War Bonds, but it will pay my income tax and now I can buy that needlepoint I had my eye on. In case you are wondering what needlepoint is, well it's sort of like embroidery and I want to make a seat for a chair and when we buy our furniture we can have a chair made for it - the chairs are like desk chairs and they are beautiful and if the work is handmade it is considered very beautiful. Well, here's hoping I do a good job on it. With all my heart, I'm looking forward as much to the time when you are home again and all the dreams we have now will come true - and will be so very happy. Oh darling, I love you so much. I have faith in God that this will be over soon - and everything will be right again.

So darling it's good night again ~ and in saying goodnight once more let me say I love you.

Goodnight darling,
I love you
Sylvia
XXX





Letter marked "Missing" below the return address, by:

J. P. Gross [Signature]
Capt. AC Exec
561 Bomb Squad
4-1-44

Stamped "Return to Sender Verified 1st Base Post Office" below postage, and
cancellation stamp on reverse dated Apr 5, 1944 by the US Army Postal Service and a
second
cancellation stamp on reverse dated Apr 7, 1944 by the "Control Section"

Travel to Stalag Luft 1

March 14-15, 1944

Events

March 15, 1944 – Left for Stalag [Luft 1]

March 19, 1944 – Arr[ives in] Stalag [Luft 1]

Lenny spends five days travelling to a permanent POW Camp. Stalag Luft 1 is located two miles northwest of the village of Barth, Germany, on the Baltic Sea. The first Allied prisoners entered the camp on 10 July 1940 (French and British POWs).



Arriving at Main Gate

Art by Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening⁴⁵

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 Feb. 1944 and was assigned to the American officers who were rapidly increasing in number.

⁴⁵ Charles Ross Greening was the second highest ranking American officer at Stalag Luft 1. His Log was recently discovered and published.

Further compounds were opened in quick succession. Finally Stalag Luft I consisted of four sub-camps: a Main Compound, Compounds North I, North II and North III. All north compounds housed exclusively officers from the American Army Air Force (USAAF). However, some US POWs remained in the Main Camp together with the British Royal Air Force (RAF) POWs. Among the RAF POWs there were also volunteers from various German-occupied countries such as Poland, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, France, Norway, Greece and Yugoslavia, as well as airmen from the countries of the then British Commonwealth such as Canada, Australia, New Zealand and South Africa.

In addition, there was a German administrative area and a German Fore-Camp for the guards, in which there was a fenced-in barracks for the Soviet soldiers.

The two Kommandants that operated Stalag Luft 1 during Lenny's term were:

- Oberst Willibald Scherer, Oct. 42 to Jan. 45
- Oberst Gustav Warnstedt, Jan. 45 to Apr. 45



Lt. Leonard (Lenny) Levy's Kriege ID⁴⁶

#3528⁴⁷

⁴⁶ POWs at Stalag Luft 1 were all issued steel IDs measuring 2 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 1 $\frac{5}{8}$ x $\frac{1}{8}$ inch. They were most likely produced by the slave labor of the Barth Concentration Camp which the Germans operated from the same complex. The concentration camp, officially KZ-Außenlager Barth, was a *sub-camp* of Ravensbrück concentration camp and was in use from November 1943 to spring 1945. It housed prisoners who performed forced labour in the nearby Heinkel-Flugzeugwerke factory, the railroad yard and in the fields of Barth.

⁴⁷ Lt. Leonard (Lenny) Levy AC was issued ID # 3528. This is a reasonable estimate of the POW population at Stalag Luft 1 at the time of Lt. Levy's arrival. The population of the Concentration Camp was probably higher than this.

Sunday night~
March 19 1944

Darling ~

This morning... Betty May⁴⁸ called. She wanted to come here for her usual Sunday visit. I was still asleep, so Mom told her to call at 10:00 - so sure enough at 10:00 on the dot the phone rang - I awoke and answered the phone. She wanted to know if she could come here - and I told her she could - then she told me not to clean the house until she came as she was going to help me. When Faye⁴⁹ heard that, she had to talk to me and ask me what kind of charm I have on Betty as she never says that to her. I guess the reason why Betty likes to come here is because she can ask me a million questions and I try to answer them. In our course of conversation today - she suddenly became serious and she said she misses two uncles very much. I asked her who they were - and she said my Uncle Lenny and Uncle Is⁵⁰ - but she misses you more because you are further away.

Well, tomorrow is the first day of Spring. I noticed that the buds are coming out on the trees - so that ought to confirm the fact. I didn't go out today as I didn't want to leave Mom alone. Sadie⁵¹ had to go out this afternoon and after last night, I'm afraid to leave her home alone too much.

I've been working on my needlepoint and I find it interesting. Now everybody wants to know how many years it will take me to finish it.

Tomorrow is Monday again - and that means another week of wasting the Associated Transport's time.

How is your stationery holding out? I hope you received the stationery I sent you.

Darling, this is about all the news for today so until tomorrow~

Goodnight darling,
I love you
Sylvia
XXX

⁴⁸ Elizabeth (Betty) May Weidman was Sylvia's niece.

⁴⁹ Louis (Lou) B. Weidman married Sylvia's younger sister Faye Geetter Weidman and had two children: Elizabeth (Betty) May and Holly Suzanne, who were six and one at the time this was written.

⁵⁰ Sylvia's oldest brother, Isidore left his job as a physician at the Mt. Sinai Hospital in Hartford to enlist in the US Navy. He is finishing his training in New London, Connecticut.

⁵¹ Sadie Geetter was Sylvia's oldest sister and was unmarried at the time.

Letter marked "Missing" below the return address, by:

J. P. Gross [Signature]
Capt. AC Exec
561 Bomb Squad
4-15-44

Stamped "Return to Sender Verified 1st Base Post Office" below postage, and
cancellation stamp on reverse dated Apr 20, 1944 by the US Army Postal Service and a
second cancellation stamp on reverse dated Apr 21, 1944 by the "Control Section"

Monday night ~
March 20 1944

Darling ~

Spring has certainly ushered in with a bang! We've had the worst snowstorm today we've had all winter. In fact it snowed all last night and it's still snowing.

I didn't go to work today as I didn't think [my] mom was well enough to be left alone today. She's much better now so I'll be back in the office tomorrow.

Having all this time on my hands today, I managed to accomplish quite a bit. There were so many little things I've been meaning to get done but somehow I've been putting them off. Well, today I did them and I feel good about it.

Did you have those pictures taken of the crew as yet? I'm anxious to see them. Are you still gaining weight? After all - I might as well know if I have a fat husband now. I spoke to [your] mom this afternoon and she was going out this evening to her poker club. I'm really happy that she manages to go out several nights a week because it would be terrible if she stayed in every night. It would give her time to think and that would do her no good whatsoever.

Norm sent home his pictures which she took recently. Mom says it's not very good but it's better than the last picture he sent home. Knowing the photographers around Army camp, you can understand why his pictures haven't been very good ones.

Well sweetheart, I must get supper ready so I don't have much more time to write. In closing - remember that I love you very much and miss you more than words can say. Take good care of yourself and once more -

Goodnight darling,
I love you
Sylvia
XXX

Letter marked "Missing" below the return address, by:

J. P. Gross [Signature]
Capt. AC Exec
561 Bomb Squad
4-15-44

Stamped "Return to Sender Verified 1st Base Post Office" below postage, and cancellation stamp on reverse dated Apr 20, 1944 by the US Army Postal Service and a second cancellation stamp on reverse dated Apr 21, 1944 by the "Control Section"

Tuesday night ~
March 21 1944

Darling ~

Ebner⁵² called tonight as he is leaving for camp tomorrow night. He wanted to... drop by later in the evening but I was invited to a friend's house who was having a gathering. He's in the best of health and his regret is that his furlough wasn't long enough - as usual - the time just flew by and he couldn't do all the things he wanted to. He told me to send his regards until he... gets back and can write.

This evening I visited Ruth Friedman - she's married to Harold Friedman, his father owns Friedman's rugs next to Silverman's restaurant. He has a brother Stanley and I met him tonight. He knows you - perhaps you recall who he is. Well this was a long overdue visit. She's been asking me to come over for years now and tonight she had about six girls who were in this club I was in when we were in high school⁵³.

She lives on Seyms Street and from the outside of her house you'd never expect it to be as lovely as it is inside. She has her home furnished in modern furniture. I never cared much for modern furniture because it is always arranged so that it has a cold appearance. However, this is the first time I saw modern furniture look comfortable. What gave me a kick was her bedroom. It was really different - but very pretty. She had twin beds and they were pushed up next to each other so that it looked like one very large bed, and in the back there was a large mirror covered with drapes. It looked like something you would see in the movies not on Seyms St.

We spent the evening chatting and Libby⁵⁴ and I brought our needlepoints - and we were both working on them. As usual the time skipped by and before we knew it, it was 12:00. Ruth wouldn't let us leave until we had coffee and cake, so we didn't leave until almost 1:00. By the time I got home, it was late - in fact it's very late now - but I can't go to sleep without writing to you first.

Today I set a record for the Associated. I had to balance my accounts today - we do it once a week - and I have \$1,785 more than I should have. We checked back and can't find any errors, so I have a profit of \$1785 for Associated. Seeing that my department, the Accounts Receivable Dept. is in receivership by the bank, I guess I'm trying to get the department back on its feet by my own methods. *Smah!*

⁵² Ebner Glooskin graduated in the same Weaver High School class of 1938 as Sylvia. Ebner has become friends with Lenny since Lenny and Sylvia began dating.

⁵³ This is a reunion of the Girls Business Club from Weaver High School, one of three high schools in Hartford, Connecticut where all the girls attending still live.

⁵⁴ Libby Handler graduated from Weaver High School in Hartford, Connecticut in 1938 with Sylvia and they have remained close friends.

Darling it's getting very late and there's not much more that has happened today. I'll end this letter now but before I do - let me tell you something funny - for two nights in a row I dreamed I gave birth to a daughter - what do you make of it - I told Sadie⁵⁵ about it and she said such dreams better not come true now because I need a lot of explaining.

Well my darling it's good night again - I wish I could kiss you goodnight but I heard of miracles happening so maybe one of my x's will jump up and give you a real smack-a-roo. So goodnight my darling, I love you with all my heart.

Goodnight darling,
I love you
Sylvia
XXX

Letter marked "Missing" below the return address, by:

J. P. Gross [Signature]
Capt. AC Exec
561 Bomb Squad
4-16-44

Stamped "Return to Sender Verified 1st Base Post Office" below postage, and cancellation stamp on reverse dated Apr 18, 1944 by the US Army Postal Service.

⁵⁵ Sadie Geetter is Sylvia's oldest sister. Like Sylvia she is a working woman and they both pay rent for a shared bedroom in their mother's house at 148 Marigold St. in Hartford, Conn. She is also the primary caregiver for her ailing mother.

On about this date, Sylvia received a telegram similar to this:

CLASS OF SERVICE		WESTERN UNION		SYMBOLS	
This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its duration is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.		(10)		DL=Day Letter	
				NL=Night Letter	
				LC=Deferred Cable	
				NLT=Night Letter Telegram	
				Y=Day Telegram	

TO: NAA156 / 33 GOVT=WUX WASHINGTON DC 24 729P
MRS SYLVIA LEVY=
148 MAGNOLIA ST

THE SECRETARY OF WAR DESIRES ME TO EXPRESS HIS DEEP REGRET THAT YOUR HUSBAND SECOND LIEUTENANT LEONARD LEVY HAS BEEN REPORTED MISSING IN ACTION SINCE SIX MARCH OVER GERMANY PERIOD LETTER FOLLOWS=
ULIO THE ADJUTANT GENERAL. (

THE COMPANY WILL APPRECIATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE

Six Hartford Area Soldiers Reported Missing in Action

Six Greater Hartford soldiers are missing in action in the European and Mediterranean areas according to a War Department casualty list published today.

Reported as missing in Europe are S/Sgt. Daniel F. Carroll, nephew of Miss Helen Tull, of 161 Campfield Ave., Hartford; S/Sgt. Victor H. Clifford, husband of Mrs. Dorothy E. Clifford, 20 Mills Lane, Bloomfield, and Flight Officer Leonard Levy, husband of Mrs. Sylvia G. Levy, 148 Magnolia St., Hartford.



Leonard Levy

Missing in the Mediterranean area are Pvt. Alfred J. Cagne Jr., son of Mrs. Margaret Cagne, 171 Bonner St., Hartford; Pvt. Frank Marocchini, son of Mrs. Catherine Marocchini, 408 Nott St., Wethersfield, and Pfc. Thomas E. Quinn, brother of Miss Mary Quinn, 236 Sigourney St., Hartford.

Wednesday night ~
March 22, 1944

Darling ~

Tomorrow I am finally getting around to doing something I've been wanting to do for such a long time. About nine of us in the office are going down to the Blood Donor Center. The only thing that bothers me is that I won't be able to eat for four hours after breakfast and I have the habit now of eating in between meals – as the girls are always bringing in food. This morning I had a terrible longing for (I don't know how to spell it - but I'll try to spell it the way it sounds) *A-Pizza* – you know that Italian bread with tomatoes and stuff all over it. (What a description!) Well, coincidentally a girl in my office brought in one she bought in a new Italian shop nearby – so I asked her to bring me one tomorrow. I'll have to save it until the afternoon.

In tonight's paper I read about a woman who gave birth to a 25 pound baby and it had a full set of teeth. However, the baby didn't live more than a day. It was her 12th child.

In case you are wondering about the enclosed slip of paper that says “let Lennie or Levy do it.” Well, Sue gave it to me. It's the letterhead on one of the customer's stationery and she got the bright idea to write that on top. She told me to send it to you and I surprised her when I told her I would. I told her about Passover⁵⁶ and that we don't eat bread then – and then she asked me if I do - and I said that I observe the holiday⁵⁷. So, to be funny she said she was going to bring in sandwiches and eat them in front of me. However, I reminded her that by April 9, we won't be working for the Associated any longer. Every day, our boss walks through the department and watches us as if he's making a mental list of who are going to be the first 100 girls to be dismissed. We nicknamed him *Hawksbrow* - and we think we should give him a magnifying glass as a parting gift.

There hasn't been any mail from you for a week now and I miss your letters terribly. There has been a delay in mail from England so I'm hoping that perhaps tomorrow will bring word from you.

Sweetheart, I hope you are getting my mail regularly now. I wish I could tell you how much I miss you, but I guess just saying so very much we'll have to do - and Hon -

I love you more everyday.

⁵⁶ Passover, or *Pesach* in Hebrew, is a major Jewish holiday that commemorates the liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, as described in the biblical Book of Exodus. It involves various rituals, including the Seder meal, and lasts for seven or eight days, during which leavened bread is forbidden.

⁵⁷ Sylvia Geetter Levy attends the Emmanuel Synagogue on Greenfield St. in Hartford, Connecticut at the beginning and end of *Pesach* and eats unleavened bread (or matzah) for the duration .

Goodnight darling,
I love you
Sylvia
XXX

Letter marked "Missing" below the return address, by:

J. P. Gross [Signature]
Capt. AC Exec
561 Bomb Squad
4-16-44

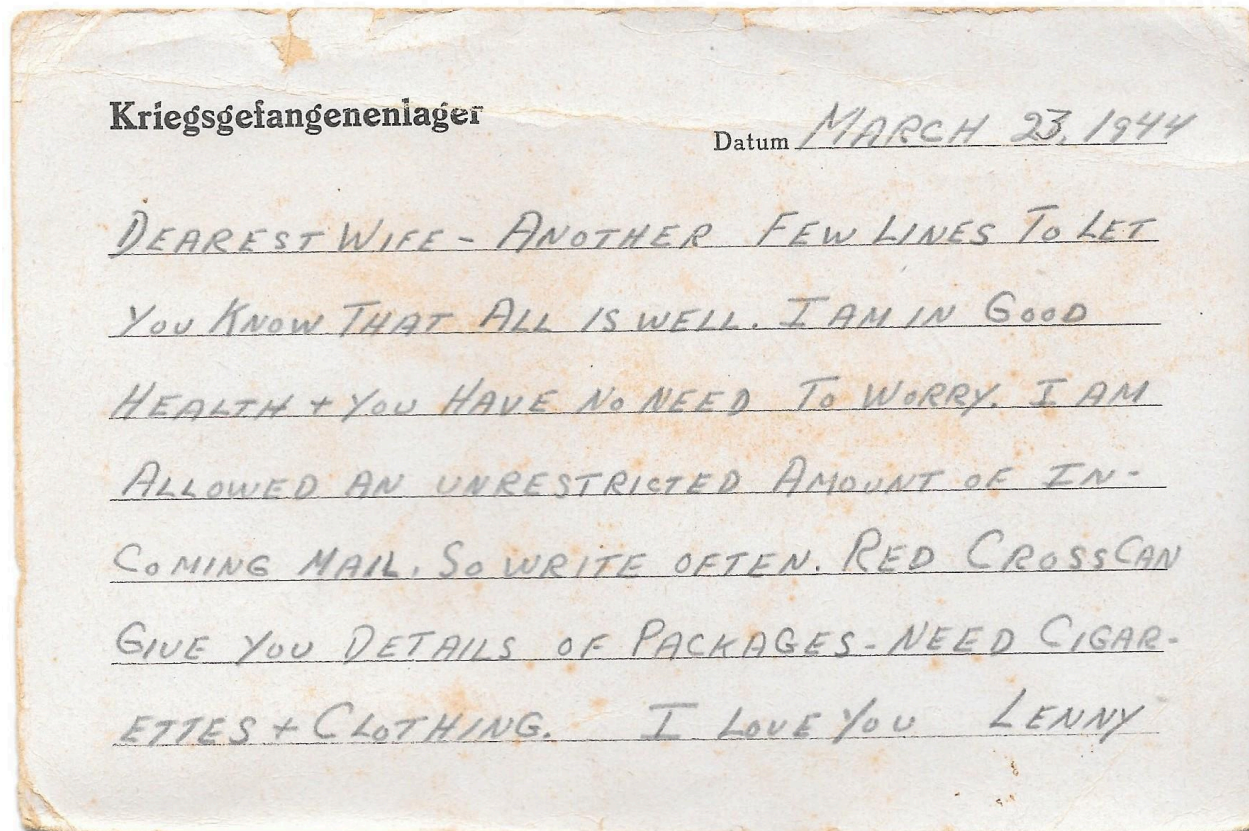
Stamped "Return to Sender Verified 1st Base Post Office" below postage, and a cancellation stamp on reverse dated Apr 18, 1944 by the US Army Postal Service.



Main St. Downtown Hartford - Looking North

Kriegsgefangenenlager⁵⁸
Tuesday, March 23⁵⁹ 1944

Dearest Wife - Another few lines To let you know that all is well. I am in good health and you have no need to worry. I am allowed an unrestricted amount of incoming mail. So right often. Red Cross can give you details of packages - need cigarettes + clothing. I love you. Lenny



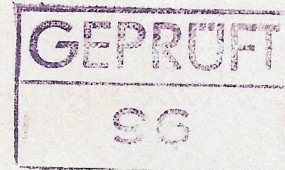
⁵⁸ Prisoner-of-war camps

⁵⁹ Lenny originally wrote March 21, erased it and penciled 23. He apparently received the card when he was at Dulag Luft on March 11, 1944.

Kriegsgefangenenpost

MIT LUFTPOST
NACH NORD AMERICA

Postkarte



An

MRS. LEONARD LEVY

Gebührenfrei!

Absender:

Vor- und Zuname:

LT. LEONARD LEVY

Gefangenenummer: NOT ALLOTTED

Lager-Bezeichnung:

Dulag Luft

Deutschland (Allemagne)

Empfangsort: 148 MAGNOLIA ST.

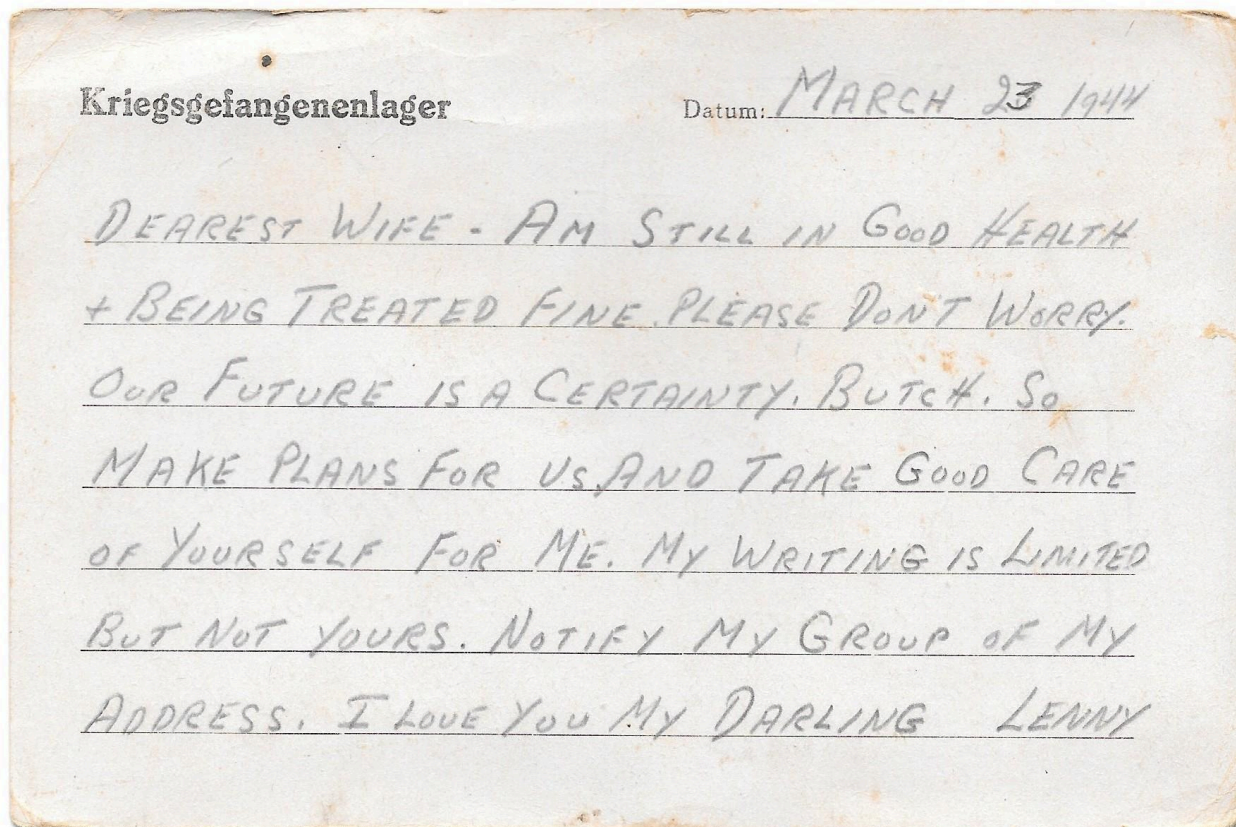
Straße: HARTFORD 5 CONN.

Land: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
Landesteil (Provinz usw.)

Return Address is Dulag Luft

Kriegsgefangenenlager⁶⁰
Thursday, March 23⁶¹ 1944

Dearest wife - Am still in good health and being treated fine. Please don't worry. Our future is a certainty, Butch. So make plans for us and take good care of yourself for me. My writing is limited but not yours. Notify my group of my address. I love you my darling. Lenny



⁶⁰ Prisoner-of-war camps.

⁶¹ 21 can be seen as the number underneath.

MIT LUFT POST
NACH NORD AMERICA

Kriegsgefangenenpost

Postkarte

An

MRS. LEONARD LEVY

Gebührenfrei!

Absender:	
Vor- und Zuname:	Empfangsort:
LT. LEONARD LEVY	148 MAGNOLIA ST.
Gefangenenummer: NOT ALLOTTED	Straße: HARTFORD & CONN.
Lager-Bezeichnung:	Land: UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
M.-Stammlager Luft 1	Landesteil (Provinz usw.)
via M.-Stammlager Luft 3	
Deutschland (Germany)	

11323
U.S. CENSOR

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)

Kriegsgefangenenlager⁶²
Thursday, March 25⁶³ 1944

Dearest wife - This is probably the only letter⁶⁴ you'll get from me due to the paper shortage. I will however write as many [post]cards⁶⁵ as allowed. Once again I want to say that I am uninjured and in good health - believe me my darling and don't worry, Butch, my sweet. Our future is assured now and I want you to make plans for it. Your allotment and my pay will continue. So we will have no financial worries thanks to the Red Cross⁶⁶. I have all that I need. Give them a good donation to show my appreciation. As you know Chris⁶⁷ is with me and he too is all right. Rock⁶⁸ was slightly wounded but should be ok soon. Please darling in your first package include candy as well as cigarettes and clothing. I really miss it here. Notify my group in England of my predicament. They will know what to do. Please darling comfort the folks as much as possible and take good care of yourself. Write every day and please don't worry I am perfectly all right. I love you, my darling and someday we'll be together. I love you Lenny

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)

⁶² Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

⁶³ 21 can be seen as the number underneath.

⁶⁴ Eighteen of these fragile, Kriege-letters made their way to Sylvia. Most took over a month to arrive. This letter was not stamped with a Hartford post office stamp.

⁶⁵ Only five of the Krieg-Postcards survived.

⁶⁶ The Red Cross parcels included tins and packets of such items as jam, cheese, powdered milk, meat, sardines, margarine, raisins, chocolate, coffee, sugar, and crackers.

⁶⁷ Augustine (Chris) Benedict Christiani is the Pilot of *Shack Rabbits*.

⁶⁸ Raymond (Rock) Newmark is the Bombardier of *Shack Rabbits*. He is at a hospital still being treated for his injuries.

MARCH 25 1944

DEAREST WIFE - THIS IS PROBABLY THE ONLY
LETTER YOU'LL GET FROM ME DUE TO THE PAPER
SHORTAGE. I WILL HOWEVER WRITE AS MANY CARDS
AS ALLOWED. ONCE AGAIN I WANT TO SAY THAT I
AM UNHURT AND IN GOOD HEALTH - BELIEVE
ME MY DARLING AND DON'T WORRY BUTCH MY
SWEET OUR FUTURE IS ASSURED NOW AND I
WANT YOU TO MAKE PLANS FOR IT. YOUR ALLOT-
MENT AND MY PAY WILL CONTINUE SO WE WILL
HAVE NO FINANCIAL WORRIES. THANKS TO THE
RED CROSS I HAVE ALL THAT I NEED.
GIVE THEM A GOODLY DONATION TO SHOW MY
APPRECIATION. AS YOU KNOW CHRIS IS WITH
ME AND HE TOO IS ALL RIGHT - ROCK WAS SLIGHT-
LY WOUNDED BUT SHOULD BE O.K. SOON. PLEASE
DARLING IN YOUR FIRST PACKAGE INCLUDE CANDY
AS WELL AS CIGARETTES AND CLOTHING. I
REALLY MISS IT HERE. NOTIFY MY GROUP
IN ENGLAND OF MY PREDICAMENT - THEY WILL
KNOW WHAT TO DO. PLEASE DARLING COMFORT
THE FOLKS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE AND TAKE
GOOD CARE OF YOURSELF. WRITE EVERY DAY
AND PLEASE DON'T WORRY I AM PER-
FECTLY ALL RIGHT. I LOVE YOU MY DARLING
AND SOMEDAY SOON WE'LL BE TOGETHER. I LOVE YOU

LENNY

KRIEGSGEFANGENENPOST

Interniertenpost

MIT LUFTPOST
NACH NORD AMERICA



An

MRS. LEONARD LEVY

Mit Luftpost
Per Avion

Taxe perçue

Rit. 40

11323

Gebührenfrei

Empfangsort:

148 MAGNOLIA ST.

Straße:

HART FORD

Kreis:

CONN.

Land:

U.S. of AMERICA

Landesteil (Provinz usw.)

Deutschland (Allemagne)

STALAG LUFT I
VIA STALAG LUFT III

Lager-Bezeichnung:

Internierten Nr.

3593

Vor- und Zuname:

LT. LEONARD LEVY

Absender:

Lenny's Logbook⁶⁹

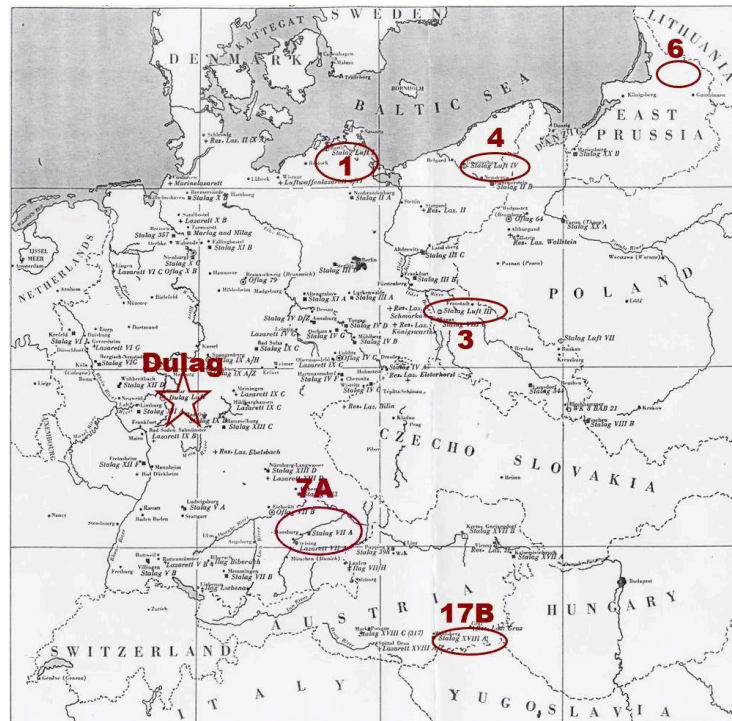
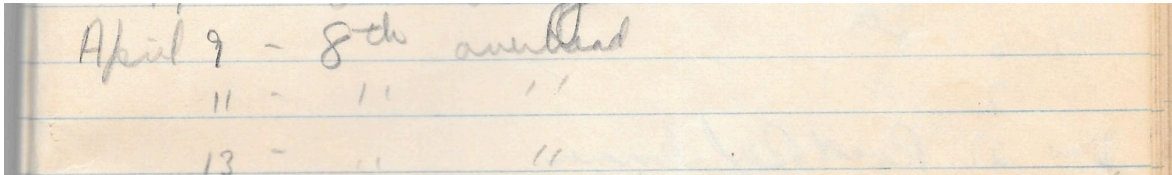
April, 1944

Events

April 9, 1944 – 8th⁷⁰ overhead⁷¹

April 11, 1944 – 8th overhead

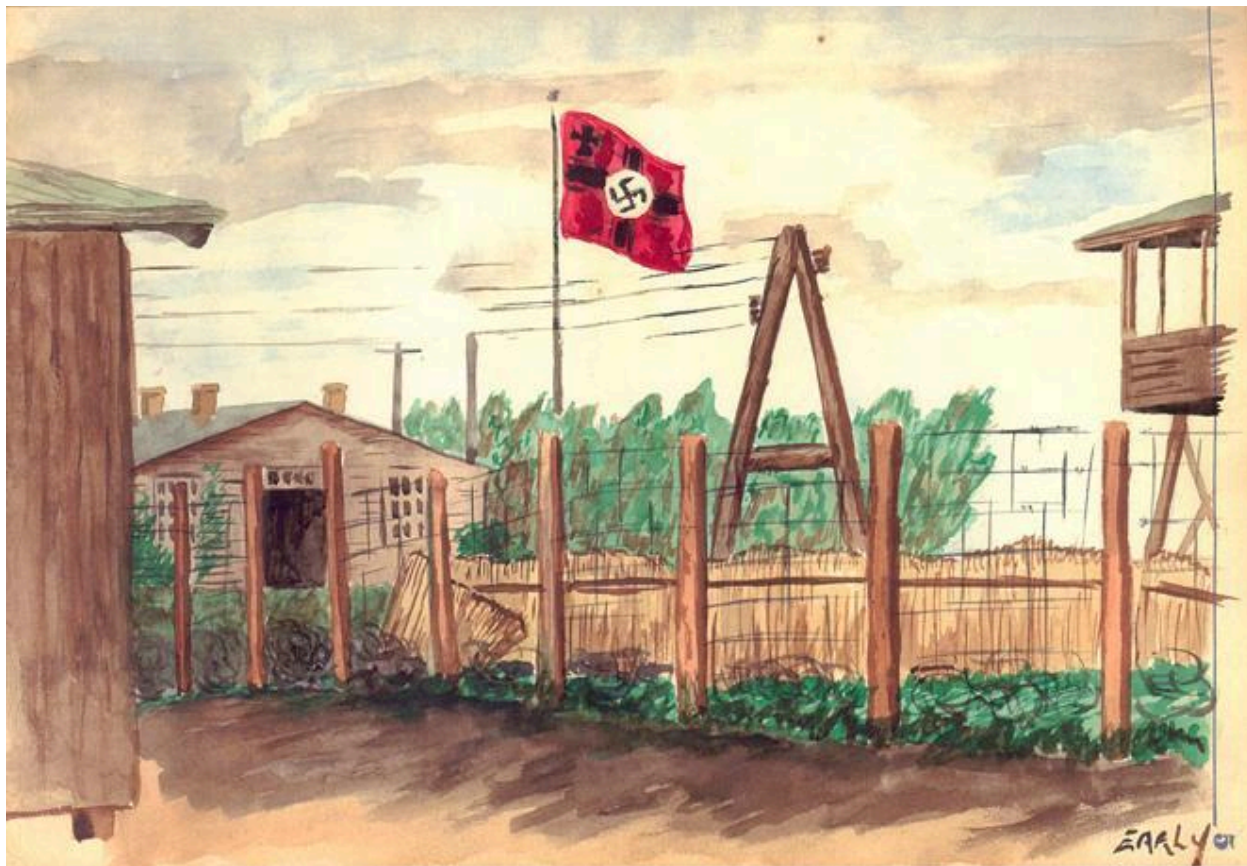
April 13, 1944 – 8th overhead



⁶⁹This document comes from a blue, paper covered composition, more than half filled with blank pages, and measuring 6.75" by 7.875."

⁷⁰ On 22 February 1944, the Army reorganized its Air Forces in Europe by renaming Eighth Air Force as the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe. This is a note that on this day, Lenny saw planes, probably in formation flying overhead.

⁷¹ The location of Stalag Luft 1 marked with a ('1' on the map) is known by the 8th Air Force, and the prison camp is said to have shielded the town of Barth from Allied bombing.



Stalag Luft 1

Art by Stalag Luft 1 POW Lt. Charles L. Early

Later Missions

13 April 1944

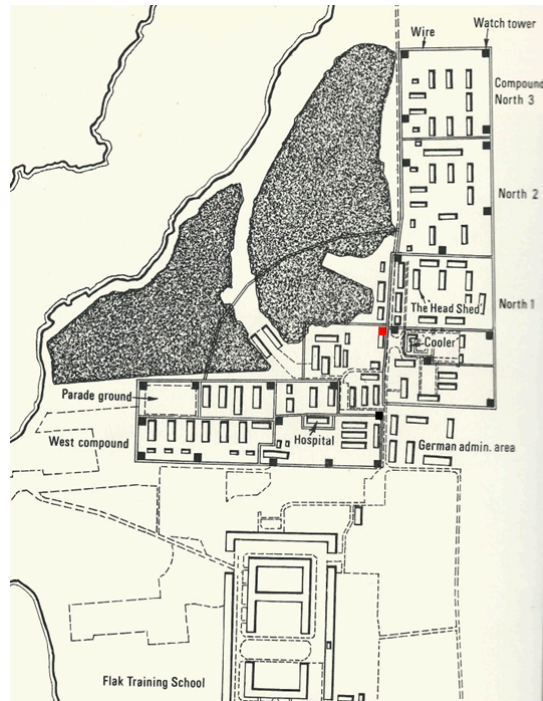


B-17G-5-BO #4231138 "Winged Fury" Code: F 388th BG - 562nd BS

Assigned to the Vince Sundstrom Crew Shot down 13 April 1944 with the A. Nelson Crew

Radio Broadcast

14 April 1944



The name and address of 2nd Lieutenant Leonard (Lenny) Levy and the name and address of his wife, was heard on a German radio broadcast, most likely in Barth, Germany. Lt. Levy spoke with a group of other American prisoners of war on an April 14, 1944 broadcast which was picked up globally by shortwave radio. He declared he was in good health, and urged his wife to be brave. The broadcast was picked up by shortwave radio operators.

Stalag Luft I [was] located near Barth, Germany. Barth was a small town on the shores of the Baltic north of Berlin. The camp itself was on a small peninsula northwest of the town... at the base of a small peninsula jutting into the Baltic – water on three sides made escape more difficult. Originally there was but one compound – the west. At first this was occupied only by the RAF, but later Americans were also held there. Since many arrived and few departed – very few, the prison was soon overcrowded and it was necessary to expand.

Lt. Robert R. Swartz
Prisoner of War, Stalag Luft 1⁷²

⁷² <http://merkki.com/swartzrobert.htm>

Radio Broadcast

15-29 April 1944

After the name and address of 2nd Lieutenant Leonard (Lenny) Levy was heard on April 14, 1944, on a German radio broadcast, dozens of postcards and letters were sent by people who had heard Lenny's name. Sylvia received the first one (a telegraph) on April 15, 1944. (All of them were in the scrapbook that was lost.)



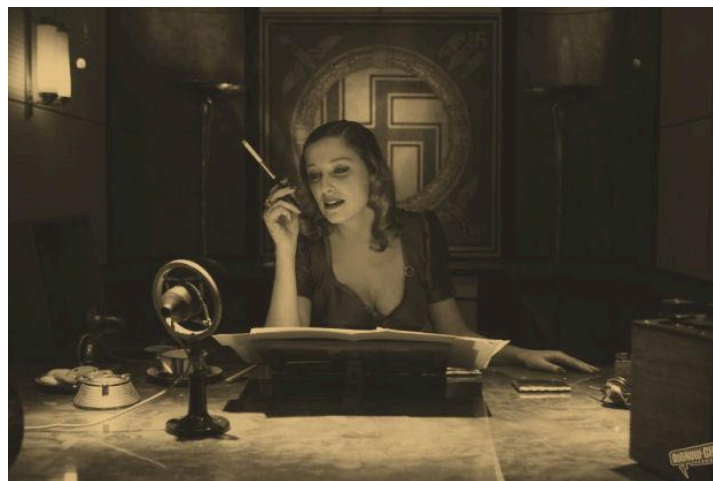
They sat in dimly lit rooms far into the wee hours of morning. Their faces illuminated by the faint, yellow glow of a short-wave radio dial, they carefully tuned through crackling frequencies during the dark days of World War II to listen to the propaganda broadcasts from Berlin, the enemy capital nearly 4,000 miles away. They were everyday citizens who independently served as ex-officio intelligence agents, sometimes finding hope and joy for the families of American and Canadian POWs in the enemy broadcasts designed to create only despair and disillusionment.

CLASS OF SERVICE		WESTERN UNION		1202		SYMBOLS	
This is a full-rate Telegram or Cablegram unless its deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol above or preceding the address.		A. N. WILLIAMS PRESIDENT				DL=Day Letter NL=Night Letter LC=Deferred Cable NLT=Cable Night Letter Ship Radiogram	
The filing time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination							
NUMBER	RECEIVED BY	CHECK					
89	HWBX	34 Goot.					
Dated <i>W W X Washington D.C. Oct. 23, 1944 1:16P</i>							
To <i>James W. Post</i> <i>1447 W. 101 St.</i>							
<i>Report just received thru International Red Cross states that your Brother-in-law First Lieutenant John L. Armstrong is a Prisoner of the Germans. Letter of information from Provost Marshal General follows.</i> <i>J. A. Ellis Adjutant General</i>							
THE COMPANY WILL ACCEPT DATE SUGGESTIONS FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE 10:43							

Mrs. Sylvia Levy received several telegrams from people across the globe

Each night, these few Americans closely listened to the broadcasts of "Axis Sally"⁷³, waiting for information about soldiers and airmen taken prisoner by the Germans. The broadcasts included names of POWs, sometimes service numbers, hometowns, and the names of family members.

Short-Wave Radio Monitors Let Families Know of Their Capture
published in On The Shortwave.com⁷⁴



⁷³ Mildred Elizabeth Gillars was an American broadcaster employed by Nazi Germany to disseminate Axis propaganda during World War II.

⁷⁴ <https://www.radioheritage.com/otsw/capture.html>

222 Ireland Ave.,
Paterson, N. J.
April 18, 1944.

My dear Mr. Harding: -

While listening to a short rare radio broadcast from Berlin last night they gave the name of 1st Lt. William John Harding # D-801276 of 427 East 66th St., New York City with you as next of kin, as a prisoner of war of the German Government.

I felt I should pass this information on to you with the thought it might relieve worry and anxiety on your part.

Yours very truly
Beatrice R. Mitchell
(Mrs. S. M. J.)

Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening

Senior Compound Officer - North 1
April 18, 1944 - April 30, 1945

Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening was born on November 12, 1914 in Carroll, Iowa. He made his first flight in June 1921 and flew 27 missions during the Second World War before being shot down over Naples on 17 July 1943. He was seriously wounded and taken prisoner in Italy. On 18 April 1944, he was transported from Italy to Stalag Luft I. After the war, his cartoon book about his time in Stalag Luft I, "Not as Briefed", was published.

StalagLuft1.de

On 18 April 1944, Greening arrived at Stalag Luft I POW camp, where he stayed for the duration of the war. Making productive use of his time once again, Greening turned to art. He organized classes, taught 75 students the basic principles of drawing and painting, drew portraits, sketched combat scenes as described by his fellow prisoners, put on a "Display of the Week" in the mess hall, and organized the "Kriegie Kraft Karnival" on 21–23 July 1944 with art work and models on display from all over the camp. After the war, Brown & Bigelow printed *Not as Briefed*, which contained 75 of Greening's paintings, with J.M. Coppinger's introduction and captions

After the German surrender, and the Russian occupation of the area, the POWs were flown out by B-17s and C-46s, with Greening flying out on 14 May 1945. Greening was able to transport 56 crates of arts and handicrafts made by the POWs. Some of this collection was used by Greening to prepare a POW Exposition, which included a reproduction of the camp's 16-man room, solitary confinement cell, and escape attempts. The exposition opened on 1 October 1945 in the Rockefeller Center Museum of Science and Industry. The exposition appeared in several US cities before concluding in Washington, D.C., that September

Wikipedia⁷⁵

⁷⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stalag_Luft_I



Pow Wow

18 April 1944

Pow Wow (stylised in all caps) was a German underground newspaper, run by prisoners of war in the Stalag Luft I camp in Nazi Germany. Its name stood for Prisoners Of War - Waiting On Winning and its motto was "The only truthful newspaper in Germany - to be read silently, quickly, and in groups of three".

It gave prisoners information on what was happening outside of the camp, and how close the war may be to being over. It grew from a small penciled newsheet read by hundreds into a neatly printed 2,000 word daily, eagerly perused by thousands. At the height of its circulation, it had over 9,000 readers and was translated into French and Russian as well as English.

They received their information from new prisoners and smuggled in German newspapers and, most crucially, a secret radio. On some occasions, they were able to receive information faster than German media. When *Pow Wow* received the news of the Normandy landings, they had to delay publication, because the prisoners' excitement would arouse suspicion

Pow Wow was started by Lowell Bennett, an American war correspondent, but he was discovered, and in April 1944 control of the paper was given to Ray Parker, an American pilot who had been shot down in April 1944. He became editor of *Pow Wow* within weeks of arriving at Stalag Luft I, after being shot down and captured, when his senior officer in the camp, J. R. Byerly heard he had been a reporter for the Los Angeles Examiner

Although the Germans knew about *Pow Wow* and tried to destroy it, from March 1944 to May 1945 they didn't manage to stop a single issue. Parker was discovered three months before the end of the war and forced to cease publishing, but survived the war and moved back to the United States

Lenny's Logbook⁷⁶

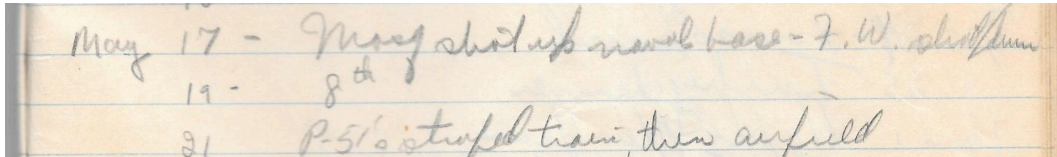
May, 1944

Events

May 17, 1944 – Mosq⁷⁷ shot up naval base⁷⁸ - F..W.[190⁷⁹] shot down

May 19, 1944 – 8th [overhead]⁸⁰

May 21, 1944 – P-51's strafed train; then airfield⁸¹



May 17 - Mosq shot up naval base - F.W. shot down
19 - 8th
21 P-51's strafed train, then airfield



Yak Attack - art by Roy Grinnell

⁷⁶This document comes from a blue, paper covered composition, more than half filled with blank pages, and measuring 6.75" by 7.875."

⁷⁷ The **de Havilland DH.98 Mosquito** is a British twin-engined, multirole combat aircraft, used during World War II

⁷⁸ The location was probably the nearby German base in Barth.

⁷⁹ The **Focke-Wulf Fw 190**, nicknamed *Würge* (Shrike) is a German single-seat, single-engine fighter aircraft designed by Kurt Tank at Focke-Wulf in the late 1930s and widely used during World War II.

⁸⁰ Eighth Air Force as the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe. This is a note that on this day, Lenny saw planes, probably in formation flying overhead.

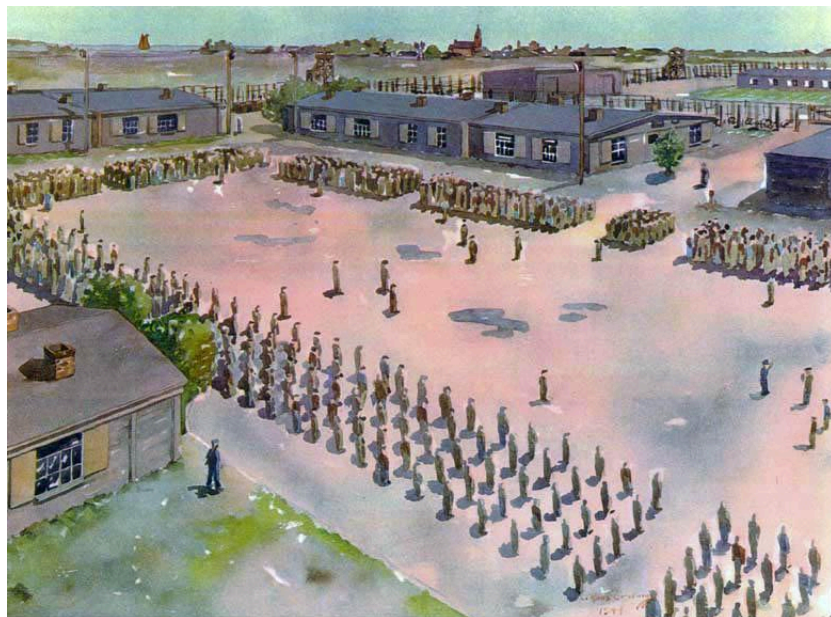
⁸¹ Again this is US aircraft on a strafing (low altitude) run visible to Lenny at the adjacent POW camp.

As POWs we were under two separate, distinct organizations. First there was the German camp organization. When we arrived the camp was under control of the Luftwaffe, control passed from the Luftwaffe to the S.S. and finally to the Wehrmacht. We were forced to abide by the rules of the Germans, but cooperation was unheard of. Whenever a new German order came out it was S.O.P. to ignore it until forced to comply. Within the camp we had our own American organization. Naturally we observed and obeyed all orders from our officers.

Most of our time as kriegies was leisure – leisure can certainly become tiresome. However, there were certain routine activities worth describing in giving a true picture of our life.

Roll call twice daily was required by the Germans. The times varied with the season, but it was usually held around 0900 and in the middle of the afternoon. We were formed by squadrons in the athletic area. A German officer and two enlisted men would count the squadrons, while other enlisted men checked the barracks. If the Germans were not satisfied with the total, they went through the process again. Often we stood for some time before the Germans were satisfied. While the Germans were counting we read the daily bulletin, and when the squadrons had all been counted we had morning calisthenics. If the Germans were not satisfied at roll call we could expect an “identity parade” in the evening. The Germans would come through the rooms calling each man by name and he was to answer with his POW number.

Lt. Robert R. Swartz
Prisoner of War, Stalag Luft 1⁸²



⁸² <http://merkki.com/swartzrobert.htm>

Roll Call - Art by Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening⁸³

Lenny's Logbook⁸⁴ June, 1944

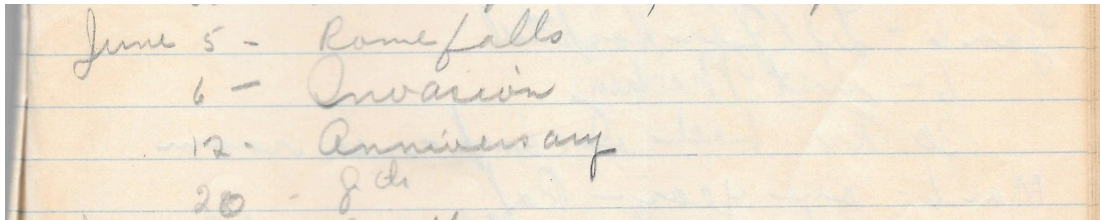
Events

June 3, 1944 – Rome Falls

June 6, 1944 – Invasion

June 12, 1944 – Anniversary

June 20, 1944 – 8th [overhead]⁸⁵



June 3, 1944 – Rome Falls

On this date the glory attached to capturing Rome, which had predominated throughout the Allied campaign, was upstaged just two days later, June 6, 1944, when the Allies launched the much more strategically important Operation Overlord, beginning with the amphibious landings on Normandy.



⁸³ Charles Ross Greening was the highest ranking American officer at Stalag Luft 1. His Log was recently discovered and published.

⁸⁴ This document comes from a blue, paper covered composition, more than half filled with blank pages, and measuring 6.75" by 7.875."

⁸⁵ Eighth Air Force as the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe. This is a note that on this day, Lenny saw planes, probably in formation flying overhead.

D-Day

June 6, 1944



The **Normandy landings** were the landing operations and associated airborne operations on 6 June 1944 of the Allied invasion of Normandy in Operation Overlord during the Second World War. Codenamed **Operation Neptune** and often referred to as **D-Day** (after the military term), it is the largest seaborne invasion in history. The operation began the liberation of France, and the rest of Western Europe, and laid the foundations of the Allied victory on the Western Front.







Volume III, Number 14

Stalag Luft I

June 6, 1944

INVASION!

YANKS-BRITISH LAND IN EUROPE!!!

THE INVASION OF NORTH-WEST EUROPE HAS BEGUN. Since pre-dawn this morning, Allied shock-troops have been landing on a 95-mile front between Cherbourg and le Havre on the north coast of France. The greatest military operation in history -- the blow to free Europe from Nazism.-- has at last been struck.



B-U-L-L-E-T-I-N-S

German Radio, late this afternoon, reported a major naval battle off the coast of Belgium.

Nazi Communique of June 5: "Despite German offer to exclude Rome from the battle area, American armored formations penetrated to the center of the city in the morning of June 4. Bitter street fighting continued until the evening."

Nazi Communique of June 6: "American armored forces were repulsed at Tivoli, fourteen miles north-east of Rome."

North Compound, evening June 6: Our grand-father guardians packed their equipment and drove off in trucks.

A terse statement from the Nazi High Command, at 2pm today, announced:

"The long-expected and long-prepared invasion of the north coast of France started about midnight, after a heavy air bombardment of the coastal defenses."

"Air-borne troops landed at several places between le Havre and Cherbourg, followed by landing craft, supported by light and heavy naval bombardment."

"Our defenses were not surprised. There was bitter fighting, in the sectors attacked."

"The air-borne troops were engaged before landing. The paratroops were, for the most part, captured or killed."

"In spite of the fire from enemy naval units, our Channel defenses kept up their fire on the landing craft."

"The action is now in full progress"

=====

All day yesterday, U.S. bomber and fighter armadas tore at the French coast. London reported that 500 Fortresses and Liberators bombed Boulogne and Calais during the morning.

At noon, very great forces of U.S. and British medium bombers hit specialized objectives all along the coast.

During the afternoon, continuous fighter sweeps were maintained all over the north of France, on dive-bombing and strafing missions.

Last night, in immediate prelude to the landings, R.A.F. Bomber Command struck with all its weight at the coast defenses.

Before dawn, U.S. and British paratroops, glider- and air-borne forces were dropped behind the German coastal

(continued back page)

defenses.

Simultaneously, Rangers and Commandos waded ashore at several points between Cherbourg and le Havre.

Over their heads roared the drum-fire shelling from scores of Allied warships. Ahead of them, dive-bombers, attack-bombers and fighters scourged the Normandy beaches.

Close behind them came the shock-divisions of U.S., Canadian and British amphibious forces.

British troops were returning to France almost four years to a day of their expulsion from those same shores. American soldiers were fulfilling their President's promise to the enslaved peoples of Europe.

Allied supporting forces are now flooding across the Channel from south-England debarkation ports in invasion ships of every type. The German communique admitted that defensive shore-fire was not able to halt the reinforcement.

Nazi motorized divisions are driving towards the beach-head from their garrison and assembly areas at Lille, Abbeville and Paris. It is yet unknown if French patriot forces have gone into action.

Few details of the actual landing, the effectiveness of German defenses, or the scale of the operation are yet to hand.

It is not yet clear if the present invasion is the intended concentration point of the Second Front.

News bulletins over the German Radio this afternoon declared that very heavy casualties had been inflicted on the first waves of the attackers. Many gliders and transport planes were claimed shot down.

Allied air support is expected to surpass by far the maximum effort provided in Italy to our Fifteenth Army Group. Eighth Air Force Bomber Command is now able to put up more than 2,000 heavy bombers in a single attack.

Fighter Command is able to maintain 1,500 sorties daily. Ninth Air Force medium bomber and fighter strength is reliably estimated at 1,000 sorties daily.

Britain's R.A.F. will contribute 1,500 heavy bombers, with an average bomb-load of seven tons each, for night pulverization of German rear-areas. A thousand R.A.F. fighters have been readied for their share of the air support. An additional 500 medium bomber sorties can be provided by the R.A.F. Tactical Air Force.

=====

Kriegsgefangenenlager⁸⁶
Thursday, June 15⁸⁷ 1944

Dearest wife - A year ago today was truly a highlight in my life - one that will always bring back nothing but the pleasantest of memories. That day saw the fulfillment of all my hopes and dreams - One year ago today I married the sweetest grandest girl in the world. My love for you, Butch Darling, has grown in that year and some day soon I hope [to] be able to show you how much. Believe it or not Syl, but your husband has become a barber - I cut the hair of all the fellows in the room. No complaints so far - my job as sports director is going [well] and today I tried out for a part in the play *Waiting for Lefty* that we are to produce. There is a great distance between us tonight, my darling, but soon we'll be together. Keep your hopes high. I love you

Lenny⁸⁸

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



⁸⁶ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

⁸⁷ 21 can be seen as the number underneath.

⁸⁸ Signed (written in script)

DEAREST WIFE - A YEAR AGO TODAY
WAS TRULY A HIGHLIGHT IN MY
LIFE - ONE THAT WILL ALWAYS BRING
BACK NOTHING BUT THE PLEASANTEST
OF MEMORIES. THAT DAY SAW THE
FULFILLMENT OF ALL MY HOPES AND
DREAMS - ONE YEAR AGO TODAY I
MARRIED THE SWEETEST GRANDEST
GIRL IN THE WORLD. MY LOVE FOR
YOU, BUTCH DARLING, HAS GROWN IN
THAT YEAR AND SOMEDAY SOON I HOPE
BE ABLE TO SHOW YOU HOW MUCH.

BELEIVE IT OR NOT SYL, BUT YOUR
HUSBAND HAS BECOME A BARBER.
I CUT THE HAIR OF ALL THE
FELLOWS IN THE ROOM. NO COMPLAINTS
SO FAR. - MY JOB AS SPORT'S DIREC-
TOR IS GOING GOOD AND TO-DAY
I TRIED OUT FOR A PART IN
THE PLAY "WAITING FOR LEFTY"
THAT WE ARE TO PRODUCE.

THERE'S A GREAT DISTANCE BETWEEN
US TONIGHT MY DARLING BUT SOON
WE'LL BE TOGETHER KEEP YOUR
HOPES HIGH. I LOVE YOU

Lenny

KRIEGSGEFANGENENPOST

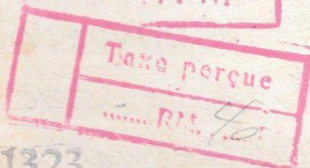
Interniertenpost

MIT ~~POST~~
NACH NORD AMERICA



An MRS. LEONARD LEVY

Mit Luftpost
Par Avion



11323

Gebührenfrei

Empfangsort:

148 MAGNOLIA ST.

Straße:

HARTFORD

Kreis:

CONN.

Land:

U.S. of AMERICA

Landesteil (Provinz usw.)

Deutschland (Allemagne)

VIA STRASBURG I
VIA STRASBURG III

Lager-Bezeichnung:

Internierten Nr.

3593

Vor- und Zuname:

LT. LEONARD LEVY

Absender:

Kriegsgefangenenlager⁸⁹
Friday, June 30⁹⁰ 1944

Dearest wife - Things are truly looking up for us here - this past week we saw motion pictures twice. (*Lilly Mars* was one of them) And best of all fresh vegetables are starting to come in - the Germans are giving us some and our gardens are going to give us quite a good harvest. My health is still good - In fact ,my only worry is you and your health my darling. Please take good care of yourself for me, Butch, and think only of our future - it is indeed bright. The weather of late has been good and my tan is getting darker. I'm storing up quite a bit of knowledge thanks to our library⁹¹ and so I'll not lack a source for conversation, between that and my daily experiences of the past few months. Once again my darling, take good care of yourself and don't worry about me. I love you Butch, very much. Goodnight my darling. I love you.

Lenny⁹²

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



The Library in South Compound - Stalag Luft 1 (Barth, Germany)

⁸⁹ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

⁹⁰ 29 can be seen as the number underneath.

⁹¹ The library was located in the South Compound, which was the older part of the POW camp with mostly British RAF prisoners.

⁹² Signed (written in script)

The library was one unit that had an important bearing upon our life. There were times when without a book to read life would have been dull and difficult. Thanks to the YMCA, for once in our lives when we had plenty of time to read we had books.

At first the choice of books was not good, but it improved with time. In December we started to receive Armed Services Editions and from there on we had excellent books. To give you an idea of our reading I'll list a few of the better books I read.

Forward the Nation - Donald C. Peattie
Love at First Flight - Spalding & Carney
Goodbye Mr. Chips - J. Hilton
Circling Year - Van De Water
The Robe - L.C. Douglas
Magnificent Obsession - L.C. Douglas
Paul Revere - Esther Forbes
Death Comes For The Archbishop - W. Cather

Lt. Robert R. Swartz
Prisoner of War, Stalag Luft 1⁹³

⁹³ <http://merkki.com/swartzrobert.htm>

Lenny's Logbook⁹⁴

July, 1944

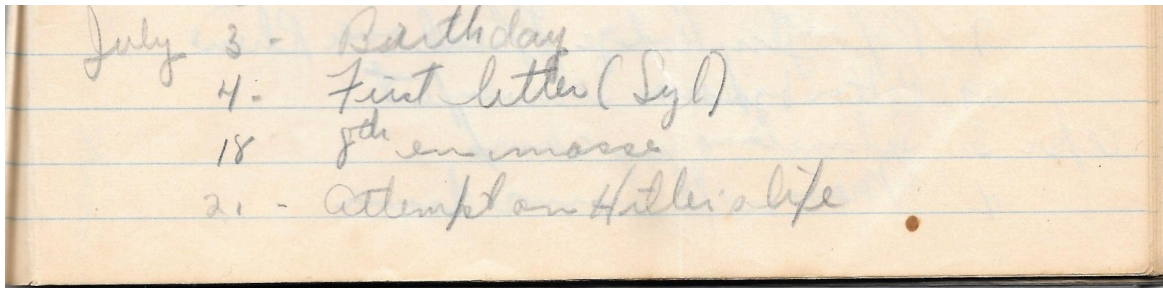
Events

July 3, 1944 – [Lenny's] Birthday

July 4, 1944 – First letter (Syl)

July 18, 1944 – 8th [overhead]⁹⁵

July 20, 1944 – Attempt on Hitler's Life



July 3, 1944 – [Lenny's] Birthday

On this date Lenny turned 26 years old. It was his 119th day as a Prisoner of War, or *Kriege*. It was his 105th day at Stalag Luft 1. It was his 220th day since the tearful farewell scene with his wife, and it was his 122nd day since he received any mail from Sylvia.

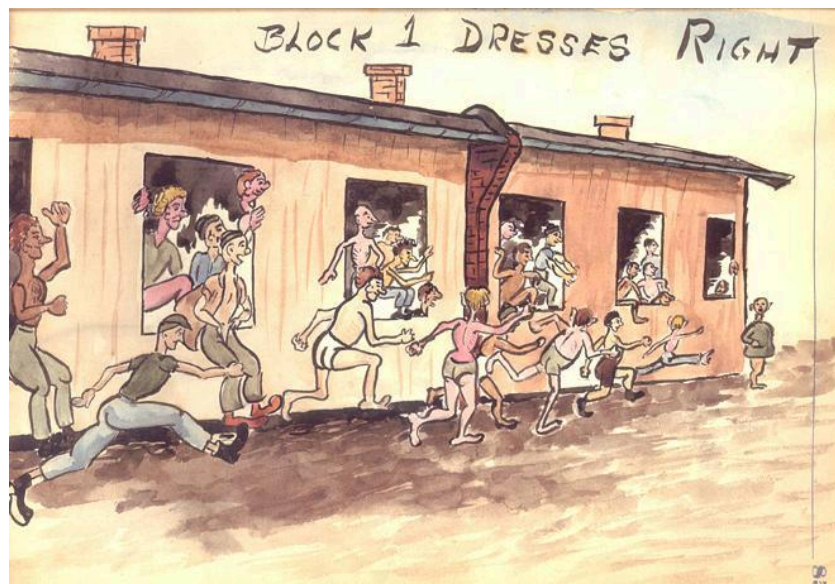
⁹⁴This document comes from a blue, paper covered composition, more than half filled with blank pages, and measuring 6.75" by 7.875."

⁹⁵ Eighth Air Force as the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe. This is a note that on this day, Lenny saw planes, probably in formation flying overhead.

Fourth of July Celebration - Stalag Luft 1

July 4, 1944

We celebrated the 4th with a day-long program of sports⁹⁶, music, speeches etc. (From Lenny's 44.07.08 letter.)



Block 1 Dresses Right

Art by Stalag Luft 1 POW Lt. Charles L. Early

⁹⁶ As the "Sports Director" at Stalag Luft 1, Lenny was probably quite busy.

Hartford Circus Fire

July 6, 1944



The Hartford Circus Fire occurred on July 6, 1944, during a performance of the Ringling Bros. and Barnum & Bailey Circus, resulting in the deaths of at least 167 people and injuring over 700. It is considered one of the worst fire disasters in U.S. history.

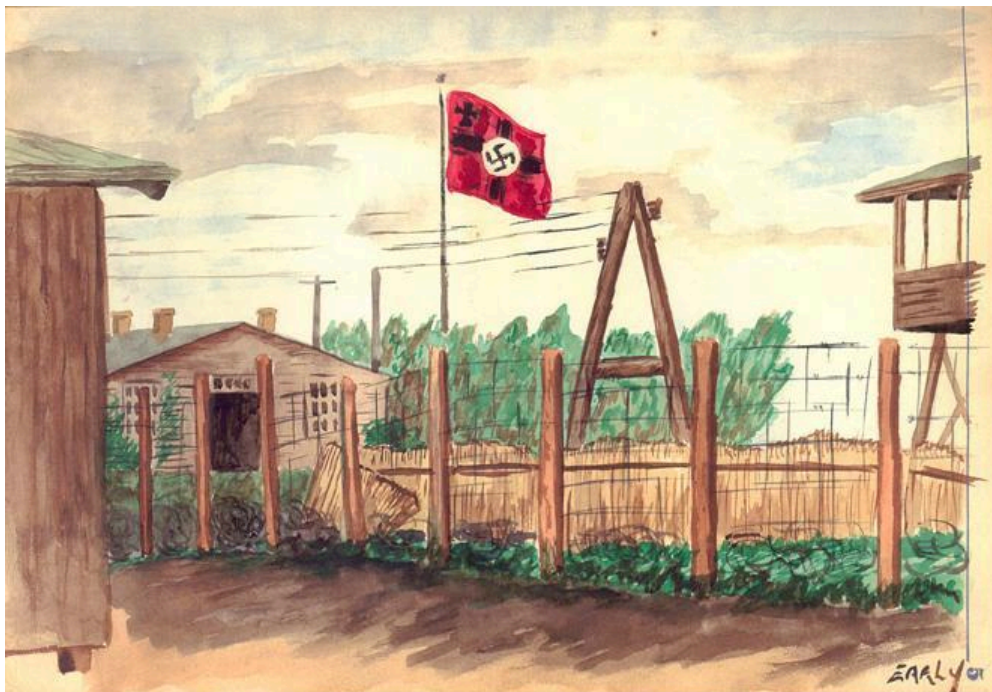


Kriegsgefangenenlager⁹⁷
Friday, July 8 1944

Dearest wife - Today has been the happiest day I've spent in a long while. We celebrated the 4th with a day-long program of sports, music, speeches etc. The finishing touch was given when a letter was handed to me. It was from you - the first one. By getting it, I became a celebrity, as it was the first one in the barracks and one of the quickest to arrive here. It was wonderful to get Butch darling, and a relief to know that you know I'm all right. I still am enjoying good health and now that I've heard from you my worries are lessened. Yesterday being my birthday, your letter was the best present I ever got. I do love you very much my darling. By now Margie must have had those twins. How are she and they? Once again sweet - please don't worry as all is well with me. Regards to all at home. Goodnight Butch. I love you

Lenny⁹⁸

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



Art by Lt. Charles Law Early⁹⁹

⁹⁷ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

⁹⁸ Signed (written in script)

⁹⁹ <http://merkki.com/earlycharles.htm>



Tower of North¹⁰⁰ Compound - Stalag Luft 1 (Barth, Germany)

Since it was a prison, our compound was enclosed with barbed wire. There were two fences, ten feet high, strung with horizontal and vertical barbed wires. The fences were about four feet apart and the area between the two was covered with coils of barbed wire. Ten feet inside the fence was a double strand of barbed wire that served as a warning wire. The compound was guarded by six towers – one on each corner and ones in the middle of each exterior side.

Lt. Robert R. Swartz
Prisoner of War, Stalag Luft 1¹⁰¹

¹⁰⁰ Lenny was in North Compound, which was the newer part of the POW camp, built to accommodate the growing number of young American men being shot down over Germany.

¹⁰¹ <http://merkki.com/swartzrobert.htm>

Stalag Luft 1 – Daily Bulletin

July 9, 1944

OFFICE OF THE GROUP COMMANDER
GROUP I, USAAF, NORTH COMPOUND
OFLAG LUFT I, BARTH, GERMANY

July 9, 1944

BULLETIN:

1. MENU

BREAKFAST	DINNER
Prunes	Stew
Barley	Chocolate Pudding
Coffee	Coffee

2. No ground school today.

3. Remember Wing Commander Ferrer's talk in the Mess Hall at 1430 hours today. Subject of the talk will be Proposed Peace Terms.

4. All Prisoners of War from Georgia, Florida and Alabama are urged to attend a meeting in the Library in Block 4 at 1600 hours today.

5. There will be a meeting of Lt. Col. Hubbard's proposed Flight Group in the tent adjoining Block 4, tomorrow, Monday after evening roll call.

6. There will be a meeting of Prisoners of War from North and South Carolina in the tent on the West end of Block 8 after roll call this evening.

7. There will be a meeting of the Texas Prisoner of War club in the single tent between Blocks 4 and 5 immediately after evening roll call.

8. Church services for members of the L.D.S. will be held in Block 2, Room 16 at 1130 hours today.

9. Catholic Mass at 1130 hours today in the Mess Mall.
10. Protestant services will be held in the large Mess Hall at 1300 hours today.
11. It's coming!!! The Group 1 sponsored production "Waiting for Lefty". Exact date of arrival will be announced in tomorrow's bulletin.
12. All personnel are again reminded that they are required to wear pants, shirt and shoes to morning and evening meals. Anyone failing to do so will be asked to leave the Mess Hall and obtain the proper uniform.

By order of Lt. Col. HUBBARD

J.M. LITTLE, 1st Lt.

From Stalag Luft 1 Online: <http://www.merkki.com/dbjuly944.htm>

Attempt on Hitler's Life

July 20, 1944

July 20, 1944 – Attempt on Hitler's Life



The **20 July plot**, sometimes referred to as **Operation Valkyrie**, was a failed attempt to assassinate Adolf Hitler, the chancellor and leader of Nazi Germany, and overthrow the Nazi regime on 20 July 1944. The plotters were part of the German resistance, mainly composed of Wehrmacht officers. The leader of the conspiracy, Claus von Stauffenberg, tried to kill Hitler by detonating an explosive hidden in a briefcase. However, due to the location of the bomb at the time of detonation, the blast only dealt Hitler minor injuries. The planners' subsequent coup attempt also failed and resulted in a purge of the Wehrmacht.

Kriegie Kraft Karnival

July 21-23, 1944

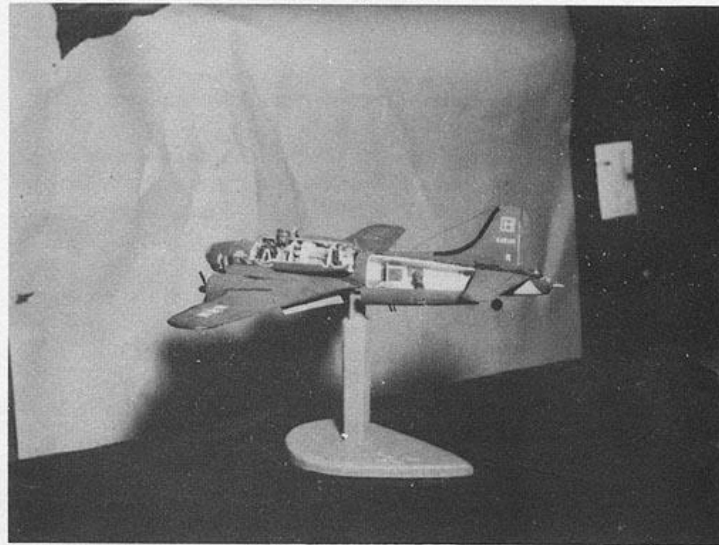
In July... we had *Kriegie-Kraft-Karnival*. It consisted of a play about a mad artist. Had an exhibit of different types of Red Cross parcels and the exhibit of *Pow-Wow*, our camp newspaper.

The biggest attraction was the hand craft exhibit, painting, drawings, carvings, sculptures, models, airplanes, boats and plaques. All in all it was very good.

Every day there was a big chocolate cake given as a door prize, 16 x 16 x 6". What a cake! The last day they drew for lighters and cigarettes. I won one-hundred cigarettes. Colonel Spicer drew my name and called for Hoppy, which was my nickname in the hospital...

I had three things entered in the exhibit, soap carvings: a racer, model T and a post-war Streamliner job. Later I built a V-8 engine scale model out of wood. All parts were removable, head, carburetor, etc. The entire exhibit is to travel through the States when we return. It is for the benefit of the Red Cross.

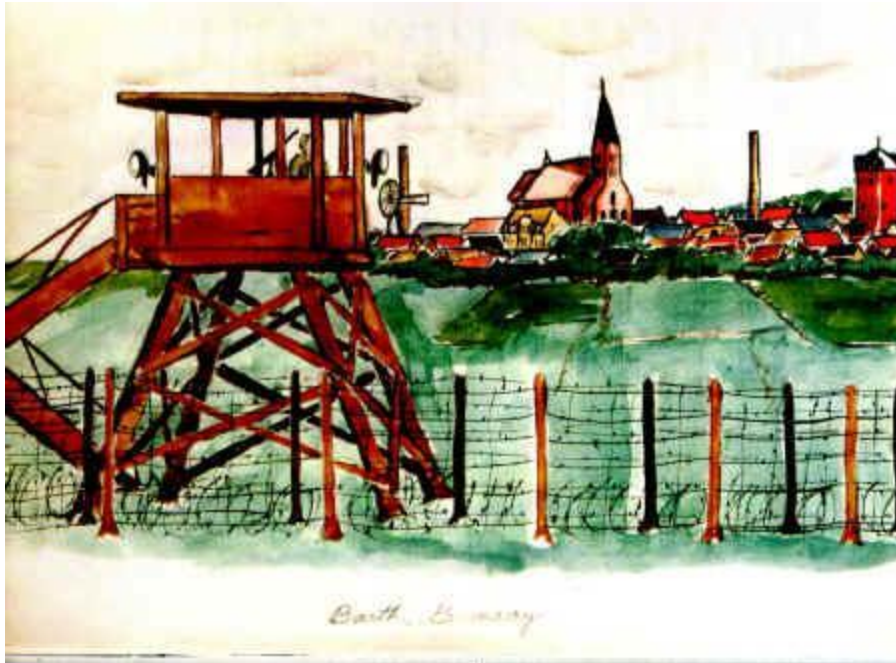
Lt. Robert Dean
Stalag Luft 1 Memoir¹⁰²



B-17 Model

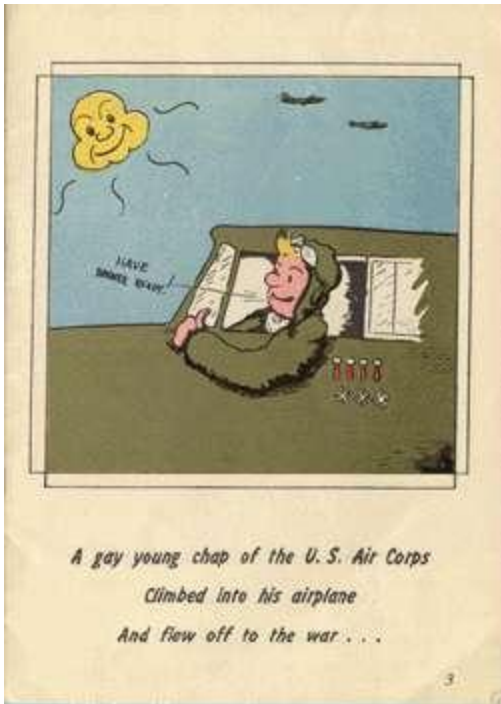
This was carved from bed slats. It is complete to crew members and the power-gun turrets are movable.

¹⁰² <https://458bg.com/combat-crews/mcmains/>



Barth Germany by Daniel McCarthy



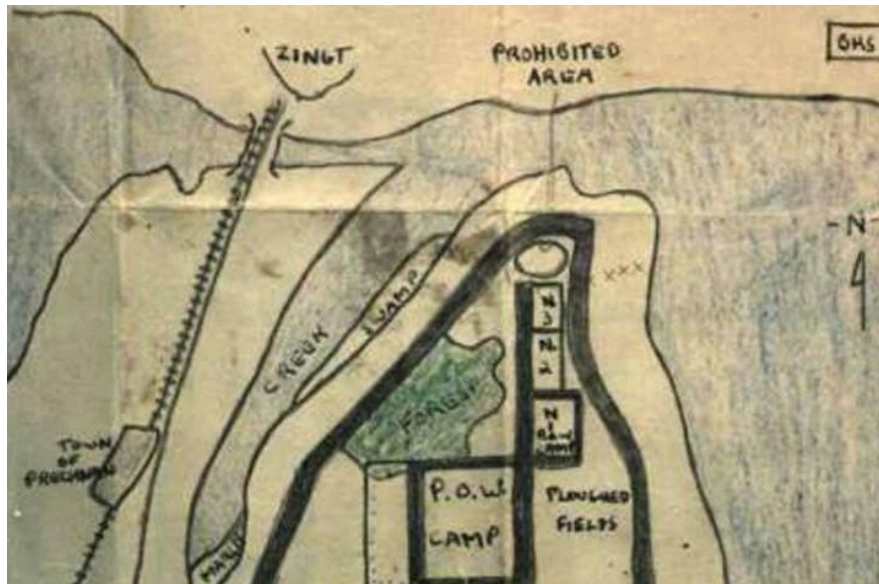


A Sad but True Story by Roger Wilco¹⁰³

¹⁰³ Lt. Kenneth C. Reimer (KG 4452)

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹⁰⁴
Monday, July 24 1944

Dearest wife - No mail since the first one but I'm still getting enjoyment out of that one by reading it at least once a day. I'm still feeling fine and everything is ok. A few days ago some of us were given a *Parole* for a few hours and allowed to go swimming in the ocean. It was a grand feeling - plus a great relaxation.



Good Swimming Here¹⁰⁵

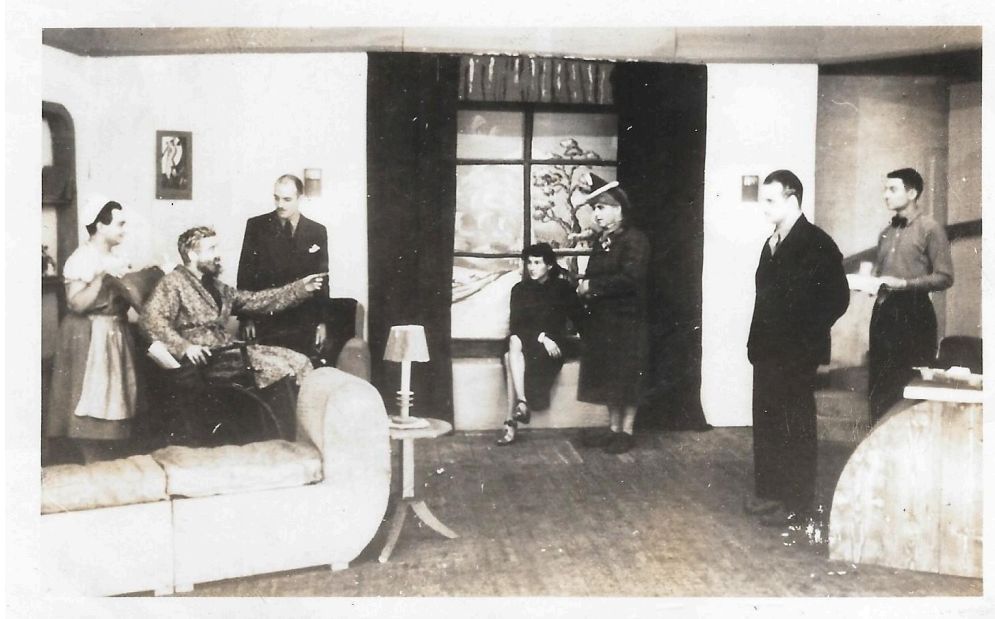
The next day, we had movies again - *George Washington Slept Here* - good for a few laughs. Yesterday, I saw *Waiting for Lefty* - put on by the dramatic club - very good. The above, plus the fact that there is always a ball game, is proof that time does not hang heavy on our hands. By now you should have received some of my mail - don't forget to make plans for our future. I love you my darling more than words can say - please take good care of yourself - for me - Butch, and remember always that I love you very much. Lenny¹⁰⁶

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)

¹⁰⁴ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

¹⁰⁵ The best swimming is in the large bay to the East of POW North 3. There is also decent swimming in the Creek which also empties into the same lagoon.

¹⁰⁶ Written in capital letters.



The official¹⁰⁷ photograph of the play performed by Lenny's fellow POWs



The empty stage from the set of the play Lenny's fellow POWs¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁷ Labeled by Sylvia Geetter Levy as *Propaganda Photo* issued by Germany

¹⁰⁸ Image from <http://merkki.com/swartzrobert.htm>

We tried to entertain ourselves and pass the time. There were organized productions. Each compound had its own orchestra and dramatic organization. The orchestra, glee club, solo musicians and comedians all gave two fine variety shows... North 2 hosted the drama productions. The first was a variety show and the other was a fine job on *The Man Who Came To Dinner*. The orchestras were quite capable considering the difficulties they encountered. The kriegie orchestra produced all their own arrangements and even found time to compose a few songs as well. Each new show seemed to feature a new song.

Lt. Robert R. Swartz
Prisoner of War, Stalag Luft 1¹⁰⁹



Photos of Drama production - Stalag Luft 1 (Barth, Germany)

¹⁰⁹ <http://merkki.com/swartzrobert.htm>

Lenny's Logbook¹¹⁰

August, 1944

Events

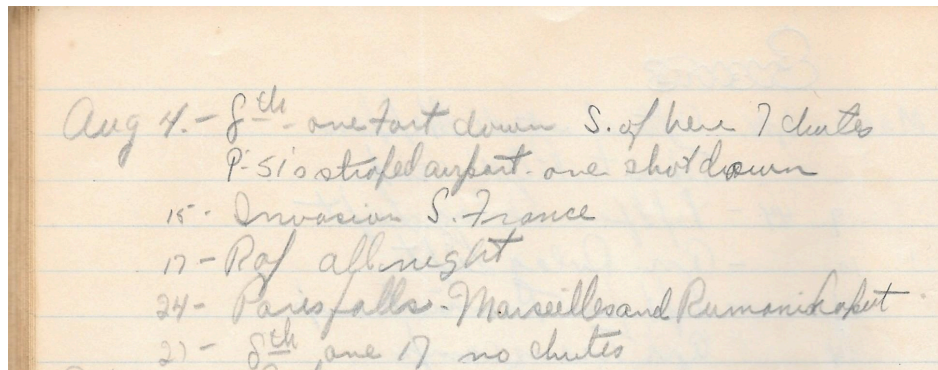
August 4, 1944 – 8th [overhead]¹¹¹ one Fort¹¹²[ress] down S[outh] of here 7 [para]chutes

- P-51s strafed airport - one shot down

August 15, 1944 – Invasion S. France

August 17, 1944 – RAF all night

August 24, 1944 – Paris falls - Marseille and Rumania kaput



August 4, 1944 – 8th [overhead]¹¹³ one Fort[ress] down S[outh] of here 7 [para]chutes

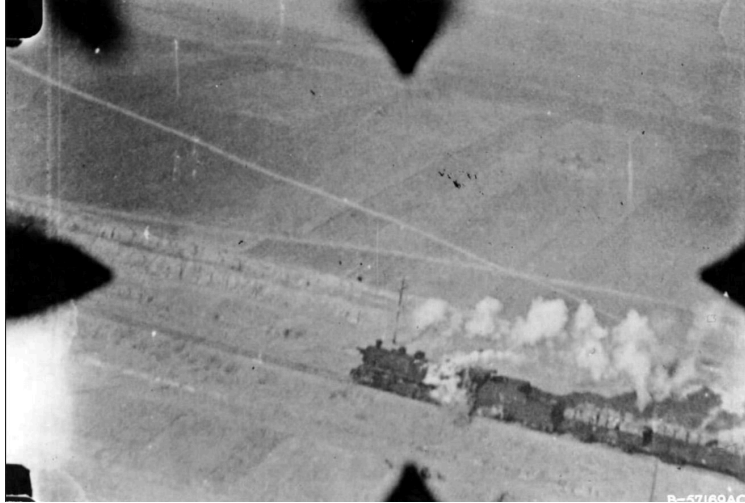
- P-51s strafed airport - one shot down

¹¹⁰This document comes from a blue, paper covered composition, more than half filled with blank pages, and measuring 6.75" by 7.875."

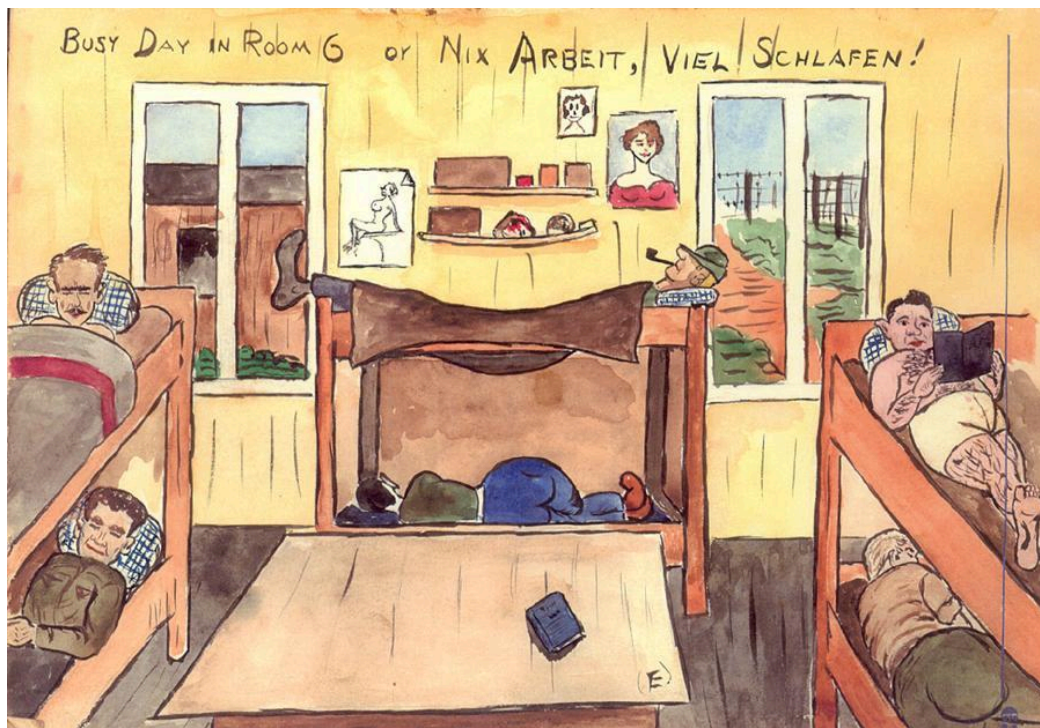
¹¹¹ Eighth Air Force as the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe. This is a note that on this day, Lenny saw planes, probably in formation flying overhead.

¹¹² A Flying Fortress (B-17G) like Lenny navigated, was seen going down South of the camp.

¹¹³ Eighth Air Force as the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe. This is a note that on this day, Lenny saw planes, probably in formation flying overhead.



PF-51 gun sight of a speeding train



Best Day in Room 6, or Nix Arbeit, Viel Schlafen¹¹⁴!

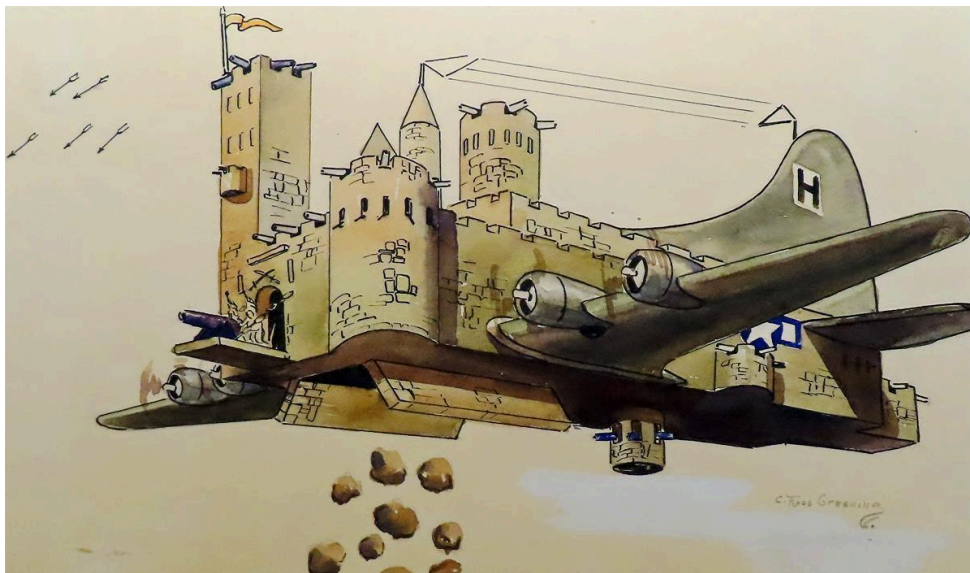
Art by Stalag Luft 1 POW Lt. Charles L. Early

¹¹⁴ No work, a lot of sleep

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹¹⁵
Monday, July 24 1944

Dearest wife - Another month brings another quota of letters, and enables me to write to you again and to assure you once more that I'm feeling fine and still in good health. The weather - cold for a while - has turned warm and the sunbathers are out in full force. Last week we held an arts and crafts exhibit - it's surprising what some fellows can do with limited supplies. I deeply regret not having any talent along that line. Some new fellows were brought in the other day and once again we have caught up with the outside world - including the latest antics of *Lil Abner*. The mail situation has slowed down again and I'm *sweating out* your second letter. Rumor has it that packages came in - maybe I'll be one of the lucky ones this time. Keep your hopes up my darling and think only of the future and always remember that I love you. Lenny¹¹⁶

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



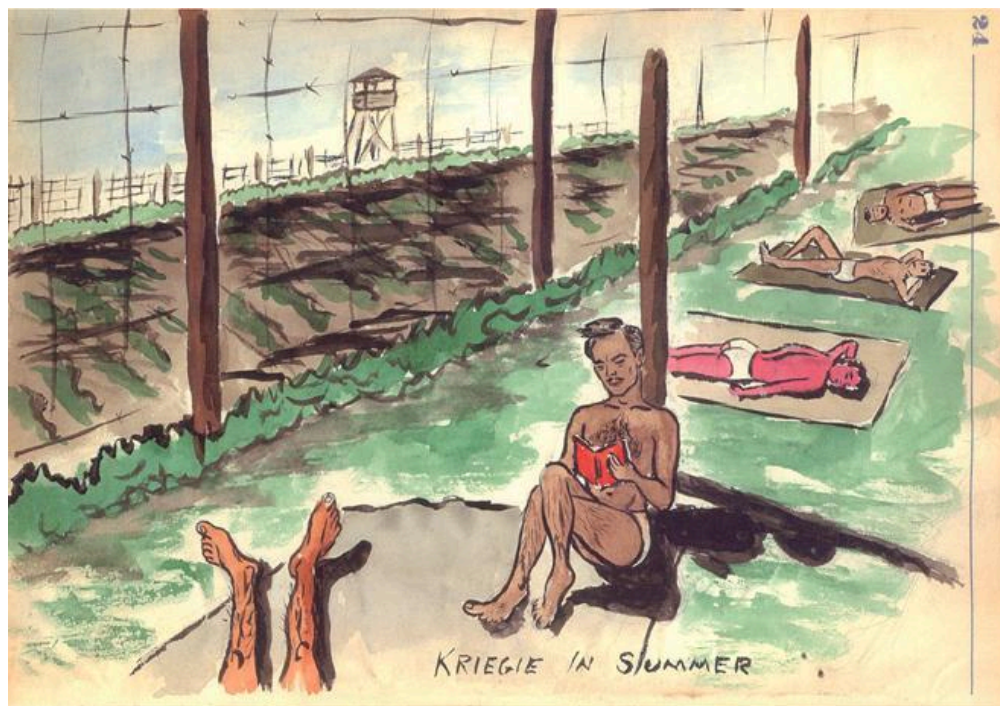
Art by Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening¹¹⁷

Flying Fortress, 1944

¹¹⁵ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

¹¹⁶ Written in script.

¹¹⁷ Charles Ross Greening was the second highest ranking American officer at Stalag Luft 1. His Log was recently discovered and published.



Kriegie in Summer

Art by Stalag Luft 1 POW Lt. Charles L. Early

Operation Dragoon

August 15, 1944

August 15, 1944 – Invasion S. France



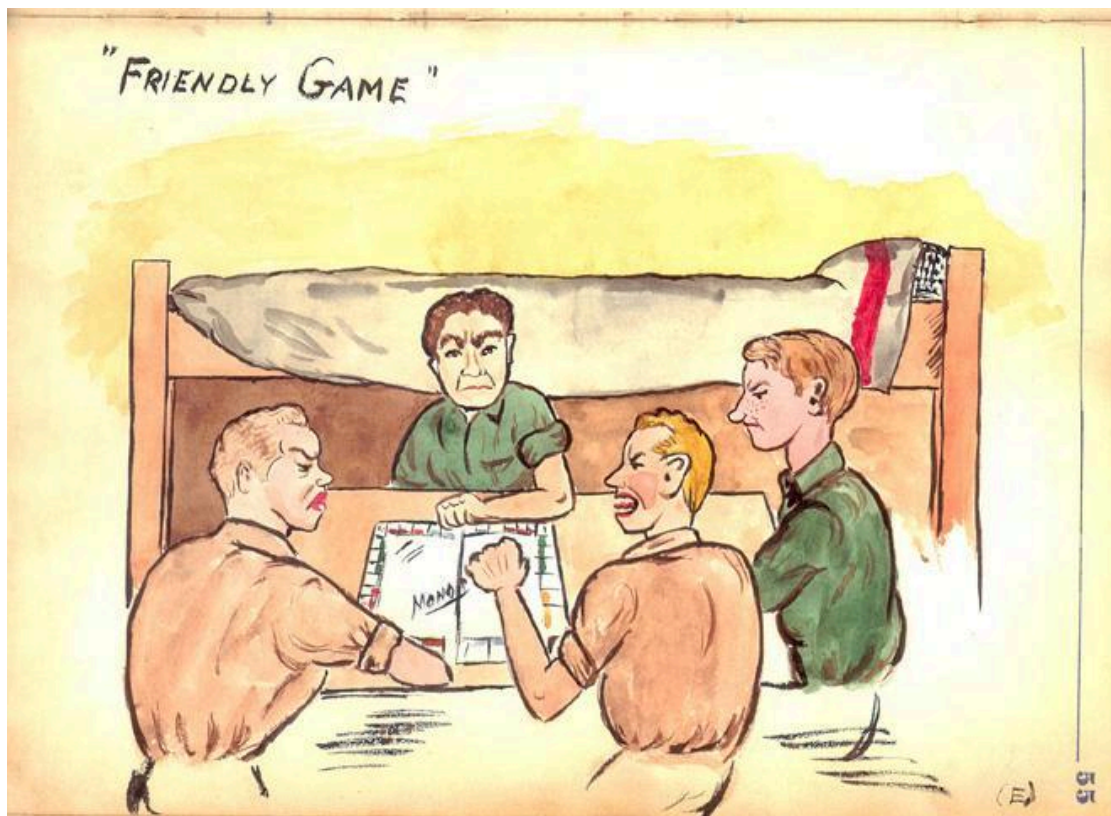
Operation Dragoon (initially Operation Anvil), was the code name for the landing operation of the Allied invasion of Provence on 15 August 1944. Although initially designed to be executed in conjunction with Operation Overlord, the June 1944 Allied landing in Normandy, the lack of enough resources led to the cancellation of the second landing.

By July 1944 the landing was reconsidered, as the clogged-up ports in Normandy did not have the capacity adequately to supply the Allied forces. Concurrently, the high command of the French Liberation Army pushed for a revival of the operation, which would involve large numbers of French troops. As a result, the operation was finally approved in July to be executed in August.

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹¹⁸
Monday, August 18 1944

Dearest wife - A few more lines to let you know that I'm still in good health and getting along fine. Time spent in plans for the future passes fast. Life consists of eating, sleeping and playing Monopoly - I am getting fat! Butch, my darling I love you very much - Take good care of yourself and don't worry. I love you, Lenny

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



Friendly Game

Art by Stalag Luft 1 POW Lt. Charles L. Early

¹¹⁸ Prisoner-of-war camps.

Cards were the most popular form of individual entertainment. The decks of playing cards in the YMCA parcels were a most welcome addition to our stock. Bridge, cribbage and Euchre were the most popular games. In addition to cards, chess, "chop", and checkers were other popular games.

When the weather permitted most available areas were the scene of some athletic contest. The YMCA furnished sporting goods and it was constantly in use. Playing catch, softball, football and volleyball were most popular. There were golf clubs available, so golfers devised balls and laid out a course.

Lt. Robert R. Swartz
Prisoner of War, Stalag Luft 1¹¹⁹



Lt. Lenny Levy
Stalag 1 Athletic Director

¹¹⁹ <http://merkki.com/swartzrobert.htm>

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹²⁰
Sunday, August 20 1944

Dearest wife - A few lines to let you know that I received two more letters One from you telling of your new job and one from mom there is nothing like getting mail here- please Butch write often and long. I am in the best of health. I love you, Lenny

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



Art by Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening¹²¹

Arrival at Stalag-Luft 1, 1945

¹²⁰ Prisoner-of-war camps.

¹²¹ Charles Ross Greening was the second highest ranking American officer at Stalag Luft 1. His Log was recently discovered and published.

Paris Falls

August 24, 1944

August 24, 1944 – Paris falls - Marseille and Rumania kaput

"All the News That's Fit to Print"

The New York Times.

LATE CITY EDITION
Publishers, ending before noon; clearing, after 10:30 today.
Temporarily suspended: Mon., Wed., Fri., Sat.
Phone: 410 A. N. 1000, 1010 A. N. 1000

VOL. XCIII, No. 34,841
NEW YORK, THURSDAY, AUGUST 24, 1944
THREE CENTS NEW YORK CITY

PARIS IS FREED; RUMANIA QUITS; MARSEILLE AND GRENOBLE WON; GERMAN FLIGHT NEARS A ROUT

BREAK IN BALKANS

King Proclaims Nation's Surrender and Wish to Help Allies

NAZIS IN AREA FIGHT

New Bucharest Regime Asks United Nations Aid Against Hungry

By DANIEL T. BRIGMAN
Bucharest, Aug. 23.—In a brief proclamation to the Rumanian people broadcast from Bucharest at 9:35 a.m. this morning, King Michael of Rumania ordered the armed forces to cease fire against the forces of the Allies, saying he had accepted their terms of unconditional surrender in the name of the nation.

The youthful king called on the nation to take up the fight immediately by the side of the Soviet forces on the Eastern front against their common enemy, Germany.

France and apparently Austria was the active participant in the German attack on Rumania, for when the Rumanian army was ordered to surrender at Bucharest, it was the regular broadcast at 8:34 P. M., while thirty seconds before the German attack on the town of Bucharest, German soldiers were ordered to take up the battle of Bucharest.

President Tells Delegates 'Four of Us' Can Keep Peace

Staying Friends and Meeting Often May Mean Generations Without War, He Says—Washington Studies U. S. Plan

By JAMES H. BRYSON
Washington, Aug. 23.—President Roosevelt told delegates to the Washington Conference today that if the United States, Soviet Russia and Great Britain could maintain their new and close friendship and spread that friendship around the world, "we may have a peaceful period for our grandchildren to grow up in."

Speaking informally to the delegates at the White House during a recess in their plans to draft an effective security league, Mr. Roosevelt seemed to emphasize the special responsibility of the great powers in maintaining peace, by the use of force if necessary.

"We have got to make sure, peace is a peace that will last," the President said, "and a peace in which the larger nations speak."

The President's remarks are on Page 13.

FRENCH TAKE PORT

Pockets of Resistance Are Being Cleared Up in Marseille

ARMY JUNCTION SEEN

American Dash Inland Said to Have Carried to Annecy, Near Border

By the Associated Press
Marseille, Aug. 23.—Marseille, France's second city and greatest port, fell to the swift onslaught of French infantry and armor today as American forces moved inland from the Mediterranean and were within less than 100 miles of a junction with Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's legions before liberated Paris.

Only eight days after the landings in southern France the captured French battered their way into the heart of Marseille against eight divisions and fought way through pockets of last-ditch resistance.

The unexpectedly easy capture of the great port across the Bonifacio Strait an adequate proof of spirit and reinforcements for speedy confirmation of the threat toward southern France. Prior to the city's fall, other French troops had cut the last escape route for the Germans.

HAILING THE LIBERATION OF PARIS



Lily Pons leads the gathering in Rockefeller Plaza in singing "The Marseillaise"

PARISIANS ROUT FOR

50,000 FFI Troops With Civilians' Aid Battle Germans 4 Days

POLICE HELP REBELS

Turn le de la Cite Into Fortress—Casualties Among People High

By RAYMOND DANIEL
Paris, Aug. 23.—Paris is free again and, because of that, the rest of the world can breathe a little more freely. In a manner befitting a capital with a long history and traditions of Paris, its own citizens ran and drove off the French police as soon as their own troops and the Allies' armies of liberation had given them the opportunity to challenge their conquerors on equal terms.

In leaving it to the French themselves to maintain the order, the Allies were following a policy that was both satisfactory and politically sound.

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower's columns were able to continue their westward sweep unimpeded by the need for pausing to mop up, and France, which was backed out of the war, which was backed out of the war, which was backed out of the war.

RED ARMY SPEEDS DEEP INTO RUMANIA

47 RAILROADS SUED AS WESTERN TRUST

Sentry and Akkerman Taken—Polish Plane Center Falls

J. P. Morgan & Co., Kuhn, Loeb and Two Associates

GRIMNESS TINGES JOY OF FRENCH HERE

Concern for Kin and Thoughts of Tasks Ahead Mingle With

French Armored Division Sent Into Paris by Bradley

The following dispatch by a representative of the Columbia Broadcasting System, the first American correspondent to enter Paris, was added to London and broadcast from there.

By CHARLES COLLINGSWOOD

August 24, 1944 – Paris falls



Crowds line the Champs Elysees to view the Free French forces of General Leclerc's 2nd Armored Division pass through the Arc de Triomphe

RUMANIA QUIT! JOINS ALLIES !!!

POWWOW

Volume VI, Number 2

Stalag Luft I

August 24, 1944

3

FRANCE PATRIOT FORCES TREW OFF THE MANTLE OF ALIEN OPPRESSION TODAY AND PARIS ONCE AGAIN BECAME THE CAPITAL OF AN ALLIED NATION. AFTER MORE THAN FIVE YEARS OF GERMAN OCCUPATION, THE CITY OF FRANCE WAS RETURNED TO ITS OWNERS -- AND THE BOB WAS DONE BY ITS OWNERS.

The city of Paris, which in 1940 has been fully redeemed, and French fighting men have seized their capital from the German Occupation Forces. This spectacular news followed after four days of heavy street battling throughout the city.

At the end of the battle was victorious. All Vichy officials and all German Occupation authorities and their troops have been arrested. French Interior Forces are in complete control of the entire city.

Orders have been issued by the Free French authorities over Paris Radio that a full-scale uprising is to begin immediately over the whole of France.

Announcing this historic news, an Allied spokesman declared today from London:

"Paris has suffered the humiliation of being occupied by the enemy for four years and two months and now -- by the patience and courage of the French people -- has regained its freedom."

THE SECOND OF NAZIDOM'S SATELLITE AL-LIES, THE OIL - AND GRAIN - RICH NATION OF RUMANIA, HAS THROWN IN THE TOWEL AND JOINED FORCES WITH THE UNITED NATIONS.

A Royal Proclamation, read over Bucharest Radio early this morning, declared that all of Rumania's resources are to be placed at the disposal of Britain, the United States and Russia -- for use against Germany.

Following the example of Italy, which surrendered little over one year ago, Rumania has officially surrendered to the Allies and Nazi Germany has lost her most important Balkan ally.

Few details were yet available of the dramatic move which closely paralleled the defection of the Kaiser's allies in the final months of the last World War. Most important fact so far to emerge is that Germany's position in the whole of south eastern Europe is now seriously jeopardized.

Her hold on Hungary, Greece and Yugoslavia as well as her political control of Bulgaria are threatened as never before.

Her access to the last remaining oil stocks of Ploesti - frequently bombed by

(continued top col. 2, page 2)

American armored columns in central France kept pace with their French Allies by driving a 40-mile salient eastward from Etamps to the junction of the Seine and Yonne Rivers.

From here, said London, spearheads were advancing on Troyes, 85 miles south east of Paris and less than 150 miles from the German frontier.

The cross-Seine bridgehead was extended 15 miles northward to include the town of Pontoise and was deepened to nearly 15 miles eastward.

West of the river, Allied troops cleared nearly all of Normandy, capturing Lisieux and reaching the area of Louviers, 42 miles to the east and within a few miles of the Seine.

U.S. forces swept around the south of Paris to reach the River Marne, but up to last night no British or American units had yet entered the patriot-held capital.

In the first two and a half months of the Battle for France, announced General Eisenhower's communique, between three and four hundred thousand casualties have been inflicted on the Germans.

Up to the middle of this month, 250,000 casualties were known suffered by (continued top col. 1, page 2)

PARIS FALLS (cont)

German forces in north-western France. It is thus likely that the total of killed, wounded and captured in the Normandy trap was in the region of 75,000, remaining casualties having been inflicted on other sectors of the front.

FRENCH CAPTURE MARSEILLE

Mediterranean Hq., Aug. 23...Close on news of the fall of Paris, French Interior Headquarters dramatically announced today the capture of Marseille, second city and first port of France.

A week-long guerrilla battle has raged in and around the great southern French city and patriots have each day reported an increasing circular pressure.

This morning, before the city's capture was completed, Patriot Hq. announced that 475 Germans were killed and over 4,000 taken prisoner during yesterday alone.

Allied armored forces were meanwhile plunging northward through the Rhone River Valley. Mediterranean Hq. announced that one force has driven 119 miles north of the Rhone Estuary, emphasizing that this was not a flying column but a whole army advance.

This gain brought our units to within 30 miles of Lyons and abreast of Grenoble, both cities reportedly under control of French Interior Forces.

Seventeen thousand German prisoners have been taken during the first nine days of the invasion, added Gen. Wilson's communique, and steady progress continues along all other sectors of the rapidly deepening front.

A third invasion of France was reported today by Berlin Radio, locating the landing operations around St. Jean de Luz, only a few miles north of the Franco-Spanish frontier and on the Atlantic coast.

No Allied statement was made of the progress of intention of this force, but from the German announcement, the landing appeared on a relatively small scale. It is possibly an effort to prevent the Germans from effecting a wholesale withdrawal from the southwest of France without opposition or pressure.

SHORTER ITEMS FROM THE WORLD'S NEWS

Moscow - A further 40-mile stretch of the Vistula River's west bank has been cleared and Soviet bridgeheads considerably deepened and expanded. In Rumania yesterday (before that country's capitulation)

(continued middle next column)

RUMANIA CAPITULATES (cont)

the 15th USAAF -- and to the rich grain fields of Rumania is now decisively ended.

Rumania's move may also greatly influence the conduct of Germany's remaining allies of Bulgaria, Hungary and Finland whose contribution to the Axis war effort has been steadily lowered during the past months.

From a military point of view, Nazi forces in Serbia, Croatia, Albania and Greece are now three-quarters isolated from their mother country.

Young King Michael has issued a radio appeal to "all true Rumanians" to stand by the throne and to throw out the Germans. Nothing is yet known of the fate of Premier-Dictator Antonescu and his Fascist Iron Guard.

Only yesterday, reported 15th USAAF Hq., 1,200 planes from Italian bases hit targets through-out Rumania.

SHORTER ITEMS FROM THE NEWS (cont)

the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Ukrainian Armies were hammering southward without opposition. Gains of up to 40 miles south of Jassy were announced and 400 localities were claimed freed of German and Rumanian troops. Soviet pressure continued both in the Warsaw and far northern sectors of the East Front.

London -British warships, patrolling the French Atlantic coast, yesterday sank eight German ships between Brest and Lorient.

Italy Hq. -Allied air units of the Balkan command today evacuated over 900 wounded patriots from Yugoslavia to Italy.

Tokyo -The last 20th USAAF raid against the southern Jap island of Kuichi was carried out by 60 bombers Sunday night, announced a Jap communique. Ten were claimed downed.

Washington -President Roosevelt has returned to Washington after a 15,000 mile tour of the north and south Pacific.

Berlin -An interAllied Conference has opened in Washington, attended by representatives of Britain, Russia and the United States, to plan post-war international security.

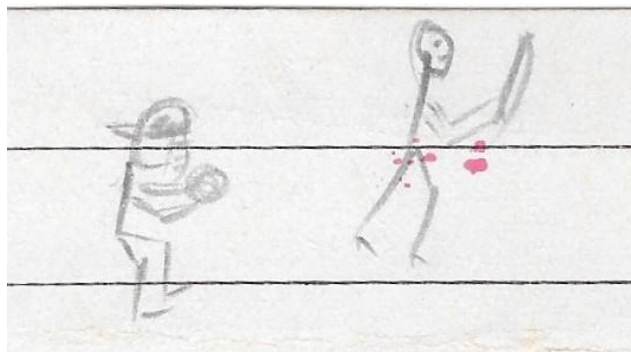
Berlin -Fifteenth USAAF bombers hit Vienna and un-named targets in Silesia during Tuesday. Fifty-seven planes were claimed down, U.S. Bomber Hq. admitted that "heavier air opposition than usual was encountered".

Berlin -Lord Mayor Goerdeler, implicated in the attempt on Hitler's life has been caught. But, Gen. Lindemann, another of the plotters, is still loose.

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹²²
Monday, August 25 1944

Dearest wife - It's been a long time since the last letter, but only because the supply of paper varies. My health is still the best and my tan is getting deeper every day - the weather is perfect. Time is still spent mainly at the ball diamond - either as a player (the Conn[ecticut] club has won and lost a game) or spectator. Once in a while, I umpire a game - thank God there are no bottles to be had to throw. No mail since Mom's letter, but it is starting to come in in bunches. So my hopes are high. By now, your plans for our future should be pretty definite - if not make haste. If you haven't already done so Butch, enclose a few pictures in your next letter - they are permissible - I miss you my darling with all my heart. Until I can once more hold you in my arms, remember I love you. Lenny¹²³

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



Baseball Doodle by 2nd Lt. Leonard Levy

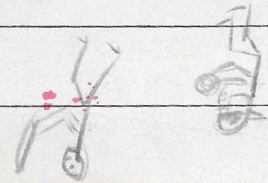
¹²² Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

¹²³ Signed - written in script.

Kriegsgefangenenlager

Datum: _____

MEALS



from a blank Kriege-card

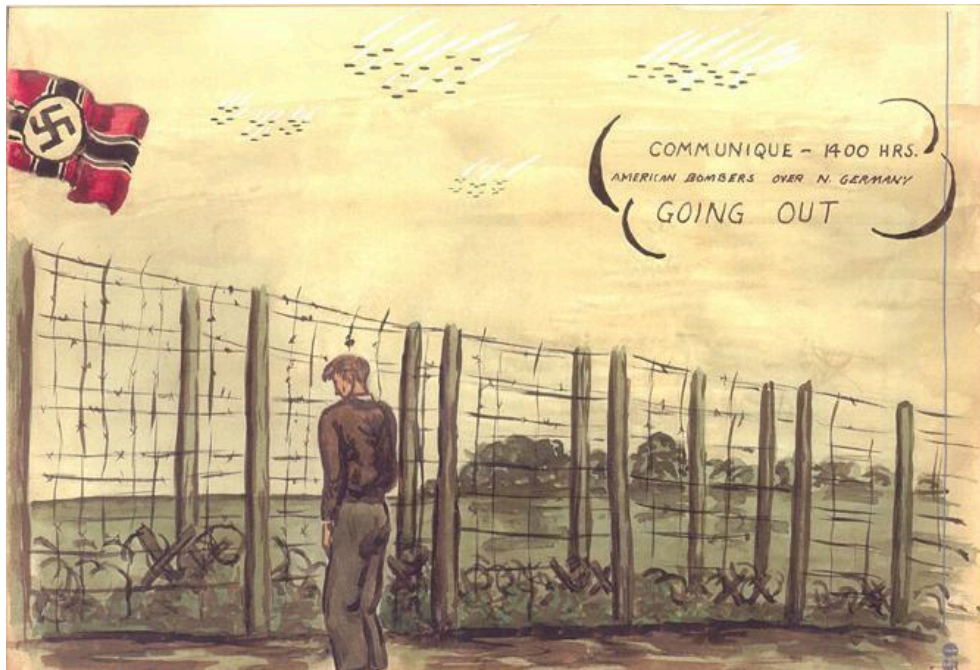
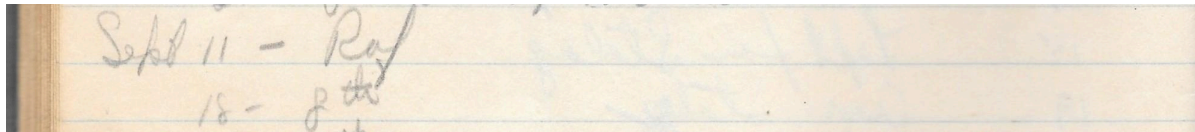
Lenny's Logbook¹²⁴

September, 1944

Events

September 11, 1944 – RAF (Royal Air Force)

September 18, 1944 – 8th [overhead]¹²⁵



Going Out

Art by Stalag Luft 1 POW Lt. Charles L. Early

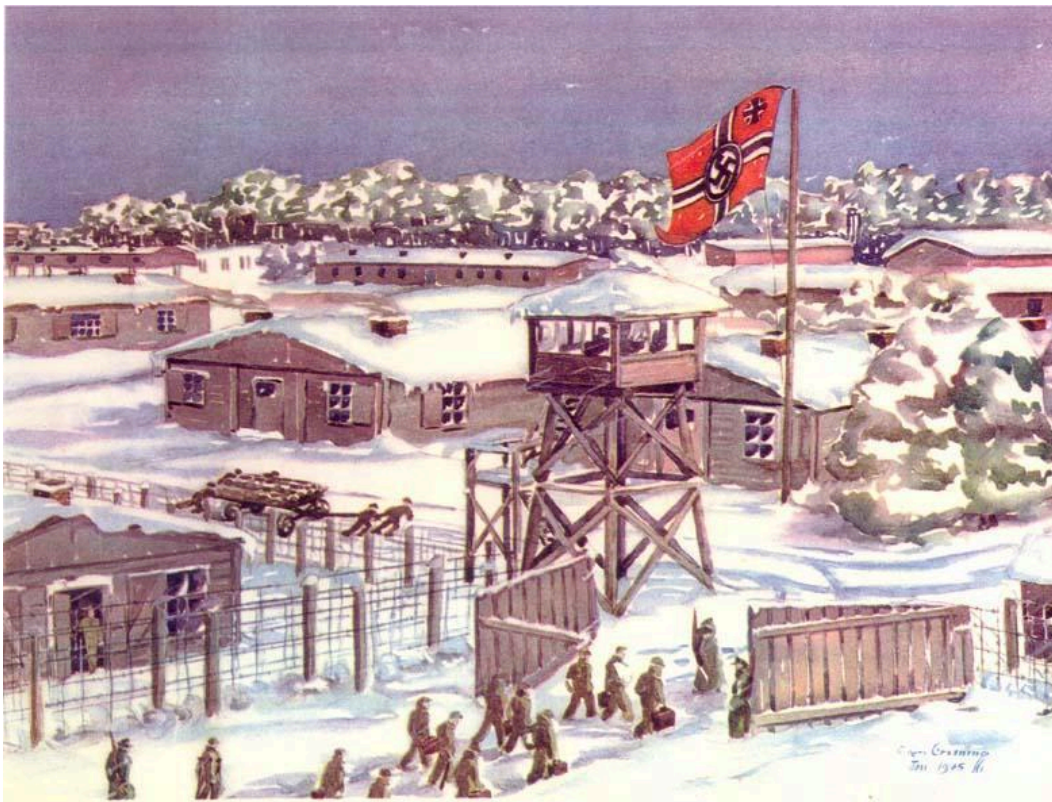
Another favorite activity in fair weather was walking. Of course barbed wire placed restrictions upon movement, but just inside the warning wire encircling the compound was a well-trodden, heavily traveled path. Our walks were full of exercise, but there was little of scenic value. The north and south sides offered nothing but views of other compounds. The

¹²⁴This document comes from a blue, paper covered composition, more than half filled with blank pages, and measuring 6.75" by 7.875."

¹²⁵ Eighth Air Force as the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe. This is a note that on this day, Lenny saw planes, probably in formation flying overhead.

west side furnished a small wooded area to break the monotony. Only the east side offered an interesting panorama. To the southeast was the village of Barth. The town was dominated by the large, square, solid rather grotesque, poor, gothic church. The only other object to break the roof line was an old steel windmill. North of Barth was a factory featuring a large cement smoke stack, which often reminded me of the paper mill at home. Due east and to the northeast was the bay and the two peninsulas in the distance.

Lt. Robert R. Swartz
Prisoner of War, Stalag Luft 1¹²⁶



Entering Camp

Art by Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening¹²⁷

¹²⁶ <http://merkki.com/swartzrobert.htm>

¹²⁷ Charles Ross Greening was the second highest ranking American officer at Stalag Luft 1. His Log was recently discovered and published.

"The Only Truthful Newspaper in Germany"

POW WOW

Volume VI, Number 21

Staling Luft I

September 12, 1944

ALLIES INSIDE GERMANY

.....AMERICAN TANKS PUNCHED A THIRTY-MILE STRAIGHT THROUGH ENEMY DEFENSES YESTERDAY TO DRIVE FIVE MILES ONTO GERMAN SOIL. ALLIED FIGHTINGMEN WERE GAINED AGAIN TO TOP SPEED, AFTER A THREE-DAY PAUSE TO REINFORCE AND REGROUP, AND THE MARCH TO BERLIN WAS BEGUN.

GREAT DAY & NIGHT RAIDS AGAINST GERMANY

London, Sept. 12.....Powerful, round the clock air assaults were kept up during the past 72 hours across the whole breadth of the breached German fortress.

Sunday night, a RAF armada pumelled the industrial Rhine town of Darmstadt, while squadrons of Mosquitos harassed the Berlin area.

During Monday, the greatest force of RAF bombers ever launched in a daylight attack struck at three synthetic oil plants in the Ruhr.

Simultaneously, over 1,000 American Fords and Libs, supported by hundreds of fighters, pounded oil targets throughout the Reich.

Aerial opposition against the American force was stiff; 175 interceptors were shot down and 77 of our planes were missing.

Fifteenth Air Force heavies were out over Hungary and southern Germany at the same time, but met considerably lighter resistance.

RAF tactical bombers and fighter-bombers, and 9th USAAF aircraft, meanwhile screened the northwest German sky and low-level attacks were carried out up and down the Rhine and in the Ruhr.

Last night, strong RAF forces kept up the unprecedented air blows with attacks across the north and northeast of Germany. Targets for these raids have not yet been announced.

The strategic raids being carried out by heavy bomber forces into Germany do not decrease the tactical support given out ground troops along the Nazi frontier. Groups of U.S. and RAF bombers are almost continuously over the battle-area.

Locale of the break-through across the old German frontier was disclosed to be immediately northwest of Trier.

Allied front reporters wired the amazing news that "the Germans are fleeing before us....blowing up bridges and mining roads..."

Although our forces were so far only five miles inside the Reich, and had not yet reached the Siegfried Line, the report revealed a gain of 30 miles within 24 hours. For it was only yesterday that advanced U.S. spearheads rolled in to the capital of Luxembourg.

British 2nd Army forces achieved a no less important though hardly as historic gain yesterday smashing the German defenses along the Albert Canal in northern Belgium. By last night, British reconnaissance units had pushed "well into Holland", although the exact locality was not identified.

Simultaneously, patrols of the American 3rd Army joined up with Gen Patch's 7th Army south of Troyes. The Allied front through easternmost France and Belgium was now one continuous line, stretching from the Swiss frontier to above the Dutch-Belgian frontier.

French troops of the 7th Army have wiped out a pocket of Germans near Dijon and other units have cut the last road from the south into the Belfort Gap where the Germans are making a stand.

On the Channel coast, Canadian troops have expanded their bridgehead across the Ghent Canal and Polish troops effected a new crossing. Twelve thousand more prisoners were taken in this area yesterday.

American 3rd Army forces are heavily engaged with strong enemy forces along the Moselle front between Metz and Nancy and the position at this point is momentary.

(continued on p. 1, page 21)

ALLIES INSIDE GERMANY (continued)

varily a stalemate.

United Kingdom troops gained high ground immediately north and overlooking the city of Le Havre where the German garrison was still holding out.

In Brest, the Breton port, street-to-street fighting was going on and Allied observers declared that this city's fall may be regarded as imminent.

The Channel ports of Boulogne, Calais and Dunkirk still resisted although all were individually isolated and their reduction was equally only a matter of time.

Ostende, reiterated London, was firmly in British hands, and the German claim to be evacuating a trapped army northward to the Scheldt estuary was therefore proved false. The increasing number of prisoners coming into British and Canadian hands was also a reliable clue that the German escape-route is barred and mopping-up was in progress.

German newspapers yesterday had no news of the new Allied offensive into Germany and Holland as it began only a short time before their publication.

But summaries of the situation immediately before the attacks opened indicated the enemy expected an imminent resumption of the full-scale offensive.

One Berlin newspaper declared, "the situation in the west is at present in a state of flux...it is not stagnant, but there is not yet a great enemy offensive. But it should be acknowledged that the present battles are leading up to a great Allied offensive...."

A London report was quoted in the German paper, declaring "the Germans were able to reorganize their defenses because the four Allied armies are too far distant from their supply bases..." Another reported, "the Germans have formed a new defense line along the Moselle, as a result of our supply difficulties, and are disputing every yard of ground. The Germans have brought up reinforcements and are offering heavy artillery fire." Another German report claimed that the air attacks against Le Havre had killed 1,300 French civilians but that only 16 Germans had lost their lives and 34 were wounded.

French patriot forces, said Berlin, sent an ultimatum to the fortress of La Rochelle (on the French Atlantic coast) but it was refused and fighting continues. This is evidently one of the few areas where the Germans were not able to evacuate in time to escape the junction of the 3rd and 7th Armies at Troyes.

SOVIET PATROL ENTERS EAST PRUSSIA

Moscow, Sept. 12..... A Red Army reconnaissance force crossed the East Prussian frontier yesterday, carrying out an extensive patrol, then withdrew to the main Soviet lines only a few miles east of the border.

All other sectors of the East Front were quiet, although Berlin reported spasmodic Soviet attacks all along the line.

Tito's Guerrilla Army, marching east to meet the Soviets at the junction of the Serbian-Rumania frontier, cleared several more towns and villages in northern Serbia yesterday.

In the Rumanian province of Transylvania, Soviet forces cleared more roads on the way to Klausenberg in southern Hungary.

Berlin reported more terms of the Russo-Rumanian armistice today. The Rumanian Army is being disbanded and formed into labor battalions to reap the harvest and the Rumanian province of Moldavia is to become a Soviet republic.

Bulgaria's armistice terms were quoted by Berlin as (1) a complete occupation of the country by Russian troops, (2) all Bulgarian shipping to make port immediately, (3) all political and war prisoners to be released immediately, (4) all anti-Jewish laws to be annulled, and (5) a large war indemnity is to be paid to Russia.

SHORTER ITEMS FROM THE WORLD'S NEWS

Italy Hq. - The towns of Prato and Pistoia, northwest of Florence, have been captured by the 5th Army. Heavy fighting continues near Rimini.

Pacific Hq. - A U.S. naval and air task force attacked the Philippines last week, wiping out an entire Jap convoy of 52 vessels and destroying 68 Jap planes. Tokyo reported heavy air attacks against Mindanao, Palau and Yap Islands, claiming 32 planes destroyed. Tokyo also reported another B-29 raid against southern Manchuria, claiming 40 bombers for a loss of 6 fighters.

London - One RAF pilot chalked up a total of 60 "kills" against the German rocket-bombs (or "doodle-bugs" as known in London) and one night-fighter squadron accounted for 212 during the raids. Heaviest hit sections of London were Croydon, Lewisham and Beckenham.

Quebec - Attending the 2nd Quebec Conference, which will plan the destruction of Japan as the 100 planned Germany's end are nearly all the British and American staff chiefs with Churchill and F.D.R.

Hartford Times

September 15, 1944

back furiously from long pre-
pared defenses.

American battleships, cruisers
and supporting warships of the
Pacific Fleet stood offshore bom-
barding the Japanese shore in-
stallations, while carrier-based
aircraft dive-bombed and strafed
the enemy in close support of the
advancing ground troops.

MacArthur's men on Morotai
also went in under a powerful
day.

Chungking— (AP) —Chinese
forces in north Burma and
Yunnan province have established
contact somewhere in Yunnan
and the Chinese now are in
control of trail between
Yina and Tengchung, a Chinese
army spokesman announced to-
day.

Nazis Attack Finn Isle; Troops Clash in North

Stockholm —(UP)— War be-
tween German and Finnish troops,
actual if undeclared, was reported
today to have broken out in
northern Finland and on an island
off the south coast.

A Finnish communique said a
German amphibious force attacked
the island of Hogland in the Gulf
of Finland last night. Fighting
was in progress on the island to-
day, it said, after the Nazis estab-
lished a small bridgehead despite
the sinking of nine of their inva-
sion ships.

Reliable sources later reported
that fighting had broken out be-
tween the Germans and Finns in
northern Finland. Three Ger-
man divisions in the Salla area
were reported partly enveloped by
Russian troops. Informants said
their fate depended on the de-
velopment of Finnish military
measures in North Finland
against the Nazis.

Notables at Times

250 Attend Opening Of Landmark; Baldwin Among Many Speakers

Formal opening of The Times
Tower and grounds atop Talcott
Mountain, yesterday, brought to-
gether 250 prominent newspaper



Kriegsgefangenenlager¹²⁸
Friday, September 15 1944

Dearest wife - Received two more letters from you yesterday and once again my morale has reached a high point. Mail is the bright light in our lives here Butch, so urge everybody to write. I am still in the best of health, and there is no need for you to worry - just take good care of yourself, my darling, for I love you so very much, Butch. The weather has turned cold and consequently I'm spending more time inside - this however enables me to work on my log¹²⁹ - a gift from the YMCA, in which I hope to keep a record of my stay here. By this time, Marge¹³⁰ no doubt has her hands full - are they twins? Your frequent change of jobs has me confused. I do hope you found something to your liking - don't forget some pictures in your next letter. Regards to everybody, and all my love to you. Goodnight my darling I love you Lenny¹³¹

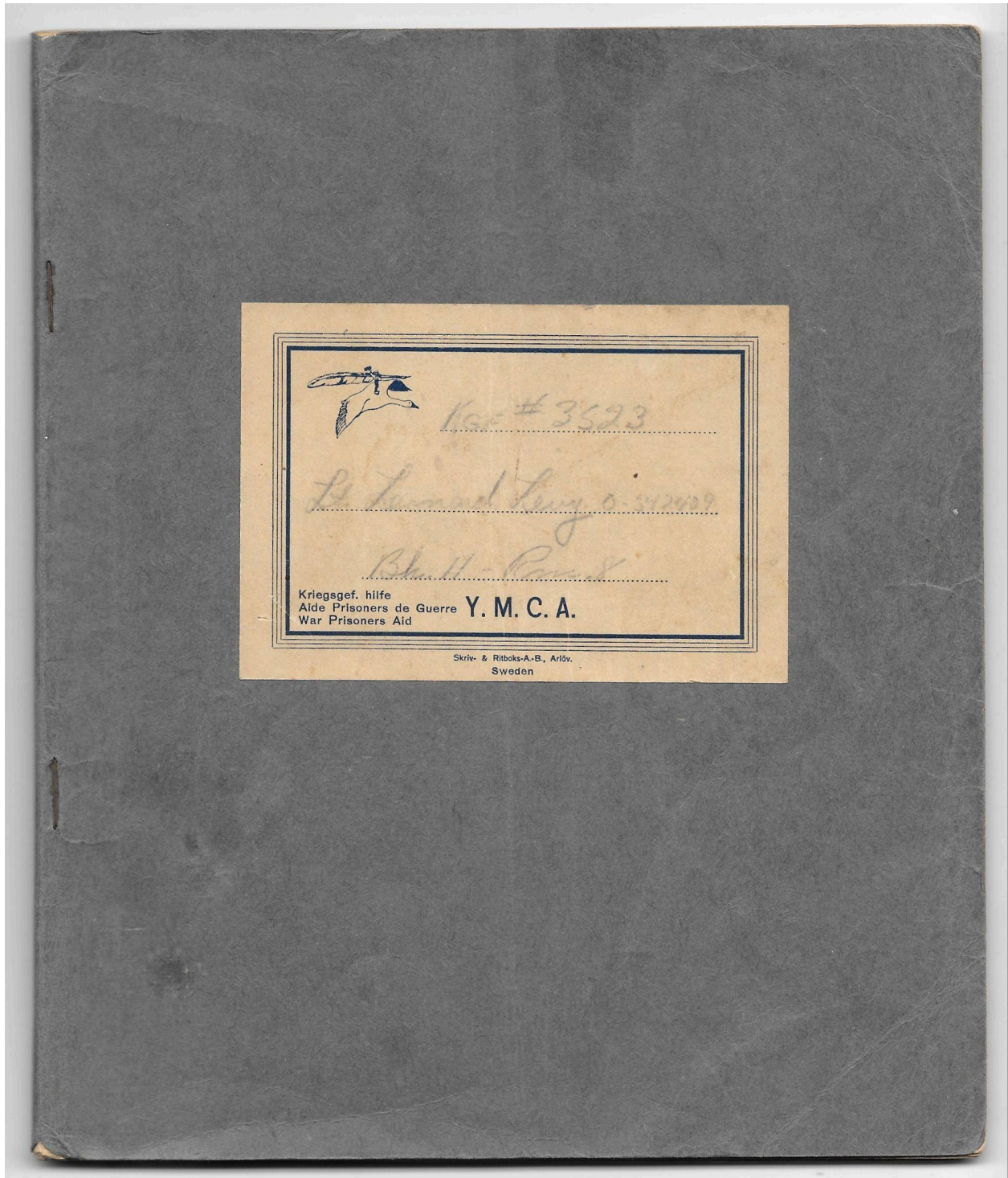
Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)

¹²⁸ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

¹²⁹ Lenny would have treasured the Log if only it held 150 bank pages, as it did. 'A Wartime Log - A Remembrance From Home Through The American Y.M.C.A.' Published by The Prisoners' Aid Of The Y.M.C.A., Geneva, Switzerland. These **hard-backed** books were sent into Prisoner of War camps inside Red Cross parcels by the YMCA and were intended to help keep those occupants busy and entertained during their incarceration. The diary provided space for stories, drawings and paintings, poems, lyrics, photographs, clippings and so on. This is the American version with red blocked title and liberty bell on the front cover. Marked with the owner's name but otherwise blank bar an inserted sheet with various autographs/signatures.

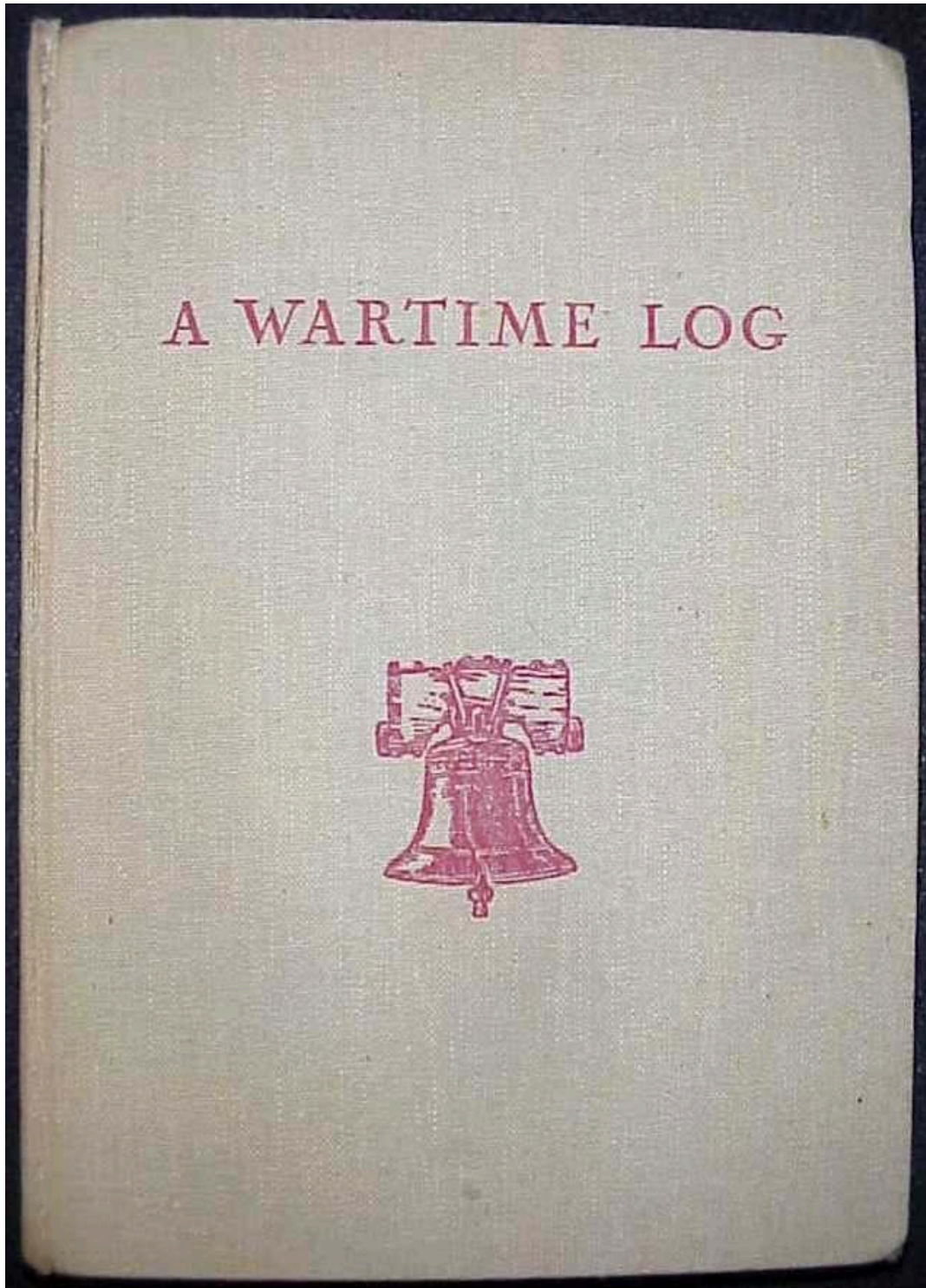
¹³⁰ Lenny's sister-in-law Marjorie (Margie) Levy is married to N. Norman Levy, recently gave birth to twin boys and lives with his parents at 108 Colebrook St. in Hartford, Connecticut.

¹³¹ Signed - written in script.



Lenny's soft-covered, composition, Log

On label: Barracks #11 - Room #8



The Hardcover Log¹³²

¹³² Lenny received a hardcover log - others from Stalag 1 are cherished heirlooms.. It probably contained daily - and lengthy - letters to Sylvia. Perhaps Lenny used his soft-covered book for the sketchy List of Dates, First Day Meals and the one lengthy -after-liberation entry it contains. Unfortunately, the hardcover book never made it back to the USA.

"The Only Truthful Newspaper in Germany"

POW WOW

Volume VI, Number 24

Stalag Luft I

September 16,

SIEGFRIED BREACHED

ELDED SUPPOSE HQ., SEPTEMBER 16.....Yank fighting-men burst through the vaunted Siegfried Defense line on the German frontier yesterday, shattering its chain of gun emplacements and encircling the city of Aachen, announced Gen. Eisenhower's Headquarters. Nazi's last perimeter defense has been breached. The road to the Rhine and Hitler's industry-packed Ruhr lies before our armies.

GREAT NEW LANDINGS IN PACIFIC

Pacific Hq., Sept. 15.....American amphibious forces struck westward towards the Philippines today with two great landings on Palau and Yap Islands. Latest battleships of the U. S. Navy covered and prepared the landings, disclosed a communique from the joint headquarters of General Douglas MacArthur and Admiral Chester Nimitz.

The Japs were reportedly taken completely by surprise and initial losses were described as very light. No planes or ships were lost during the first 12 hours of the landings.

Admiral Chester Nimitz' Marine forces went ashore on Palau and Yap Islands, 1,200 and 750 miles respectively from our latest landings on Guam Island.

Simultaneously, U. S. Army forces went ashore on Marotí Island and Hamla-Hara, both further west towards the Philippines.

A naval and air assault unparalleled in the Pacific to date heralded the new amphibious operations. Five hundred Jap planes were destroyed and 173 vessels sunk or badly damaged in the terrific air-sea hammering preceding the landings.

Included in naval squadrons supporting the operation, disclosed Washington were America's latest battleships of the Wisconsin Class (57,000 tons).

The new landings brought American troops to less than a thousand miles from Manila, scene of military disasters in the first days of the war. The Japanese held on the Caroline Islands, including the naval base at Truk, is now completely encircled and our forces have jumped half-way to the Dutch East Indies.

American tank spearheads, under a sky dark with aerial artillery, punched thru the network of pill-boxes, traps and gun emplacements southeast of Aachen and nullified in a day the whole Nazi defense system on the western frontier.

Simultaneously, British and American divisions rumbled into Germany at a new point, capturing the Belgian city of Maastricht and crossing the border north of Aachen.

By nightfall, these forces were six miles inside the Reich and had linked up with U. S. units east of Aachen to encircle the city.

Allied Headquarters announced that our forces were on the outskirts of the city and London military observers declared its fall to be imminent.

The Gestapo has fled from this area, added front reports, and the Allied Military Government has already moved in and is in operation.

Along the Moselle front U. S. 3rd Army forces pushed forward to even out an inward bulge in our line. One column has driven 37 miles during the past two days from Neufchateau to capture Epinal in the Vosges Mountains.

Another force, using the bridge-head across the Moselle as a starting point, moved 16 miles southeast of Nancy to the area of Lunville where strength is being built up to cross the Meurthe River.

The gains on this sector lengthened the Allied front along the Moselle River to 150 miles, from immediately west of Trier to Epinal. Moreover, the German 19th Army was further threatened on its right flank by our southward driving columns.

In the northernmost Belgium, British and Army forces moved across the Scheldt

(Continued top col. 1, page 2)

STRENGTHENED LINE BREACHED (cont.)

Canal towards the river estuary northeast of Antwerp, across which the Germans are still withdrawing into Holland.

Berlin's communique today admitted the loss of Maastricht and spoke of an Allied offensive between that city and Aachen.

"In this sector, the Canadian 1st, the British 2nd and American 1st Armies have begun their break-through offensive", added a radio commentator.

"South and southeast of Aachen", continued the German report, "the Allies succeeded in breaking through the out-post positions of the West Wall".

Very heavy fighting was claimed in progress in the Nancy area and around Belfort where the American 7th Army is pushing into the Burgundian Gap. But of this battle, Berlin declared that the 3rd and 9th U. S. Armies were fighting only to gain jumping-off positions for an offensive through Alsace into southwest Germany.

Brest, Boulogne and Cap Gris Nez were claimed still holding out, although it was conceded that only a few fortresses were left in Brest which has been burning for several days.

In contrast to the Allied report of "no hostility and no fear" exhibited by the Germans in Eupen yesterday, Berlin Radio claimed that "American troops who entered Eupen met only hate and disdain. The population", said the German report, "is hostile and shows no cooperation".

Where Berlin obtained such information is difficult to explain, since by German admission the town has been in U. S. hands since yesterday.

German propagandist dressed further florid descriptions of the terrible conditions existent in France since Allied occupation. Said one report: "In Paris there is a great night-life, plenty of Champagne -- but no condensed milk for the babies...."

SOVIETS MASS AT EDGE OF WARSAW

Moscow, Sept. 18.....While a steady artillery barrage across the broad Vistula River pounded German positions in Warsaw, Red Army divisions massed only one half mile from the city for a final offensive to clear it of the enemy.

Lublin Radio has broadcast to Polish patriots inside the capital, praising them for their martyrdom and telling them "help will arrive soon".

Russian divisions, following the capture of Prague, are separated from Warsaw only by the half-mile stretch of the (continued top next column)

Vistula River. Earlier last month, Red Army tanks actually crossed the river and drove into the city, but were thrown out after hard German counter-attacks.

Berlin's communique spoke of the battle for Warsaw, admitting the loss of Prague and describing increasing Soviet pressure on three sides of the Polish capital.

But the chief German interest today was focused on the front between Warsaw and the East Prussian frontier where 40 Russian infantry divisions, heavily supported with artillery and dive-bombers, were engaged in an all-out offensive.

Strong Soviet attacks were also in progress between Sasek and Sandzimir, at the southern end of the central Polish line.

In Finland, declared a London report the Germans have attacked the Finns and attempted to seize an island in the Baltic. London believed that the Germans were trying to maintain their line in Finland and that heavier fighting would soon spread throughout the country.

In the Balkans, where Soviet and guerrilla forces are engaged in a joint offensive to clear Yugoslavia, 500 US heavy supported the operations with widespread attacks against enemy concentrations.

Athens airfield in Greece was heavily bombed and a large number of transport aircraft destroyed on the ground.

SHORTER ITINGS FROM THE WORLD'S NEWS

London - A message from Gen. Eisenhower's Hq. has been broadcast by the BBC in Denmark, calling on them to collect military information and to protect vital installations against German demolitions. "Hinder enemy movements.....the day of liberation is near", added the message.

London - Long-range flying bombs were again over southern England and London last night. A Ministry of Home Security communique disclosed today that through air bombardment, 107,000 houses have been destroyed in Britain and 170,000 damaged. Flying-bombs destroyed and damaged an additional million homes, although damage to many was slight.

Italy Hq. - Eighth Army pressure is increasing against Rimini, 1 1/2 miles to the north of our forward positions. Fifth Army divisions are meeting heavy resistance. Berlin spoke of a major Allied offensive in progress, with its focal point near Coriano and Fiesole, north of Florence.

Berlin - The Allies intend to demand Germany's surrender after the Quebec conference, forecast Nazi writers.

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹³³
Saturday, September 23 1944

Dearest wife - Another letter telling you all the news possible - I am still in the best of health and keeping busy to avoid becoming bored with our life here. Ball playing takes up most of my time, and the rest is filled in somehow. Had a surprise the other day when we played a game against the South compound (the other part of the camp.) Leo Mascolo was one of the players. We had a long talk and plan to have more. No new mail has come in, so I'm still reading the old ones. Tell the family I'd sure like to hear from them, too. Butch darling, it's thoughts of you and our future that make life worthwhile - all day is spent in making plans, and never a day goes by, but I think of you and how much love I have for you. Take good care of yourself for me. Regards to all - I love you very much - Lenny¹³⁴

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)

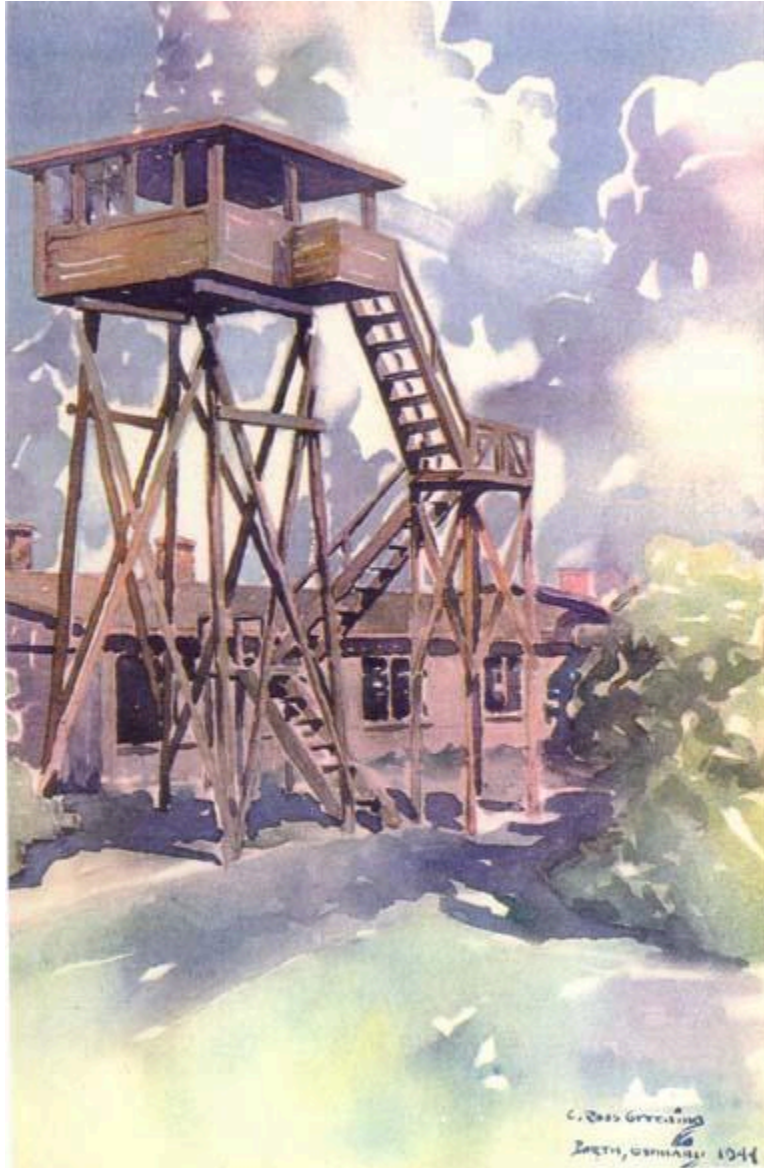


Stalag Luft I consisted of a West Compound (also referred to as the South Compound) and North Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Compounds, separated by German quarters. According to Lt Col Charles Ross Greening, Senior Officer in North Camp 1, "Our barracks were rough, wood

¹³³ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

¹³⁴ Signed - written in script.

frame structures standing on small foundation posts about 8 to 10 inches off the ground. The Germans had dug a series of shallow trenches underneath the barracks to allow guard dogs to creep along and detect any tunnelers. Occasionally, the German guards themselves crawled into the trenches and listened to the conversations of the prisoners in their rooms."



Art by Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening¹³⁵'s

The Guard Tower, 1944

¹³⁵ Charles Ross Greening was the second highest ranking American officer at Stalag Luft 1. His Log was recently discovered and published.

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹³⁶
Saturday, September 30 1944

Dearest wife - Two more letters from you today and once again my morale is at its high point. One of the letters told of the twins. Give my best to Marge¹³⁷, and kiss Richard and Steven for me. (Those are two sensible names.) Tell Norm¹³⁸ that at present he is a better man, but just wait until I get home. Butch darling don't let Marge or the kids want for anything (you know what I mean) - I'm still in the best of health and although it's turning colder I still manage a few ball games per week. Like you my darling, I'm keeping a record of my life here so that when I read yours you'll be able to read mine. Time goes slow my darling but when I think of you waiting, it makes it all [go faster.] I do love you so very much, Butch, and when we are together again I'll try to prove it to you. Take care of yourself and remember I love you - Lenny¹³⁹

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)

¹³⁶ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

¹³⁷ Sylvia's sister-in-law Marjorie (Margie) Levy is married to N. Norman Levy, recently gave birth to twins Richard and Steven and they are living with her in-laws at 108 Colebrook St. in Hartford, Connecticut.

¹³⁸ Lenny's brother N. Norman (Norm) Levy is a Private in the US Army and is stationed in Indiana.

¹³⁹ Signed - written in script.



Art by Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening¹⁴⁰'s

The Mess Hall, 1944

¹⁴⁰ Charles Ross Greening was the highest ranking American officer at Stalag Luft 1. His Log was recently discovered and published.

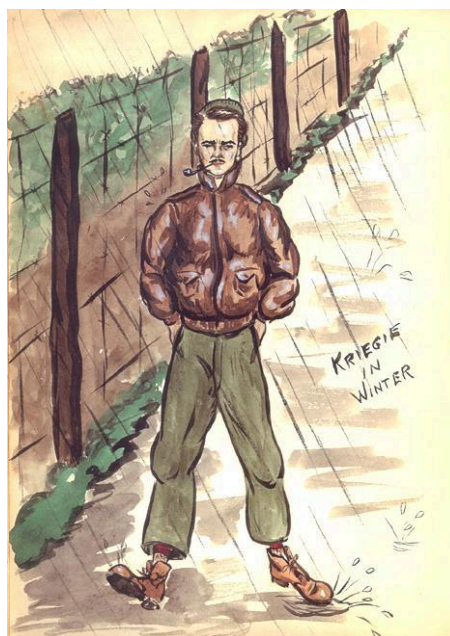
Lenny's Logbook¹⁴¹

October, 1944

Events

October 6, 1944 – 8th [overhead]¹⁴²

October 7, 1944 – 8th [overhead]



Kriege in Winter

Art by Stalag Luft 1 POW Lt. Charles L. Early

¹⁴¹This document comes from a blue, paper covered composition, more than half filled with blank pages, and measuring 6.75" by 7.875."

¹⁴² Eighth Air Force as the United States Strategic Air Forces in Europe. This is a note that on this day, Lenny saw planes, probably in formation flying overhead.

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹⁴³
Friday, October 8, 1944

Dearest wife - Sunday afternoon and it's raining which brings memories of you to me so vividly. I miss you terribly Butch, and love you more than I'll ever be able to say. Quite a shipment of packages have come in - as yet none for me, but my hopes are high. If you haven't already done so send along a pipe or two - also instead of cigarettes make a tobacco or cigars - I have plenty of cigarettes thanks to the Red Cross. Include plenty of candy and dehydrated stuff, plus a large size can of cocoa (Nestle's.) My health is still perfect, hope the same is true of you and the family. How are [your] Mom's eyes? Hope the operation was a success. Once again, tell everybody to write. My incoming mail is not limited - don't forget the pictures. Give some of my love to the twins - some more to the family - and all of my love to you - for I do love you - Lenny¹⁴⁴

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



Red Cross packages arrived at Stalag XVIII-A,
helped supplement the POWs' meager German food rations
(Bundesarchiv N 1578 Bild-013-08 Foto: Berg, Erik)

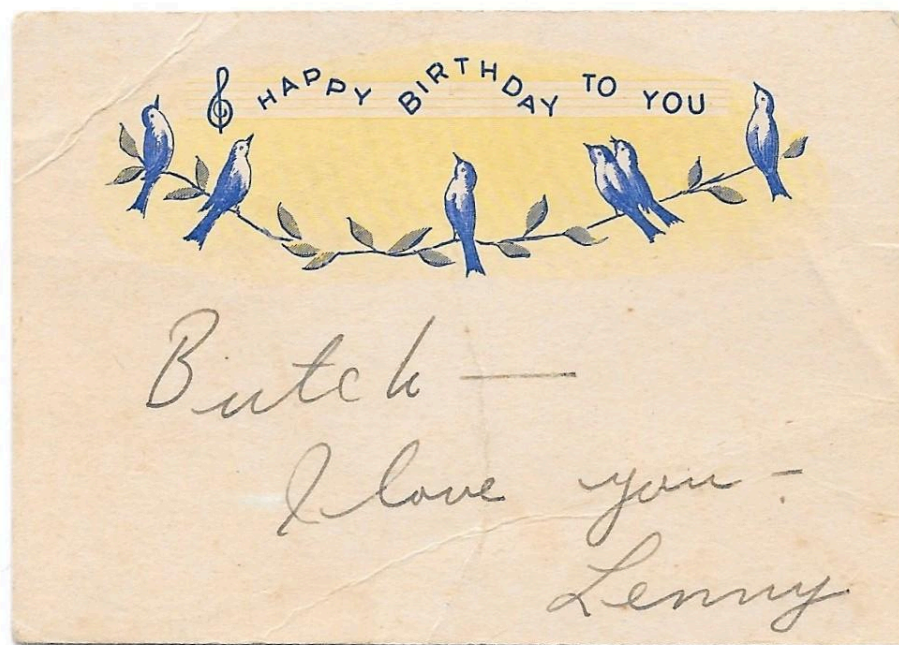
¹⁴³ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

¹⁴⁴ Signed - written in script.

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹⁴⁵
Monday, October 16, 1944

Dearest wife - Today has been truly a good one. I received two letters from you and one from mom plus six cartoons of cigarettes. Both were welcome, but the letters more so. Your letter about the books was good news, and I'm eagerly awaiting them. I know that this will arrive late my darling but "Happy Birthday" to you and may the next one see us together. I do love you so very much, Butch. I can just imagine Dad and Mom and the fuss they're making over the twins - don't forget to send pictures of them, plus you and the family. Chris¹⁴⁶ got the news today that he is to be a father and is quite happy about it all. Give my regards to everybody, and do take care of yourself, my darling. I love you- Lenny¹⁴⁷

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



Enclosed: Lenny's improvised Birthday Card to Sylvia

¹⁴⁵ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

¹⁴⁶ Augustine (Chris) Benedict Christiani was the Pilot of Lenny's plane which the crew named Shack Rabbits.

¹⁴⁷ Signed - written in script.

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹⁴⁸
Saturday, October 28, 1944

Dearest wife - [missing top line¹⁴⁹]... letter from you today - by far the quickest one yet - just a little over one month. You speak of us taking a trip, when I get home - It sounds like a good idea - write me more of the details? As yet, Chris¹⁵⁰ has not had first hand news on his being a father, and doesn't know whether it's a girl or boy. Rock¹⁵¹ is not at this camp, so if he should write to you let me know. Butch darling, you apologize for being sentimental once in a while - go on being so, for I do love you so very much. My name has finally been posted for a package from home - should get it tomorrow - thanks a lot for it darling. This is your birthday, my love, and I'd give anything to be with you, but it looks like everything will wait for next year. Goodnight my darling, Always remember - I love you - Lenny¹⁵²

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



Prisoners play cards at Stalag XVIII-A. (Bundesarchiv N 1578 Bild-013-08 Foto: Berg, Erik)

¹⁴⁸ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

¹⁴⁹ The top fold of the mailer was ripped, and is missing the first line of text and the date Lenny mailed it.

¹⁵⁰ Augustine (Chris) Benedict Christiani was the Pilot of Lenny's plane which the crew named *Shack Rabbits*.

¹⁵¹ Raymond (Rock) Robert Newmark was the Bombardier of Lenny's plane which the crew named *Shack Rabbits*.

¹⁵² Signed - written in script.



Kriegsgefangenenlager¹⁵³
Wednesday, November 8, 1944

¹⁵³ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

Dearest wife - As my card has no doubt told you, the past two weeks have seen me receiving three packages and no less than fifteen letters! Needless to say, it has made me quite happy. The packages arrived in good shape - the pipes were a godsend - please continue to send pipe tobacco - no cigarettes as I have plenty. Include plenty of dehydrated foods, cocoa and candy in the rest of them. All I need in the line of clothes are some woolen socks. The weather has turned cold - outside of a game of football once in a while, most of my time is spent reading. Butch darling, I've completed a set of plans for our future home; two floors, six rooms - can already see us in it. I miss you terribly my darling, when we are together, we shall truly make up for all this. I do love you so very much. Regards to all the family. Please send some pictures. Good night my darling - I love you - Lenny¹⁵⁴

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



Package Delivery - Stalag Luft 1

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹⁵⁵
Monday, November 20, 1944

¹⁵⁴ Signed - written in script.

¹⁵⁵ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

Dearest wife - Today I received the second parcel you sent me - it contained exactly what I needed and wanted: the gloves, scarf and socks were just in time - it's getting cold here. Butch darling, what I really want to say in this letter is that I miss you so very much, and love you more than mere words can tell. You and our future are on my mind constantly. All my time is spent planning the future, so that it will be one long honeymoon - I do love you so very much my sweet. That was quite a storm you folks had - much damage around home? As before sweet, my health is excellent. I hope yours is the same. Chris¹⁵⁶ and I have entered a bridge tournament - we'll let you know the results. Once again, don't forget to send some pictures of yourself! Give my regards to all in all my love to you - I love you Butch - Lenny¹⁵⁷

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



Prisoners play cards at Stalag XVIII-A.
Bundesarchiv N 1578 Bild-013-08 Foto: Berg, Erik

¹⁵⁶ Augustine (Chris) Benedict Christiani was the Pilot of Lenny's plane which the crew named *Shack Rabbits*.

¹⁵⁷ Signed - written in script.

Lenny's Logbook¹⁵⁸

November, 1944

Events

November 27, 1944 – Roast Beef dinner

A photograph of a single line from a handwritten logbook. The text 'Nov 27 Roast Beef dinner' is written in cursive on a light-colored, possibly lined, paper.



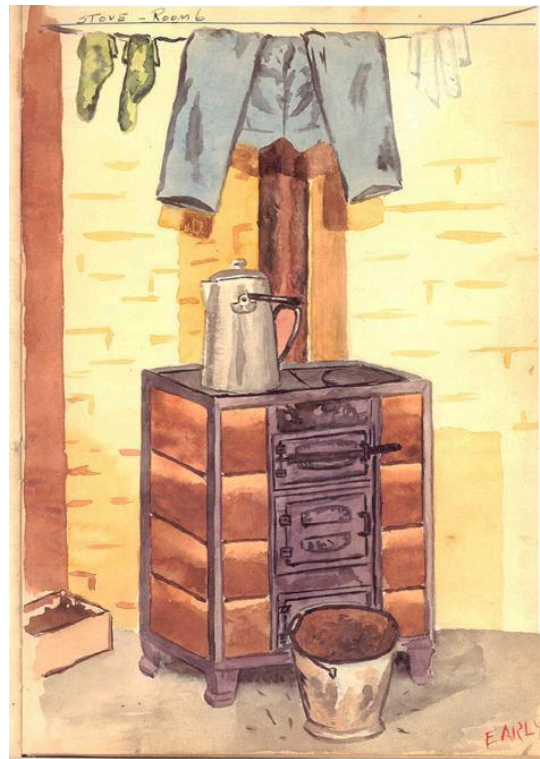
The Germans furnished us with only the bare necessities. We had tables, chairs, beds and one cup, bowl, knife, fork and spoon per man. It did not take the kriegies long to construct essential items and substitutes for many of the things considered necessary at home. Most of the kriegie kitchen utensils were devised from "klim" cans – standard terminology for all powdered milk cans.

¹⁵⁸This document comes from a blue, paper covered composition, more than half filled with blank pages, and measuring 6.75" by 7.875."

Pans for cooking were essential. All sizes were developed, but they were usually square or rectangular. We had one unusual pan. It was made from a piece of stove pipe and proved to be an excellent frying pan.

Potato mashers were of many designs. The two I was familiar with were a stick and a tin can filled with gravel and fitted with a handle. "Klim mixers" were a vital necessity. Once again I was familiar with two types. The one resembled the beater portion of an eggbeater. The other was a fanlike affair that worked equally well. "Klim cans" were also utilized for stove grills, ovens, pails and coffee pots.

Lt. Robert R. Swartz
Prisoner of War, Stalag Luft 1¹⁵⁹



Stove - Room 6

Art by Stalag Luft 1 POW Lt. Charles L. Early

¹⁵⁹ <http://merkki.com/swartzrobert.htm>

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹⁶⁰
Wednesday, November 29, 1944

Dearest wife - It's been a month since, last I heard from you - I do hope everything at home is all right. Please darling, do not keep anything from me in your letters. I am still in good health and although the weather keeps me indoors most of the time, I manage to keep occupied. I've become quite good at fudge making, and the other night I whipped up a batch of potato *latkes* - they reminded me of, because they were so different - [but] not half as good. Chris¹⁶¹ and I are doing fair in the bridge tournament, winning almost as many as we lose. He sends his regards. Butch Darling, I miss you terribly - my mind is constantly on you and our future. It's really going to be... all right. I do love you so very much darling. My regards to everybody at home. All my love to you - I love you - Lenny¹⁶²

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



¹⁶⁰ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

¹⁶¹ Augustine (Chris) Benedict Christiani was the Pilot of Lenny's plane which the crew named *Shack Rabbits*.

¹⁶² Signed - written in script.

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹⁶³
Monday, December 11, 1944

Dearest wife - After a month's lapse, I received mail from you - two letters and the pictures of the twins - God but they're fine looking boys. But why, dearest, send me a picture with your head cut off¹⁶⁴? Please Butch, send me lots of pictures of you. Thanksgiving has come and gone, and for a change we had a good meal - Roast Beef (in cans) that we've been saving for months. For once, we left the mess hall full. Your idea of my going to college when this is over is a good one, but it wouldn't be fair to you my darling - I've argued it out with myself, and I realize that the only thing I want to do is keep busy making you happy in a home of our own. The bridge tournament is over. We didn't do so well - nuff said - my darling I miss you and love you more than words can ever tell. Please take good care of yourself. Give my regards to all the family - I love you - Lenny¹⁶⁵

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



Stalag-Luft-1 - Group-Photo - Christmas

¹⁶³ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

¹⁶⁴ Probably from the German censors.

¹⁶⁵ Signed - written in script.

Col. Hubert Zemke - Senior Allied Officer

December 16, 1944 - April 30, 1945



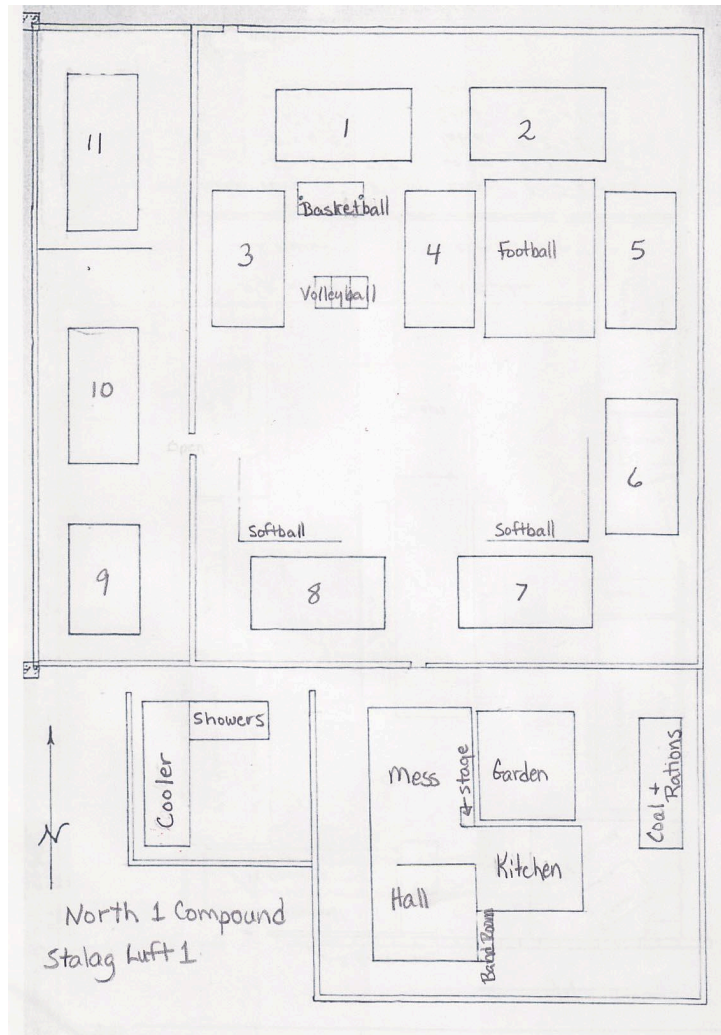
Col. Hubert Zemke was a child of German immigrants in Missoula, Montana. He became not only one of the best American fighter pilots, but had also gained international experience in various theatres of war since 1941...

On a mission on 30 October 1944, while flying in un-forecasted turbulence, the wing of Zemke's P-51 tore off. Zemke had to bail out and became a prisoner of war in October 1944... He arrived in Barth by train. As the highest ranking officer in the camp, he replaced the previous Senior Allied Officer (SAO), Colonel Jean Byerly. Colonel Hubert Zemke's headquarters (Head Shed) was located in Barrack 9¹⁶⁶, Room 21 of North I.

StalagLuft1.de

Col. Zemke became Senior Allied Officer of Stalag Luft I at Barth, on December 16, 1944, in command of the 7,000 Allied prisoners of "Provisional Wing X". Conditions were deplorable: insufficient food, inadequate clothing and medical attention, a lack of military discipline among some POWs, and indifferent or hostile German officials.

¹⁶⁶ Leonard (Lenny) Levy was in Barracks 11 of the same North 1 Compound two buildings north of Col. Zemke.



Stalag Luft 1 - North 1 Compound¹⁶⁷

Col. Zemke established his leadership of the POWs, who numbered 9,000 by the end of the war. Gradually he developed working relations with the German camp commandant and staff and achieved some improvements in living conditions.

¹⁶⁷ Public Image from *Stalag Luft 1 Online* at <http://www.merkki.com/>

Lenny's Logbook¹⁶⁸

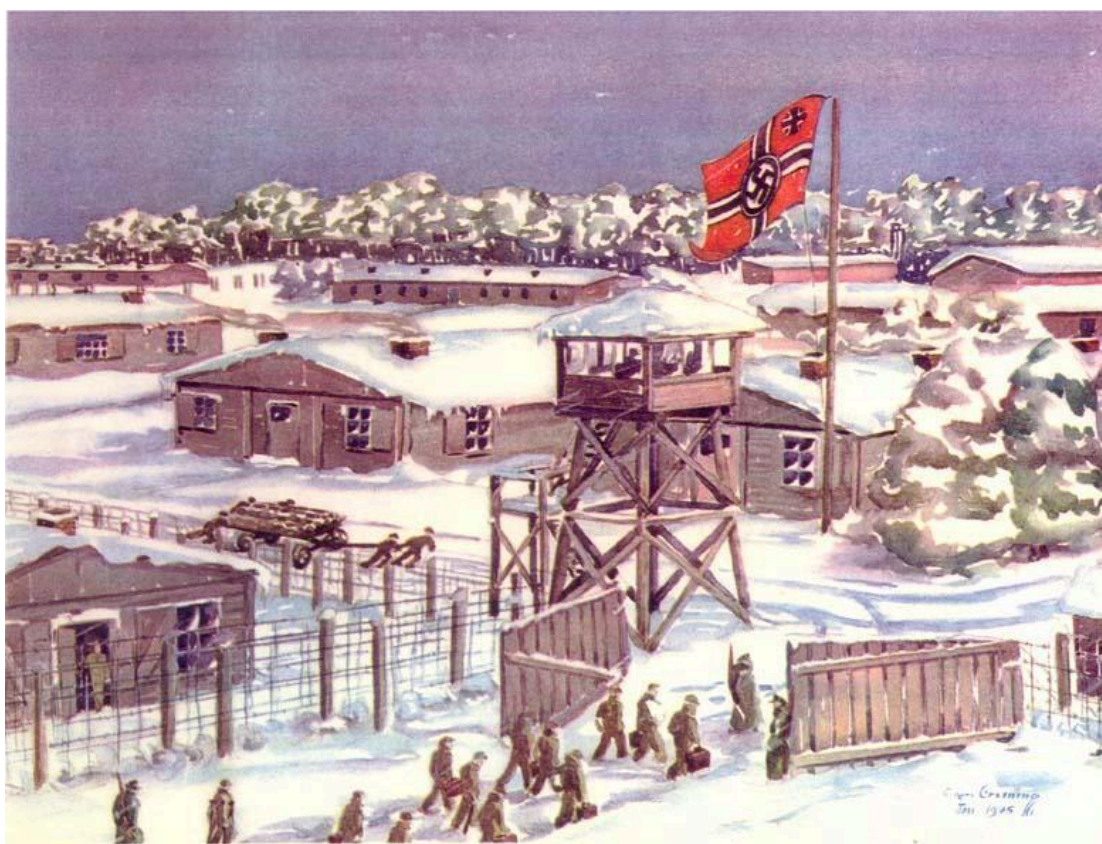
December, 1944

Events

December 24, 1944 – Xmas Parcel

December 25, 1944 – Turkey Dinner

Dec 24 - Xmas Parcel
25 - Turkey dinner



Art by Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening¹⁶⁹

Arrival at Stalag-Luft 1, 1945

¹⁶⁸This document comes from a blue, paper covered composition, more than half filled with blank pages, and measuring 6.75" by 7.875."

¹⁶⁹ Charles Ross Greening was the second highest ranking American officer at Stalag Luft 1. His Log was recently discovered and published.

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹⁷⁰
Friday, December 26 1944

Dear Eb¹⁷¹ - Long time since I heard from you - How about a long letter soon? By now you must be at least engaged? [I've] seen a lot of the world since that day in N. O¹⁷².
Tell you all about it someday - regards to your family - Lenny

Kriegsgefangenenlager Datum: DEC. 26, 1944
DEAR EB - LONG TIME SINCE I'VE
HEARD FROM YOU - HOW ABOUT A LONG
LETTER SOON? BY NOW YOU MUST BE
AT LEAST ENGAGED - ? SEEN A LOT OF
THE WORLD SINCE THAT DAY IN N.O.
TELL YOU ALL ABOUT IT SOMEDAY -
REGARDS TO YOUR FAMILY - Lenny

¹⁷⁰ Prisoner-of-war camps.

¹⁷¹ Ebner Glooskin was a former friend of Sylvia's. They both graduated from Weaver High School in the class of 1938. Lenny was in the class of 1936 and became friends with Ebner after they enlisted in the Army.

¹⁷² New Orleans.

Lenny's Logbook¹⁷³

January 1, 1945

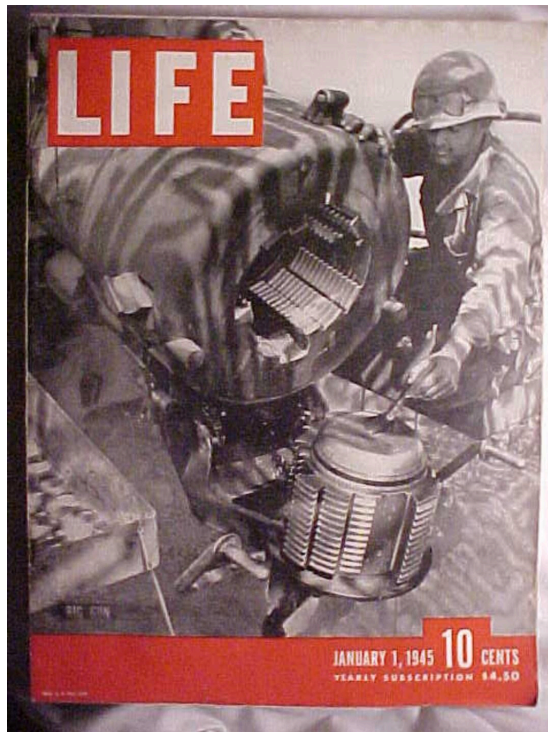
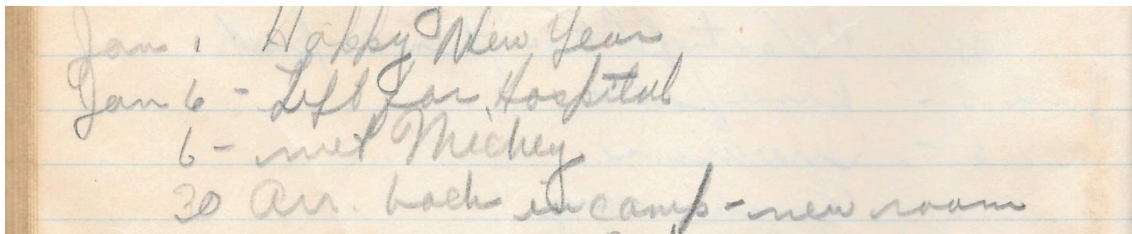
Events

January 1, 1945 – Happy New Year

January 6, 1945 – Left for Hospital

January 6, 1945 – Met Mickey

January 30, 1945 – Arr[ived] back in camp - new room



Heilstätten Hohenlychen Sanatorium

¹⁷³This document comes from a blue, paper covered composition, more than half filled with blank pages, and measuring 6.75" by 7.875."

January 6-30, 1945

“Shortly after the first of the year my sinus attacks became acute and I was sent to a hospital¹⁷⁴ sixty miles north of Berlin.”

Leonard Levy in his letter of June 6, 1945



It was common practice for American POWs to be sent to German hospitals, or *sanatoriums*, for treatment of serious conditions, particularly if they were suffering from respiratory illnesses or tuberculosis. The hospitals in the area of Berlin are:

1. **Beelitz Heilstätten** - Originally established as a sanatorium for lung diseases, it was repurposed as a military hospital during the war and is known for its extensive medical facilities. From Berlin, it is roughly 550 kilometers (about 342 miles) to the southwest.
2. **Hohemark Hospital**, which was part of Dulag Luft, located near Oberursel, about 20 kilometers north of Frankfurt. This hospital was known to treat POWs during World War II.
3. Additionally, various military hospitals in **Berlin** itself were designated for POW treatment, but detailed names of hospitals specifically north of Berlin are less clear in the available sources.
4. **Heilstätten Hohenlychen Sanatorium** - This facility was primarily used for treating military personnel, including injured SS members. It is, however, precisely 60 miles north of Berlin.

Heilstätten Hohenlychen Sanatorium

¹⁷⁴ 60 miles north of Berlin is a small town called Lychen. In the early twentieth century, the city was a health resort with a health center called the Heilanstalt **Hohenlychen**. In 1935, SS officer and doctor Karl Gebhardt became head of the clinic and transformed the clinic from a treatment center for tuberculosis patients to an orthopedic clinic.

January 6-30, 1945



In January 1945, Heilstätten Hohenlychen was under the administration of the SS¹⁷⁵ and was primarily managed by Dr. Karl Gebhardt, who was a prominent physician and a member of the SS.

He supervised many questionable medical experiments there, including an attempted arm transplant from a Ravensbruck prisoner onto a German man, but he became infamous for his experiments on 72 Polish women who became known as “the Rabbits.”

Heilstätten Hohenlychen was a complex of sanatoriums, primarily designed for the treatment of tuberculosis and other respiratory diseases. The term "Heilstätten" translates to "healing places" in German, and these facilities were part of a broader movement in the early 20th century to provide specialized care for patients with chronic illnesses.

¹⁷⁵ The German SS, or *Schutzstaffel*, was a major paramilitary organization of the Nazi Party.. It grew to become a powerful entity responsible for enforcing Nazi policies, including the Holocaust, and operated throughout Nazi-occupied Europe during World War II

The complex included several buildings, each serving different functions, such as:



1. Sanatoriums for Tuberculosis: These were specifically designed to treat patients suffering from tuberculosis, utilizing fresh air, sunlight, and rest as part of the therapeutic regimen.
2. Rehabilitation Facilities: Some buildings were dedicated to the rehabilitation of patients recovering from serious illnesses or surgeries, providing a peaceful environment conducive to healing.
3. Medical and Administrative Buildings: The complex also housed medical staff, administrative offices, and support services necessary for the operation of the sanatoriums.



Overall, Heilstätten Hohenlychen was a significant medical facility in its time, reflecting the healthcare practices and architectural styles of the early 20th century.

Heinrich Himmler, the head of the SS, was at Hohenlychen Sanatorium in January 1945. He was receiving treatment for health issues during that time. The sanatorium served as a medical facility for high-ranking SS officials, and Himmler's stay there was part of his efforts to recuperate from various ailments.

Dr. Karl Gebhardt attempted to negotiate with the International Red Cross. He sought to strike a deal that would allow for the evacuation of certain patients from Hohenlychen Sanatorium, particularly those who were seriously ill, in exchange for the Red Cross's assistance in providing medical supplies and support.

This effort was part of a broader strategy by some Nazi officials to present a more humane image of their medical practices and to gain favor with international organizations. However, these negotiations were ultimately unsuccessful, and the Red Cross was aware of the broader context of the Nazi regime's actions, which included widespread atrocities and war crimes.

Jewish POWs

January 30, 1945



“Coming back to camp, after a month of treatment, I found that all the boys of Jewish faith had been segregated into one barrack, so I had to leave Chris and move in with what turned out to be a bunch of swell fellows.”

Lenny in his letter of June 6, 1945

The Jewish POWs

One group of prisoners of war in Stalag Luft I who were subjected to the Nazi racial ideology were 400 to 500 Jewish airmen, mainly officers from the USA. They constantly and not unjustly feared being separated from the other prisoners and losing all protection. According to an order of the German High Command they were basically treated as correctly as the other inmates. They did not have to wear a yellow star and were allowed to receive letters and parcels – both from family members and the Red Cross – and were given basic medical care when needed. Religious services were also permitted, but without the traditional Jewish rituals.

In January 1945, the Germans segregated the Jewish prisoners from their comrades in two barracks of compound North I. Many feared that this was done to send them to an extermination camp and asked their non-Jewish comrades to inform their families if they did not return home with them. Colonel Zemke, as Senior Allied Officer, made it abundantly clear to the German camp commandant that the responsible would be accused as war criminals after the war, if they did not treat the Jewish POWs correctly.

The separation remained in place and fortunately no further repression took place. However, it remains unclear why the western Jewish POWs were not mass murdered like the civilian Jews in Europe or the Soviet POWs (Jews among them had a mortality rate of over 60%).

Text from <https://stalagluft1.de/en/compound-north-i/>



Prisoner of War Post¹⁷⁶
Thursday, January 31, 1944

Darling -

Yesterday I received a letter from Eleanor [Ellison, pictured below]] and she is so excited about her coming baby. You know Eleanor's sense of humor, so you can well imagine how comical her description was, of her first visit to the Doctor.



She expects her baby at the end of July. She is busy looking for an apartment and buying furniture. She informed me that she has already purchased a studio couch, so that if I... ever visit her, I will have a place to sleep. At the present time she is living with her in-laws and is anxious to move out. She warned me never to live with in-laws, but that is something I have always known. It is one of those things that very seldom works out. Darling, I expect to receive your personal belongings soon¹⁷⁷. I have been notified that they are on the way. I have no idea what I will get but whatever it is, I will keep everything in good condition until you come home.

Errol Flynn the movie actor is still keeping in the limelight with his women troubles. In yesterday's paper another girl claimed he is the father of her baby. He is a glamorized Mayer Mosseson. There I go being a brat again. Yesterday, I took photos at a studio and the photographer, a slick thing, asked me if I would like a job modeling. That's the second offer in two weeks. Can you imagine me as a model? I can't.

My darling, you are always with me and I pray you are well. Please take care of yourself for me. I am waiting for the happy day when we will be together again. I love you

Sylvia

¹⁷⁶ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is the American version of one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.5" x 12.5" Only one of these fragile, POW-letters survived. Most took over a month to arrive. This letter was stamped with a New York post office stamp on November 28, and presumably, was one of many that didn't find Lenny. It probably arrived at 148 Magnolia St. about December 1, 1945.

¹⁷⁷ Probably his footlocker from Knettishall AFB in England.

February, 1945

After Zemke arrived in the camp, conditions began to deteriorate for the men in Stalag Luft I. One POW, bombardier Oscar Richard, resident of Stalag Luft I since January 1944 reported in his book *Kriegie: An American POW in Germany*, "German power lines were ripped away in several vital places, and our electric lights were out for over a month. The water went on and off periodically, and we were caught short several times because we had no containers in which to store water."

In February, the Germans also cut off the Red Cross parcels which had helped to sustain POW life by supplementing the meager German rations. Richard refers to this period as "the famine." POWs became too weak to do anything but lie in their bunks and dream about food.

At that time, 8,346 prisoners of war were in Stalag Luft I, 7,202 of which were Americans , 1,144 British, 260 Canadians, 59 Australians, 49 South Africans, 30 New Zealanders, 5 Rhodesians, 1 Liberian, 34 newcomers (according to a report by Monsieur *Bovey*, a representative of the Swiss protecting power).

Stalag Luft I.de



[Dearest wife] ... [two-thirds of letter is missing]

... contain delicacies of all kinds - at least our stomachs will be happy that day. Please take good care of yourself my darling, and always remember that I love you. Give my regards and love to all of the families - and once again - I love you - Lenny¹⁷⁹

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



Art by Stalag Luft 1 POW Lt. Charles L. Early

Parade

¹⁷⁸ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

¹⁷⁹ Signed - written in script.

Stalag Luft 1 – Daily Bulletin

February 26, 1945

Office Of Group Commander
USAAF North Compound I
Stalag Luft I Barth, Germany
February 26, 1945

Daily Bulletin:

1. Menu: Br - (None till further Notice)
Dinner: German Soup (no potatoes)
2. Official: No Light and Water. This Hdg. has been notified that water may be shut off at any time in the rooms as necessary without warning so it is recommended that a supply be kept on hand.
3. Official: Red Cross Food will run out Sunday. No more parcels are in camp and none expected. Conserve what food you have if any.
4. Official: Any persons desirous of helping to dig a well, report to Group Maintenance officer at 11:00 Hrs. today.
5. Official: German Authorities have informed us that the coal ration will be cut another 20% effective immediately. They can guarantee no more coal. Come on Joe.
6. Official: Personal will refrain from taking garbage from Mess Hall garbage tins for obvious reasons.
7. Official: Some instances of ground glass in the bread have been reported from the South Compound. Cut your slices thin and report any glass to Hdgs.
8. Official: Personnel are requested to save cellophane from cigarette packages for delivery to the Hospital for making bandages for they are short of same.
9. Official: German Memorandum Feb. 24 "Any Prisoner of War found outside his barracks or looking out of windows during an Air Raid will be fired upon without warning."
10. Official: Personnel who received bones from the Mess Hall for purposes of making soup; will return same immediately. - (For Re-Issue - they've already been cooked twice)

Lt. Col. Greening

G. C. Mozier
Maj., A.C.
Adjutant

Lenny's Logbook¹⁸⁰

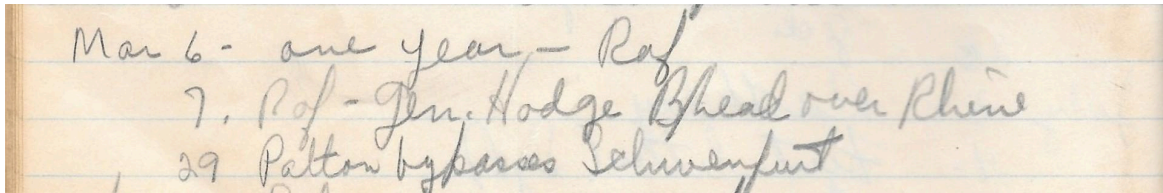
March 1, 1945

Events

March 6, 1945 – one year - RAF¹⁸¹

March 7, 1945 – RAF - Gen. Hodge Bhead over Rhine

March 30, 1945 – Patton bypasses Schwenfurt



"March was uneventful unless the fact that we almost starved means anything. They were indeed dark days - moldy bread, watery turnip soup and undrinkable coffee being our complete diet. Finally during the last weeks of the month, thousands of Red Cross parcels arrived and our morale went up."

Leonard Levy, in his June 6, 1945 letter

March 6, 1945 – one year - RAF

On this date Lenny noted the passage of one year since his Black Thursday plane crash and capture by the Germans. It was his 119th day as a Prisoner of War, or *Kriege*. It was his 327th day at Stalag Luft 1. It was his 466th day since the tearful farewell scene with his wife, and he was receiving some mail from Sylvia.

¹⁸⁰This document comes from a blue, paper covered composition, more than half filled with blank pages, and measuring 6.75" by 7.875."

¹⁸¹ The Royal Air Force was seen above Stalag Luft 1.

Beachhead on the Rhine

March 7, 1945

March 7, 1945 – RAF¹⁸² - Gen. Hodge B'head over Rhine

The US Army's surprise capture of the Ludendorff Bridge over the Rhine River at Remagen, Germany, broke open Germany's defenses in the west.



¹⁸² The Royal Air Force was seen above Stalag Luft 1.

Rock¹⁸³ Newmark home in the US March 11, 1945

March 11, 1945 – Brooklyn Daily Sun



Eagle Staff photo

EXCITEMENT FOR THREE—1st Lt. Raymond Newmark, just back from a Nazi prison camp, and his mother, opera lovers both, meet Eleanor Steber in her dressing room right after her debut in "La Traviata."

¹⁸³ Raymond (Rock) Robert Newmark was the Bombardier of Lenny's crew. He was treated at the hospital in Dulag Luft for his injured leg and released early from his stay at Stalag Luft 3. Lt. Newmark is one of the 463 wounded US army men just returned from Germany by diplomatic exchange.

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹⁸⁴
Thursday, March 19¹⁸⁵, 1945

Dearest wife - Nothing much to write about knowing what a letter means - here I am. Spring is just about here and our garden is just about ready to go. We plan to have quite a variety this year but whatever comes will be greatly enjoyed by all. We really miss our fresh vegetables.

My darling, this should reach you just about on our second anniversary. God only knows how I prayed for us to be together on this one, but I guess it just isn't in the cards. I want you to know my darling with all my heart and so I love you, think of you and miss you. Someday we'll be together and make up for all the lost time. Happy (?) Anniversary, my sweet and once again I love you. Regards to all the family and to you my sweet I say - I love you - Lenny¹⁸⁶

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)



¹⁸⁴ Prisoner-of-war camps. This is a one-page, fold-up and mail paper letter, measuring 5.75" x 8.25"

¹⁸⁵ Two dates appear: March 19 on the top left was when Lenny wrote the letter and March 22, 1945 on the flap was the date he mailed it.

¹⁸⁶ Signed - written in script.

Kriegsgefangenenlager¹⁸⁷

Friday, March 30 1945

Dearest wife - The weather has turned quite warm and I'm back in summer uniform - thanks to you, for the khaki pants. Have received quite a few letters from you and Newton the past few days. I am still in good health. Regards to all. I love you, Lenny



Stalag-Luft 1, 1945

Return address is Stalag Luft 1 (via Stalag Luft 3)

¹⁸⁷ Prisoner-of-war camps.

Stalag Luft 1 – Daily Bulletin

March 31, 1945

**OFFICE OF THE GROUP COMMANDER
GROUP I, USAAF, NORTH COMPOUND
OFLAG LUFT I, BARTH, GERMANY**

March 31, 1945

1. Menu:

Breakfast	Dinner
American Cereal	Fried Spam (1/4 per man) Mashed Potatoes Cole Slaw Gravy

2. NOTICE: Catholic Choir rehearsal after 4th Mess this evening in Large Mess.

3. NOTICE: Personnel interested in the results of yesterday's Meeting of the Mess Committee, contact your Squadron Commander.

4. OFFICIAL: It is now a Group order that articles will no longer be thrown over the fence between this Compound and North 2.

5. OFFICIAL: All porcelain bowls will have be turned into the Mess Hall before 1200 hours today. This includes absolutely every bowl and plate with the exception of ten each from the Sergeants Blocks 12, 13, and 14. All red water pitchers will also have to be turned in. Arrangements will be made for future possible issue of these pitchers. It is anticipated that soon, hot water may be on the tables. This cannot be done until these pitchers are turned in.

6. OFFICIAL: Squadron Commanders will inspect their respective Blocks at 1200 hours today.

7. OFFICIAL: In order to stop a typical kriegie rumor, the statement that there would be no address directory in

"Behind Barbed Wire" is not true. The directory includes all four compounds.

8. OFFICIAL: Due to the coal shortage in the Compound, the Laundry Schedule, effective today, will be extended, where by participants Will do their laundry once every ten days instead of every seven days. The purpose of this new schedule is to make available more hot water daily. The following schedule for the laundry boiler in the Sergeants compound is effective commencing today:

0830 - Laundry - Bl. 13 (8 bundles)
1330 - Hot water for brews.
1500 - Hot water for all purposes.
1630 - Hot water for all purposes.
1800 - Hot water for brew only.

NOTE: During the periods scheduled for brew water, please take only the amount needed for your brew making at that particular time as this source has to supply the whole Compound.

9. Block 4, Room 3:

0900 Catholic Mass
1200 Jewish Church Services
1500 Business Accounting

By order of Lt. Col.

GREENING

G.C.HOZIER, Major
Adjutant

From Stalag Luft 1 Online: <http://www.merkki.com/dbjuly944.htm>

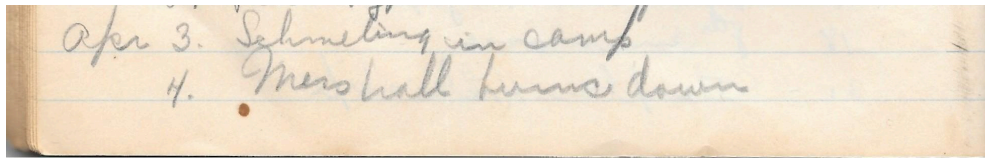
Lenny's Logbook¹⁸⁸

April, 1945

Events

April 3, 1945 – Schmeling in camp

April 4, 1945 – Mess Hall burns down



“Disaster... struck early in the morning of April 4th - our mess hall burned completely down. Luckily, very little food was lost. Now we had to cook in our room plus sleeping and living there. Because of my cooking knowledge, I was made room cook - a job I held until the very end. We made the most of a bad situation and at times thanks to parcels from home manage to have some fairly good meals.

Things rode on fairly smoothly throughout April...”

Leonard Levy, in his June 6, 1945 letter

¹⁸⁸This document comes from a blue, paper covered composition, more than half filled with blank pages, and measuring 6.75” by 7.875.”

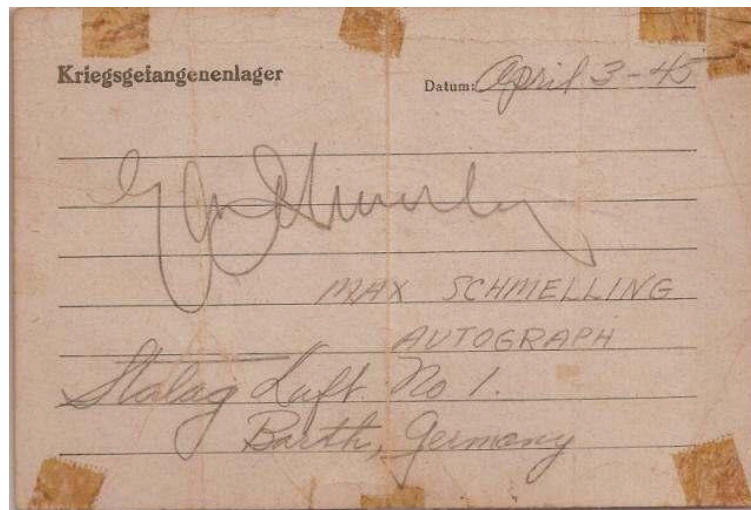


Max Schmeling

I saw Schmeling in Germany during the winter of 1944-1945 when I was a prisoner of war. He was being sent around by the Luftwaffe, no doubt as a hedge against their forthcoming defeat, as a public relations gesture. The camp I was in, Stalag Luft 1, was an officer's camp filled with 8th and 15th Air Force as well as some Royal Air Force officers who had been shot down in the air war that was still raging.

The news that he was in the camp swept over us like wildfire; because we had nothing to do but to follow rumors, we congregated around the quarters of our commander, Col. Zemke. There Max was inside and of course he stood up and waved to us and we went back to our barracks. After he left we all received a harsh note from Zemke saying that he was disgusted with us for acting like "schoolkids."

William A. Pace¹⁸⁹
Rolling Hills Estates



Autographed Kriege Card - Not collected by Lenny Levy

¹⁸⁹ <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-2005-feb-09-le-immig9.2-story.html>

Mess Hall Fire

April 4, 1945

April 4, 1945 – Mess Hall burns down



April 4, 1945 – Mess Hall burns down

“Disaster... struck early in the morning of April 4th - our mess hall burned completely down. Luckily, very little food was lost. Now we have to cook in our room.”

Leonard Levy, in his June 6, 1945 letter



Art by Lt. Col. Charles Ross Greening¹⁹⁰

Mess Hall at Stalag-Luft 1, 1945

¹⁹⁰ Charles Ross Greening was the highest ranking American officer at Stalag Luft 1. His Log was recently discovered and published.

Kriege March

January - April 1945

The *Long March* refers to a series of forced marches during the final stages of the Second World War in Europe. From a total of 257,000 western Allied prisoners of war held in German military prison camps, over 80,000 POWs were forced to march westward across Poland, Czechoslovakia, and Germany in extreme winter conditions, over about four months between January and April 1945.



The Long March by Alan Moore

Some of these POW refugees arrived at Stalag Luft I, where the camp began to suffer from overcrowding. The Stalag Luft I Kriegies began to prepare for a similar fate. They were told to make sleds and sew rucksacks out of garments in order to carry their belongings on the journey to a new camp deeper in the German Reich.



Then, life changed again for the Kriegies, in mid-April as the Red Cross lifeline was reopened and security restrictions relaxed. Morale soared and suspicions were that the Germans knew they were beaten and wanted to make nice. The shift in attitude was evident, and around this time some of the German guards even began to salute Zemke.

Plans were made by Zemke for a peaceful power transfer in the camp. He even had signs posted in the camp, in plain sight for camp Kommandant Oberst von Warnstedt, who assumed control in January 1945, detailing how the enemy would be treated fairly once the surrender happened. There was constant artillery booming in the distance.

StalagLuft1.de

PATTON DRIVING INTO SAXONY; ALLIES HOLD 100 MILE FRONT ON ELBE

London, Apr. 13. . . . Patton's armored columns were well beyond the Saale River today, driving thru Saxony toward Dresden. Further north, a 100 mile front was established on the Elbe. Allied forces ranged along a 150 mile front from Wittenberge to south of Zeitz are 90 to 125 miles from Soviet troops on the Oder and Neisse Rivers.

Armored units of Patton's 3rd advanced a total of 48 miles from the Jena area today into the industrial region of Saxony, contained in the triangle formed by Halle, Dresden and Plauen. The town of Zeitz, 13 miles southwest of Leipzig, was entered after a 20 mile advance. This spearhead then pushed 23 miles further east to reach and cross the Saale River northwest of Chemnitz and only 35 to 40 miles from Dresden. Jena, scene of Napoleon's defeat of the Prussians 150 years ago, was captured. Erfurt has been cleared. 1 column mopped up 150 towns and villages in 24 hours.

Further north, the Elbe River has been reached on a 100 mile front. Some units of the 9th gained the Elbe only 55 miles from Berlin. British columns, advancing 60 miles in 24 hours, reached Tangermunde on the west bank of the Elbe, 55 miles from the German capital and 30 north of Magdeburg. Tangermunde has been entered and by-passed. According to Berlin, 2 fast British spearheads driving from north of Brunswick reached Salzwedel and Wittenberge. Salzwedel is 25 miles southwest of Wittenberge. These towns were not mentioned by London.

1st Army units on Patton's north flank are just 7 miles from Leipzig in the area east of Merseburg, where Berlin reported that the Saale had been reached. Other elements are closing on Halle, northwest of Leipzig, in the advance from Eisleben. Yesterday Hodges' 1st took 25,000 POWs, mostly in the Ruhr, to make their total 80,000. The Ruhr city of Duisburg was captured. Berlin disclosed that a thrust on the southern flank of the industrial area had advanced 16 miles northwestward from Olpe to Ludenschied. The pocket is only 20 miles wide between this city and Witten, on the Ruhr River.

In the south, Patch's 7th continues to gain ground toward Burenburg. French 1st Army troops are approaching Stuttgart.

Canadian forces in Holland have cleared 1/2 of Arnhem and are pushing forward across the plains from their Isel bridgeheads. Berlin revealed that Canadian units had forced a bridgehead across the river near Beventer, and admitted that reconnaissance thrusts had reached the Orange Canal northeast of Meppel, 40 miles south of Emden.

British units pushing northward along the east bank of the Ems River were reported only 10 miles from the port of Emden. There are no details of the drive toward Hamburg from the Bremen area.

On the completion of the 1,000th bridge since "D"-day of the Rhine offensive, Montgomery declared today, "The German Army is completely and utterly finished. We have nearly 2,000,000 POWs, and will continue to cut off chunks of the Reich until the end."

GERMAN COMMUNIQUE 1400 Apr 14 -- In northwest part of front, fighting on Issel, Ems, Weser and lower Elbe. On Elbe southeast of Magdeburg, counter-attacks in progress against Allied bridgehead. In Ruhr, on Rhine and in the mountain areas, fighting increased in severity. Superior Allied forces repulsed. In central Bergland Allies thrusting north and southeast. Recon forces reached Saale at Halle, are moving forward on both sides of Zeitz. In Harz Mts. American assaults from west and south, entrance into mountains was frustrated. Fighting continues southeast of Thuringian Forest. Heavy defensive fighting at Saale River between Jena and Saalfeld (20 southwest Jena). South of there, weaker attacks against Frankenstein (unlocatable). In Main triangle at Bamberg, river crossed and city entered from east. In Steiger Forest, attacks from west repulsed at Gerolzhofen (11 mi. southeast Schweinfurt). Stronger attacks between Neustadt-on-Aisch and Heilbronn, further advance hindered by German attacks in flanks and rear. In northern part of Black Forest and in Rhine plains, attacks continue. Several kilometer gains south of Rastatt, which was lost.

(continued back)

WEST FRONT (continued)

COMMENTARY 1400 Apr 14 -- New bridgeheads over Elbe and Saale, bridgehead established at Saale-Elbe junction, counter-attacks in progress. Further south, broad front established on Saale between Elbe and Weissenfels, crossings repulsed. Area south of Weissenfels now focal point of West Front battle. Naumburg in German hands, recce thrusts on both sides of the city and in area of Jena pushing east. Fighting at Regau (7 miles southsouthwest Leipzig), Zeitz and along autobahn further south. Heavy fighting further south at Rudolstadt and Saalfeld.

EAST FRONT - London Apr 13 -- A Soviet Order of the Day, announced that Vienna has been cleared. During the recent drive into Austria, 11 German tank divisions were routed, and 1400 tanks and self-propelled guns destroyed as well as 2250 field guns. 130,000 POWs were taken. A 2nd Order of the Day revealed that the Soviets have crossed the border into Moravia and captured Goding on the west bank of the March River. This town lies 35 miles southeast of Brunn, capital of Moravia Province.

GER COM 1400 Apr 14 -- Fighting on both sides of upper Raab River. New Russian forces in action east of (?) and southeast of St. Polten (32 miles west Vienna). Vienna garrison resisting superior forces on west bank of Danube. Small Russian gains in March triangle. Several attacks between March and the source of the Nitra thrown back. Nothing new on remainder of front, except for mountain peninsula, where 20 Russian divisions are attacking with strong artillery and air support, achieving several breakthroughs.

LONDON April 13 -- Messages of tribute and condolence on the death of Pres. Roosevelt have been reaching Washington from all the United Nations. Roosevelt was taken to the White House today and will be buried at Hyde Park on Sunday. Tomorrow was set aside by Pres. Truman as a day of mourning. Roosevelt was stricken yesterday at Warm Springs while being sketched by an artist. He was overcome within a severe headache, soon became unconscious, and died in a few hours.

Congress met today, voted condolences to the President's family, and adjourned. In his last official proclamation, Truman said, "I earnestly recommend that the people assemble in their places of worship to pray for him whose death we mourn." Churchill told the House of Commons, "It is not fitting to continue our work today. We can show our respect by adjourning." It is the 1st time Parliament has ever adjourned for a foreign statesman. Churchill and H. M. The King sent messages to the family, the country and the new President.

From Moscow came Stalin's message, "The Soviets greatly valued Pres. Roosevelt as the organizer of the fight for freedom." De Gaulle said, "In the eyes of all mankind, Roosevelt was the symbol of the United Nations fight for freedom." Gen. Eisenhower pledged unrelenting action to finish the job.

Harry Truman is our 33rd President. The Vice-Presidency is vacant, but Stettinius as Sec'y of State is next in line. Truman conferred with Cabinet and military heads today as well as representatives of the United Nations. He will speak to a joint session of Congress tomorrow. Truman has stated, "I will make every effort to carry on as I believe the President would have done." The Cabinet is staying on. Truman announced that the San Francisco Conference would be held as scheduled.

AIR FRONT - London Apr 13 -- 8th USAAF heavies smashed at rail yards at Neumunster, north of Hamburg today. Berlin and Munich were hit 3 times during the day. There was no opposition from the Luftwaffe over the Ruhr pocket. 266 German planes were destroyed today, mostly on the ground.

LONDON - Apr 13 -- Bohol Island, north of Mindanao, was captured today. American subs have sunk 15 more Jap ships. B29s hit Tokyo.

The 8th Army offensive in Italy, launched 447 from the Adriatic to south of Bologna is meeting stiff resistance, although German units on the right flank south of Lake Comacchio seem to be partially disorganized. 5th Army troops on the Ligurian coast are continuing their advance toward Spezia.

Liberation of Stalag Luft 1

April 30, 1945

In April 1945 when it became obvious that *Stalag Luft 1* would be overrun by the Soviet Army, the senior Allied Officers drew up a defense plan. The plan required the seizure of the POW camp itself and the capture of the nearby Barth airfield.

In the last week of April, Commandant von Warnstedt met daily with Lt. Col. Zemke and tried to order the entire camp to take to the road, just steps ahead of the Russians advancing rapidly from the East. Zemke refused and held ground.

On April 30, 1945, the camp Commandant received a message that the POWs were to be put on 24 hour standby to move to a new location in the Hamburg area. He had several conferences with the Senior Allied Officer (SAO) and shared his orders to move the camp to prevent it from falling into the hands of the Russians. Lt. Col. Zemke stated that the POWs would not move unless force was used, so the German Commandant realized that "the end was near," and all the guards were withdrawn. They agreed that von Warnstedt and the guards would leave under the cover of darkness and head towards the American lines to surrender.

At about 10:00 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 Zemke, he formally took over the camp. The following morning the POW "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 camp.¹⁹¹

¹⁹¹ <https://www.b24.net/powStalag1.htm>

Freedom

May 1, 1945

“Then came May Day, and with it the Russians. They in turn brought liberation and...”

Leonard Levy, in his June 6, 1945 letter

Events¹⁹²

May 1, 1945 – The Russians enter Stalag Luft 1

May 8, 1945 - VE Day¹⁹³

May 12-13, 1945 – Stalag Luft 1 is Evacuated by 8th Air Force B-17s

May 12-13, 1945 – Arrival in Camp Luck Strike, LeHavre, France

May 29-30 - On leave in Paris

The German guards of Stalag Luft I fled from the approaching Red Army on the night of 30 April to 1 May 1945. Originally, they wanted to force the prisoners of war to leave the camp with them. But even under threat of armed force, Senior Allied Officer Colonel Zemke (USAAF) refused this order and so the prisoners of war virtually liberated themselves.

Former POW pilot Richard “Dick” Terrell wrote in a diary he kept at the time, “Jerry pulled out tonight. Americans manned the towers at 01:10.” On May 1, 1945, the Kriegies at Stalag Luft I awoke to no captors.

Zemke assumed control of the camp, setting up an MP force, his “Field Force,” in the camp to help establish some order. Scouts were sent from the camp to intercept the Russian forces, which they did five miles from the gates. Still they wondered, what would be their fate. The Russians appeared at the camp the next day. A special, single edition of a new newspaper, *The Barth Hard Times* reported “Russky Come!” Terrell reported in his diary, “Have had 4 RedX parcels issued, eating like rascals.”

StalagLuft1.de

¹⁹² Lt. Leonard (Lenny) Levy did not contain any May entry in his Log Book.

¹⁹³ Victory in Europe Day (VE Day) is observed on May 8, commemorating the formal acceptance of Germany's unconditional surrender in 1945, which marked the end of World War II in Europe. It is celebrated annually in various countries, particularly in Europe

On 1 May 1945 contact parties were sent out to make contact with Russian advance troops. After 2 or 3 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 PWs.

Stalag Luft 1 History¹⁹⁴



¹⁹⁴ <https://www.b24.net/powStalag1.htm>

Freedom, Part 2

May 2, 1945

“Then came May Day, and with it the Russians. They in turn brought liberation and...”

Leonard Levy, in his June 6, 1945 letter

The next day, May 2nd, more Russians arrived and Zemke lost control of the situation. Terrell reported, “Russians seem to be running things. Krieges [sic] going wild - lots of them taking off - lots of discontent...” For men who had been held behind barbed wire in some cases for years, there was no holding them back. Pilot James Baynham recalled, “Of course we went out. We couldn’t wait to get a taste of freedom.” Despite Zemke’s orders to stay put, the Russians commanded that the barbed wire be torn down. The city of Barth became complete chaos. Russian troops paraded through the streets with the ex-Kriegies, drinking, collecting souvenirs, and cowing the few locals left in Barth. The next day, the Russian commander declared martial law in the town. Several Americans were reported killed in the chaos and confusion that reigned.

Zemke ordered the liberated American POWs to stay put, fearing further losses in the chaotic last days of the war. With the exception of around 700 POWs who could no longer be held back and took to foot to make their way independently back to Allied lines, most of the POWs were still in Stalag Luft I to celebrate VE-Day on May 8th.

Senior British Officer of the camp, Group Captain Weir reported for *The Barth Hard Times*, “With the redemption of a continent, our exile is ended. Our barb-bound community will soon be a memory.”

StalagLuft1.de

BARTH



HARD TIMES

Vol. I No. 1 LAST SATURDAY MAY 5th 1945 PRICE 1 D-BAR.

Editor: E. E. W. THORPE. Press: THE L.M. SODDONS. Publisher: W. E. D. MACDONALD. Printing: F. L. J. D. WHITE.

RUSSKY COME!

As seen by LOWELL MENNET, I.N.S. War Correspondent

RELIEVED!

Colonel Zenke intended to write his appreciation of the relief of Stalag Luft 1, but unfortunately necessary duties have made this impossible. He has, in his own words, "taken a powder" to make final arrangements with the relieving Soviet forces.

It is therefore my privilege to introduce this Memorial Edition of the BARTH HARD TIMES. During the successes, reverses and vagrant periods encountered during this struggle, our newspaper has faithfully recorded the German war communique and expanded upon them in capable editorials.

With the redemption of a continent, our style is ended. Our barbed-community will soon be a memory. So, on behalf of Colonel Hubert Zenke, and myself, in all our fellow-kringles: GOOD LUCK!

G. U. C. E. Wain



WHAT D'YE KNOW- JOE!!

BRAITHWAITE FINDS UNCLE JOE

Contacts Russian Infantryman at Crossroads

Five miles South of Stalag One.

Major Braithwaite and Sgt Korson, our Stalag scouts, raced out to a crossroads 5 miles south of Barth with the order, "Find Uncle Joe". This was 4 p.m., May 1. They searched southward, defying a removed Russian cordon which was about

as brief and emphatic as their own order: "EVERYONE stay put; anyone seen moving will be shot on sight."

Nearby, Wing Commander Blackburn's telephone crew were ringing numbers in Braithwaite, hoping a Russian would

answer the phone and we could break the big news of our presence. "Try the mayor," they asked the girl (who was still working Barth's phone exchange). "Not a chance," said she. "Barth's mayor poisoned himself and Stralsund's mayor has sprouted wings."

Scouts Braithwaite and Korson pushed on 3 miles. The scenery: thousands of people everywhere; sitting down, waiting,

LIFE AND DEATH OF A GERMAN TOWN

TENSE MOMENTS WHILE ALLIES TAKE CONTROL

An air of tension hung over the camp for many days. The presence of the English and American armies on the Elbe and the Russian encirclement of Berlin made everyone feel that the end must be near. The commencement of a new Russian drive across the lower Oder toward the Baltic ports finally increased the tension to an almost unbearable pitch. Panic reigned in the Vorlager. No German had any more interest in guarding the prisoners, but only in saving his own life. Confidential reports were hurriedly burnt — and copies of "Mein Kampf" went to swell the flames.

Conference with the Kommandant

Finally, late in the afternoon, the Senior British and American officers were called to a conference with the German camp Kommandant Colonel Warnstedt. They were told that orders had been received to move the whole camp westward. Colonel Zemke stated he was not willing to move at all, and asked in that case what the German attitude would be. The Kommandant replied that he would not tolerate bloodshed in the camp; if we did not intend to move, he and his men would evacuate themselves and leave us in sole possession of the camp. When the Germans left it would be up to us to take over the camp peacefully and assume full control.

At approximately 1 A.M. on April 30 Major Steinhilber informed Group Captain Weir and Colonel Zemke that the Germans had evacuated the camp, leaving it in our charge. When the camp woke up in the morning it was to find itself no longer under armed guard and comparatively free.

Where are the Russians?

Our next problem was to establish contact with the Russian forces. It was decided to send out something in the nature of a reconnoitering patrol. An American Major, a British Officer speaking German, and an American Officer speaking Russian, set out with the German in the auto which was equipped with an American flag on one fender and a white flag on the other, to investigate the real situation in Barth and then proceed to the main Stralsund-Rostock road, some 15 kilometers south of the camp, to wait there for any signs of Russian spearheads or of the proximity of the front line. The first patrol returned in the early evening. Still no sign or news of the Russian Army, but they were coming!



Russian Contact (con. from Page 1)

Every house draped with red flags (who said the Germans weren't chameleons?). Suddenly, there was Uncle Joe — or one of his ambassadors: a chunky little Dead End guy who loomed up and flashed a variety of lethal weapons and a cacophony of Slavic language.

"Engliski", shouted the scouts.

"Never mind the words", said Joe's man, "this isn't Dulag" or something like that in Russian. And, without ceremony they went to the nearest Russian officer. It was 1st Lt. Alec Nick Karmyzoff, infantryman from Tulsa (you oughta see that written in Russian!) He'd fought his way from Stalingrad — three years across Russia, Poland and Germany — to the relief of Stalag Luft 1.

Toasts are Drunk.

Karmyzoff came in the main gate. Commanding Officers Zemke and Weir received him. Schnapps seared kriegie throats — glasses smashed Hitler's picture, the barracks jiggled with cheering and back-pounding. Toasts were drunk: "To the destruction of Germany — she will never rise again! And to our solid and enduring friendship." Karmyzoff went to the Russian barracks (our co-kriegies) — told them about himself, their army and the new life that was beginning. Thus the first contact. Karmyzoff bedded down on the floor — "Rather the floor than a German bed," said he. BBC announced Hitler dead; kriegies heard the "Hit Parade" from home; the excitement was exhausting. — But what an experience!

QUAKING BARTH BURGHERS BOW BEFORE REDS

As Russian tanks rumbled Northwards on the cobblestone roads from Stralsund, as Russian cavalry and guerilla troops tore hell bent for the Baltic, as the spluttering German radio flashed a staccato of place names that had gone under in the Red rip tide, Barth became an open city and an open grave. The few Americans who had been in town on camp chores from Stalag 1 knew that the life of Barth was a living death. We had seen the streets peopled by children and octogenarians, we had noticed that all males were either lame, halt, or blind; we had stared into empty shop windows, and we had seen the soldiers of the master race straggle back from the fronts dazed, whipped, harbingers of the ruin that stalked the streets of German towns. By April 30, this year of grace, the good burghers of Barth turned their faces to the wall and stopped hoping.

LET 'EM EAT CAKE

Life had not been good. In the bakery shop where the camp brot was made hung a sign; cake is not sold to Jews or Poles. It failed to explain that cake was not sold to the supermen either. There was no cake. But there were good things to eat in the larders of Barth, baking powder requisitioned from Holland, Nestles milk commandeered from Denmark, wines looted from the cellars of France, spaghetti and noodles hijacked from Italy, Worcestershire sauce which had trickled through mysteriously from England, olive oil drained from Greece, in short, all types of blood from the turnip of Europe. If Mussolini considered the Mediterranean his sea, Hitler considered the world his oyster and was trying to serve it up to the Reich on the half shell.

A House of Cards

As the first explosions from the flak school reverberated under the sullen Baltic sky, the new order toppled on Barth like a house of cards. Red flags and white sheets began to appear in the windows of the ginger bread houses. Flight was futile and the old stood quaveringly on their door steps, wringing gnarled hands and weeping. Pictures of Hitler were torn down and scattered like confetti. Two German children came wailing into the bakery shop. They had heard American airmen ate little boys and mother said the day of reckoning was at hand.

Barth, like the whole of Deutschland-über-alles Germany, was on its knees in terror. But mayhem did not materialize. Wine, not blood, flowed through the streets. We got drunk.

POWOW

EDITOR: Raymond Parker CO-EDITORS: Donald Austin, Eugene Gallagher

WAR ENDS

Barth, May 8, 1945....Today is "Victory in Europe" day. After five years and eight months of fighting the battle of Free Mankind, the United Nations have crushed and utterly defeated the Forces of Darkness represented by Nazism. Germany accepted Unconditional Surrender last night, and although official Allied announcements were delayed until today, the United Nations went wild with joy.

Truman and Churchill will broadcast this afternoon, and the King of England will speak this evening. In a congratulatory message to Eisenhower, the King said, "Many months ago you led the Allied Expeditionary Force across the English Channel, carrying with you the hopes and prayers of many peoples. All the world now knows that this force has accomplished its mission with a finality never achieved before..."

Czech Radio broadcast this morning that the Germans in Prague and the whole of Bohemia have surrendered unconditionally. The liberation of Norway was announced by members of the Norwegian Home Front. The Danish Parliament will hold its first session in over five years tomorrow.

The formal proclamation of V-E day did not come as a surprise, for the world knew the end was imminent as it watched the heads of the Nazi Hydra being lopped off, one by one. German Armies in Italy, Northern Germany, Denmark and Holland had surrendered unconditionally, and reports from the last resistance centers of Czechoslovakia and Norway pointed to a final collapse.

The race to surrender began with the mysterious death of Adolf Hitler and the fall of Berlin. Goebbels, Goering, and other Party men met obscure, violent deaths or disappeared completely.

Admiral Doenitz became ersatz-Fuhrer and established Headquarters in Copenhagen because Germany was no longer in German hands. But he couldn't pick up the pieces as fast as they fell, so he called in his U-Boats and told his Generals, who were doing it anyway, to surrender their Armies.

Meanwhile, it was open season on New Order satellites. Back in Italy, the Conqueror of Ethiopia, Il Duce, was lying beside his mistress for the last time -- on a stone slab in a Milan mortuary. Petain came to France to stand trial for High Treason. Laval squirmed in Spain, refusing to return to the France he betrayed. Quisling nervously warned Norwegians that his was the only legal government and promised to resist all attacks.

The momentous news which thrilled the outside world was taken in stride by Stalag Luft I, for Nazism's death throes were almost anti-climatic to the frenzied excitement of liberation by our Russian Brothers-in-Arms. Crowds were dancing in the streets of London and Paris, and America was mad with excitement, but life had picked up its pulse-beat for us again on April 30th when our seedy, disillusioned Volksturm guards fled for their lives toward the Allied lines.

But now, with other free men, we turn our thoughts toward the World that is to be, and to the San Francisco Conference from which its outline will emerge. We are thinking as well of the War against Japan, for that nation now stands alone, its Asiatic Fascism doomed to fall before the concerted might arrayed on the side of Freedom. Victory in Europe has released vast forces for this task.

We at Stalag Luft I are ready to play our part in the events foreshadowed by this day, ready to paddle out of Berth's stagnant backwater into the main stream. We came to Europe and learned to appreciate America. We fought and learned why we were fighting. In retrospect, we are proud of our share in bringing about this glorious occasion. Our planes brought the War home to the enemy. We were the Vanguard of Victory.

Evacuation of Stalag Luft 1 May 11-14, 1945



Barth Airdrome¹⁹⁵ taken over by the Allies

Following the arrival of the Russians on the 2nd May 1945, the liberated prisoners set about clearing the airfield in preparation for their repatriation. May 12-14, 1945 approximately 9,000 prisoners of war at Stalag Luft I were flown out of Barth, Germany and back into Allied control. Royal Air Force POWs were flown back to England and the American POWs were flown to Camp Lucky Strike in Le Harve, France, where they were processed and waited for a liberty ship to return to the states. The American POWs were fittingly evacuated by 8th Air Force B-17s on 12-13 May 1945.

"The Russians wanted the prisoners transported by land to Odessa, a port on the Black Sea, then by ship to the United Kingdom and then on to the United States, but the idea was rejected and further negotiations followed. Much to the disappointment of almost 9,000 liberated POWs, it took almost two weeks to repatriate the prisoners by air.

On May 11th, the Allies secured permission to use an airport adjacent to the camp for the

¹⁹⁵ The Luftwaffe Base was between the Barth Concentration Camp and Stalag Luft 1. Public image from *Operation Revival: Rescue from Stalag Luft I* at www.nationalww2museum.org

evacuation on the 12th and 13th, within a specific time block of hours. A corridor for travel over Russian occupied territory was set up and by then all the POWs had their meager belongings together. The evacuation plan was to first take the hospital cases and the sick, next the British Troops who for the most part had been in captivity longer than any other prisoners, dating back to 1940. The prisoners were marched in barracks groups to the airport to avoid clogging the highway and loading area.

The first plane to arrive on the 12th was a B-17 with Gen. William Gross on board, who was the Commander of the 1st. Air Division of the Eighth Force. A C-46 followed with Officers of Gen. Eisenhower's Staff. Two more B-17s arrived with communication equipment and personnel to establish links with the Eighth Force. Later in the afternoon 30 - 40 more B-17s arrived. The floors of B-17s were equipped with wood decking material to provide a level floor, thereby able to accommodate 25 -30 POWs with a few packed into the radio compartment.

Early on the morning of the 13th the sick and wounded were evacuated in six C-46s. Dozens of additional C-46s and C-47s joined the B-17s in the evacuation process. The aircraft crept slowly as the men jumped in and piled up in most cases. They were anxious to be on their way home. They had no idea how many groups participated in the evacuation. On the morning of the third day, the 14th, the remaining men were all flown out aboard B-17s. The last prisoner aboard was Col. Zemke and according to Col. Zemke's records 8487 prisoners had been evacuated."

Charles Reed Holden
South Compound - Stalag Luft I







Camp Lucky Strike

Normandy, France

May 14-31, 1945



As the war in Europe came to a close, staging camps previously used for replacements coming into the European theater did an about-face. In the summer of 1945, Camp Lucky Strike in St. Valery, France, 45 miles from the port of Le Havre, became a massive tent city for American troops preparing to embark on the voyage home. Demobilization in Western Europe was carried out primarily through Camp Lucky Strike and nine other camps, eight in France and one in Belgium. These holding areas took their code names from brands of popular cigarettes, hence they became known as the “cigarette camps.” Camp Lucky Strike was the largest cigarette camp, with a capacity of 58,000 troops awaiting transportation back to the United States. Camp Lucky Strike was designated “RAMP Camp No. 1” and was the chief assembly point for newly-liberated American prisoners of war, or RAMPs [Recovered American Military Personnel.]

The airstrip on which Lucky Strike was built served as the main thoroughfare in the camp, with tent cities arranged in areas designated alphabetically A-D. Each region had its own infrastructure with churches, PX-shops, souvenir depots (“booty tents” where one registered their war trophies), barbers, and auditoriums. RAMPs spent time lounging around Lucky Strike, drinking coffee at the American Red Cross Java Junction or reuniting with old friends or crew members from whom they had been separated. While RAMPs were used to waiting and some entertainment was provided with movies shown nightly in

some of the larger tents, many slipped through the gate and escaped the camp, as they had desired to do while prisoners.

In wartime, as POWs were freed, the War Department ruled that any American held prisoner for more than 60 days would be returned to the United States rather than returned to their units. This became a bigger challenge when the war ended and 93,000 RAMPs began to assemble. Most of the American POWs in Europe had already been assembled (by the Germans) at Stalag VIIA in Moosburg near Munich. Some were trucked part of the way to Strasbourg and then flown in C-47s to Camp Lucky Strike. Around 7,000 former “Guests of the Third Reich” from Stalag Luft I were flown to LeHavre in B-17s as part of Operation Revival. After making their way to Lucky Strike, the RAMPs began to be “processed.”

Showers and delousing happened immediately upon arrival, followed by the issuing of new equipment. Many RAMPs were wearing the same torn rags they had lived in for months. New uniforms took the place of the hodge-podge of styles cobbled together by the former prisoners of war. This alone gave many RAMPs peace of mind and restored a little bit of their humanity.

Then the RAMPs were given medical examinations: x-rays, blood and urine tests, and inoculations. Many RAMPs required hospitalization due to respiratory infections or malnourishment. A 350-bed hospital run by the 77th Field Hospital expanded to a 1500-bed capacity augmented by the 306th General Hospital. RAMPs in need of convalescence (some arrived via hospital train) were assigned to Block “C” of Lucky Strike.

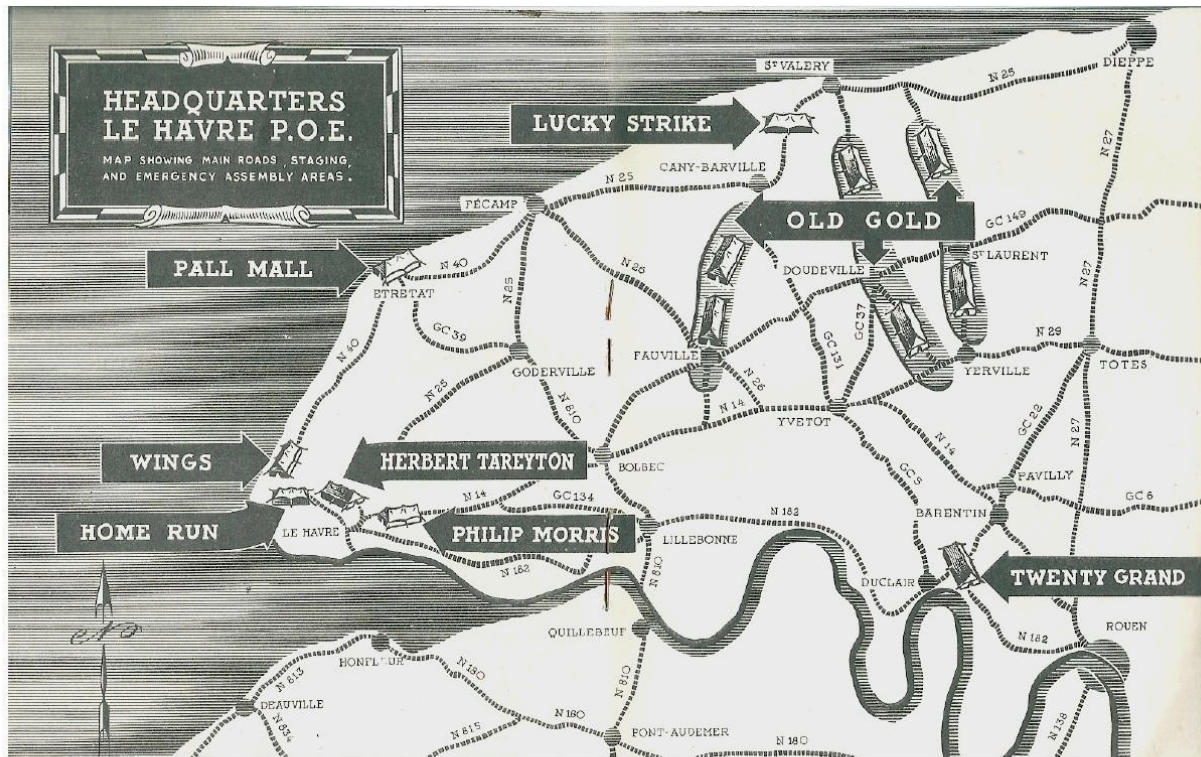
Once RAMPs (and the other troops) in Lucky Strike received departure orders, they were trucked to staging areas at the port. Personnel rosters were compiled, medical checks were conducted, baggage was inspected and shipped (“Troops embarking may carry no more than 25 lbs. In excess of issued equipment.”) Finally, they were ready to board ships for the 18-day voyage home to the East Coast of the United States.

www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/camp-lucky-strike

American Military Hobo

Normandy, France and elsewhere...

May 17-30, 1945



© WW2 US Medical Research Centre

While RAMPs [Recovered American Military Personnel] like Lenny Levy were used to waiting, many slipped through the gate of Camp Luck Strike and escaped the camp, as they already had done at Stalag Luft 1. The prime destination for these unsanctioned leaves (as well as sanctioned ones) was Paris, about 100 miles from Lucky Strike. American military hobos were plentiful on the stretch of road from LeHavre to the City of Lights.

www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/camp-lucky-strike



Lenny Levy's Signed¹⁹⁶ Souvenir Money from Luxembourg



¹⁹⁶ The signatures on the front side appear to be mostly GIs; visible names include Lt. Col. A. F. Briggs - his CO from the 388th, Nathan Lichtenholtz and Jonas I. Lipman from Pre-flight, two Stalag Luft 1 campmates Jack Moskowitz and Saul Zelman, fairly legible images of signatures from Sydney Boulanger, Raymond H. Benjamin, Beau Brooks, Thomas J. Feely, Bill Garfield, Eddie Holtz, Kenneth Livingston, Phillip Loring, Phil Newkirk, Arthur H. Rehan, Arline Simmons and Forest Spiegel. The signatures on the reverse side are more faded than the front.

Camp Lucky Strike

Normandy, France

May 17, 1945

May 17, 1945

Dearest wife -

Another day has almost passed with nothing visibly done to get me home to you. Just about all they have for us to do here is eat and sleep with not too much of the former because of the diet we are on; they are trying to build us up again.

The name Sunny France is a truly appropriate one - and in the three days I've been at the camp I've acquired an enviable coat of tan. The days are quite warm, but the evenings are rather cool. Thanks to the sleeping bag I was issued, I manage to keep comfortable at night.

As near as I can figure it, my darling, I should be leaving here in a week for La Havre and a boat for the States and you. After docking, I'll be given a sixty day leave which I plan to spend with you and you alone. I do miss you and love you so very much, Butch.

When the sixty days run out, I must report to Fort Devens¹⁹⁷ for a physical check up. If physically all right I'll be sent to an Army base near home I think, for three months of light duty - you will be there with me my sweet. From there on I don't know what cooks, but I have hope of being released.

Syl darling, as yet I don't have those pearls I promised to come back with. I do have a few souvenirs of my stay at 'Barth on the Baltic' - not too much; just enough to remind me of the hard times spent as a Krieger. As you probably know by now, the Rock¹⁹⁸ was not with Chris¹⁹⁹ and myself at Barth. He was wounded the day we were shot down and we haven't seen him since.

¹⁹⁷ In 1940, at the onset of World War II, Fort Devens (Ayers, Mass.) was designated a reception center for all men in New England who would serve one year as draftees. A massive \$25 million building project was begun, including more than 1200 wooden buildings and an airfield.

¹⁹⁸ Raymond (Rock) Newmark was the Bombardier of *Shack Rabbits*. He was a POW at Stalag Luft 3.

¹⁹⁹ Chris Christiani was the Pilot of *Shack Rabbits*. He was a POW at Stalag Luft 1 with Lenny.

Judging from your letters, he hasn't written to you. Wonder what has happened to him?

Butch darling, in yesterday's letter I told you to make all the plans for that sixty days of heaven in store for us - I meant it. Don't worry about the money end of it as we'll have plenty of that.

Am saving my horror story until I see you, also the experiences I've had these past seventeen months. Not being much of a *writer*, I feel that I can *tell* them much better. One thing I will say - all that you've read or heard about the Nazis is true. I've seen it with my own eyes.

Time for Chow again my darling so with all my love to you I'll close now.

Regards to everybody at home. Tell Betty-May that her favorite (?) uncle is coming soon. (Am I still the favorite?)

Good night my darling and remember that always and all ways I love you very much.

Good night my darling,

I love you
Lenny

Camp Lucky Strike

Normandy, France

May 30, 1945

30 may 1945

Dearest wife

Blame it on Paris - Paris in the Spring - for not having heard from me in almost a week. Getting fed up with this place and its inactivity; three of us just took off and went there to see if twenty million Frenchmen are wrong or not - they aren't! Paris my darling is all anyone has ever said about it, and then some. The sights are truly magnificent and the women breathtaking. It all made me homesick and so damn lonely for you Butch that I wasn't very good company for the other two. My biggest regret was that you weren't on my arm as I paraded down the Champs d'Elysees.



We took in everything, from the Louvre down to the dingiest bar in Pigalle. The Eiffel Tower, Arc de Triomphe, Place de L'opera, Concorde, Trinite Church, along with Napoleon's tomb and the Louvre were all included in our itinerary. I have a few pictures and some other stuff as souvenirs that *Paree* is famous for.

Things have finally started to move here. I've been issued some officers' clothing and should be on a boat in a week or ten days. Seems if the Army just won't let us be together on our wedding anniversary. Golly Butch - I'd give my arm to be with you right now - but never fear sweet - our time is coming, sixty glorious days and nights of it.

My first stop after leaving the boat will be Fort Devens²⁰⁰; I shouldn't be there more than three days, and from there home. I shall call you at least once a day from there. We have been separated into various sections according to the state from which we came. Directly across from me sleeps none other than Leo Mascolo, we shall, no doubt, be together from here on. The USO²⁰¹ and ARC²⁰² are really doing a bang up job for us R.A.M.P.'s²⁰³ I've already seen some damn good shows and tomorrow Alec Templeton is going to play for us. The ARC always has plenty of coffee, egg nog, etc. and they never run out!

Butch darling, the two weeks spent here have been harder and longer to spend than the past year and a half all told, only because I know that I am so near to seeing you and holding you in my arms once again. I love you so very much my darling - soon, very soon you shall [have] physical proof of my great love for you.

Take good care of yourself my darling and remember always that I love you.

Good night my darling,

I love you
Lenny

Regards to all at home
L

²⁰⁰ In 1940, at the onset of World War II, Fort Devens (Ayers, Mass.) was designated a reception center for all men in New England who would serve one year as draftees. A massive \$25 million building project was begun, including more than 1200 wooden buildings and an airfield.

²⁰¹ The United Service Organizations Inc. (USO) is an American nonprofit-charitable corporation that provides live entertainment, such as comedians, actors and musicians, social facilities, and other programs to members of the United States Armed Forces and their families.

²⁰² American Red Cross

²⁰³ Recovered Allied Military Personnel

France – Letter 2

June 4, 1945

4 June 1945

Dearest wife -

Time is one thing I have plenty of but they manage to keep me running around just enough so that I don't get the opportunity to write as often as I would like. By now - I should have signed enough papers and 'sweated out' enough lines to get me on the boat, this should happen soon! As near as I can figure, I will be on the next shipment to leave here - this means that within a week I should be homeward bound.



Life here would be extremely miserable except for two things, one being that I am so close to you and have my darling, the other is that Fécamp [Abbey], the home of the original Benedictine, is within easy commuting distance . Benedictine is the liquor made in a monastery and known all over the world. A few of the boys make a daily run into town and we hold a party almost every night. It can't be taken straight, so we bribe a mess hall officer each day for some fruit juice.

One other thing that makes life livable is the amount of Red Cross tents on the base; if they weren't here we'd go hungry due to the 'diet' the Army has us on, because we are ex-PWs our stomachs cannot take too much good food so we get what is known as a bland diet - plenty of eggs, chicken, lean meat and eggnog. You'd go big for that last item. Butch.

Incidentally sweet, the three things that made my trip to Paris so enjoyable were (1) sleeping in a spring bed with clean sheets, (2) eating in a dining room with a table-cloth on the table and waitresses serving us, and (3) being treated like an officer again. Everything in Paris has been taken over by the Army and North R.A.M.P.'s.²⁰⁴ Everything was free to us. We were given a hotel room, free mess and all the good entertainment we wanted. More about the shows when I see you. Speaking of entertainment, last night they held a dance here - forty girls and four thousand fellows. I read the world almanac for an hour and came back to my tent and went to sleep. That remark I made in my first letter about sunny France is not true - out of the twenty days I've been here, it has rained on all but one; this is due, no doubt, to the fact that we are on the Channel and get that English weather.

Butch darling, in one of my last letters to you before I was shot down I asked you to send me a wedding band - naturally I never received it (not being around when it came.) Please, my sweetheart, have one waiting for me when I get home. I'm so terribly happy to be married to you that I want people to know at a glance that I am married to you. I love you so very much my darling that this waiting here is driving me crazy. Hanging around here as a free man is almost as bad as being behind barbed wire only because I know that soon we will be together again for keeps.

Butch darling, this will have to do until tomorrow only because I can't collect my thoughts anymore. Give my love and regards to all at home but save my special love for yourself my darling for I do love you so much.

Good night my darling,

I love you
Lenny



²⁰⁴ Recovered Allied Military Personnel

France – Letter 3

June 6, 1945

6 June 1945

Dearest wife

Not a thing of any importance has happened since my last letter to you. As a result I'm still hanging around waiting for the order putting us aboard a ship for home. We've been given promises by Generals that we'll leave here by mid-month, so it can't be much longer. My optimistic prediction that we would be together for our anniversary was too much so, but by all that's right, we should celebrate my birthday the way it should be, in each other's arms. I do love you so very much my darling.

Last night it dawned on me that any and all letters I wrote to you since the first of the year were in all probability never sent out of Germany; therefore quite a few pertinent facts mentioned in these letters were never received by you. Going back to the first of the year I'll try to list a few of the more important happenings.

Shortly after the first of the year my sinus attacks became acute and I was sent to a hospital²⁰⁵ sixty miles north of Berlin. Proving the adage "It's a small world"; I met Mickey Lassman there. He is married to Bea Kroopnick. You should know her, as she is a friend of Lil's²⁰⁶ (so Mickey told me.) He too was a P.O.W., captured somewhere in France. Like many others, he was eagerly awaiting news from home to hear whether he was the father of a boy or girl. (Your letter telling me about it came in March, and try as I could, I couldn't get the good news to him.)

Coming back to camp, after a month of treatment I found that all the boys of Jewish faith had been segregated into one barrack so I had to leave Chris and move in with what turned out to be a bunch of swell fellows. We've already made plans for a reunion in New York sometime during our leave. It promises to be quite an affair.

March was uneventful unless the fact that we almost starved means anything. They were indeed dark days - moldy bread, watery turnip soup and

²⁰⁵ About 100 kilometres north of Berlin is a small town called Lychen. In the early twentieth century, the city was a health resort with a health center called the Heilanstalt **Hohenlychen**. In 1935, SS officer and doctor Karl Gebhardt became head of the clinic and transformed the clinic from a treatment center for tuberculosis patients to an orthopedic clinic. In 1939, Hohenlychen was converted into a military hospital, still headed up by Gebhardt.

²⁰⁶ Lillian (Lil) R. Geetter is married to Sylvia's youngest brother Nathan A. Geetter

undrinkable coffee being our complete diet. Finally during the last weeks of the month, thousands of Red Cross parcels arrived and our morale went up. Disaster, however, struck early in the morning of April 4th - our mess hall burned completely down. Luckily, very little food was lost. Now we had to cook in our room in addition to sleeping and living there. Because of my cooking knowledge, I was made room cook - a job I held until the very end. We made the most of a bad situation and at times thanks to parcels from home manage to have some fairly good meals.

Things rode on fairly smoothly throughout April, and then came May Day, and with it the Russians. They in turn brought liberation and here I am, my sweet, eagerly awaiting seeing you again.

Last night a few of us held a premature reunion party. The refreshments were liquid only - two bottles of Champagne and sixty miniature battles of Benedictine. Your husband was a sick man by eleven o'clock! The only mixer we had was a case of lemon juice powder that we talked a mess officer out of. It was sour but served the purpose. Yesterday I sweated out the line to the P.X. and managed to get a few more souvenirs mostly for you my darling. Hope you like them when you see them. France being known for its things for women, I'm at a loss as to what to get for my many male relations. There just isn't anything worthwhile buying.

Once again Butch, I've run out of words not only of what to say, but of how to tell you just how much I miss you and love you. Can you be content with 'I love you' until the day I'm home and can hold you in my arms and kiss you and --- ? Truly Syl, it will take the entire sixty days for me to say and do all that I want to say and do to, and with, you.

Good night my darling,

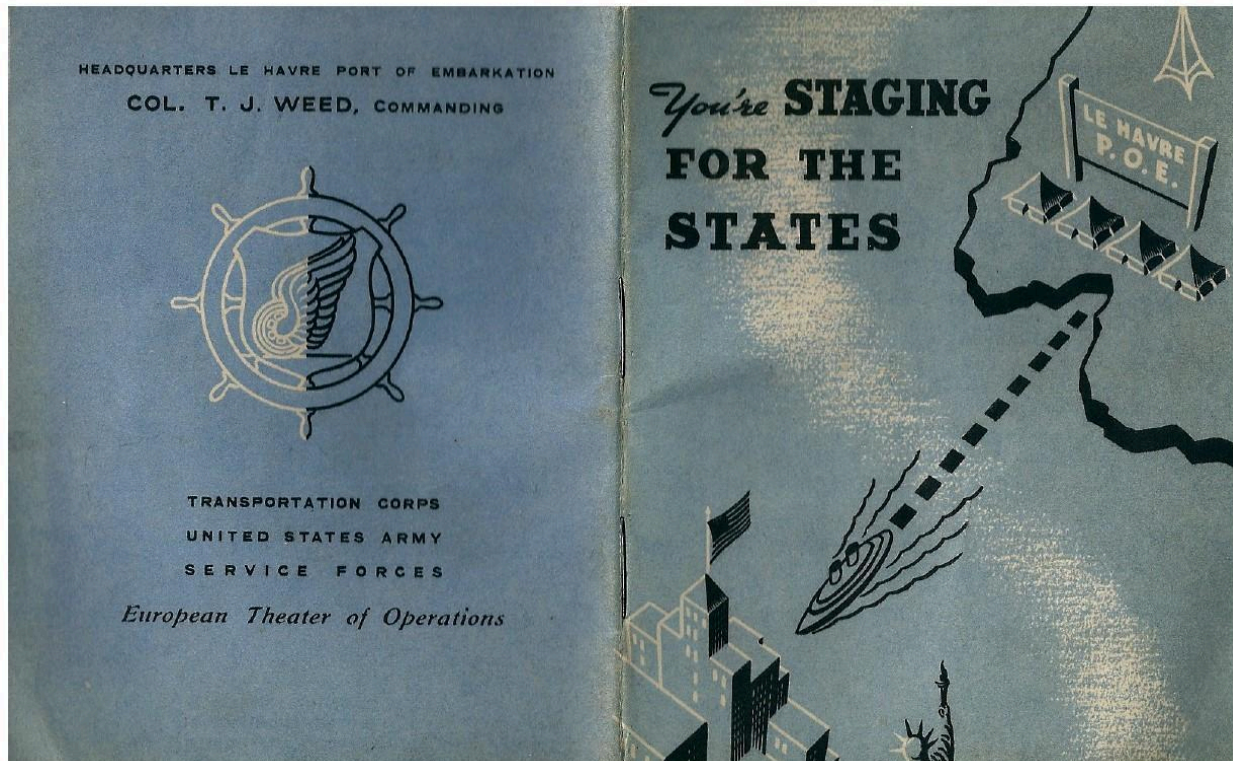
I love you
Lenny

Good news my sweet, the Army says I won't have to go to the Pacific.

Love you
Lenny

Lt. Leonard Levy - Navigator - [was last seen in] Le Havre, France - 10 June 1945.

Augustine (Chris) Benedict Christiani,
Missing Crew Report, March 6, 1944



Lt. Levy, Nazi Captive, Saved Life of Pilot Now Home

June 22, 1945 (undated)

Lt. Levy, Nazi Captive, Saved Life of Pilot Now Home

Second Lt. Leonard Levy, an Army Air Force navigator, was taken prisoner by the Germans Mar. 6 last year. And ever since that date his wife, Mrs. Sylvia Geetter Levy, 148 Magnolia St., has been following the war news closely for word of her husband and his air force comrades in German prison camps.



Lt. Levy

According to word received today by Mrs. Levy, she now knows that her husband saved the life of 2nd Lt. Raymond Newmark, pilot, of Brooklyn when their plane was shot down by a group of Messerschmitt pursuit planes near the Dutch border. Lieutenant Newmark is one of the 463 wounded U. S. Army men just returned from Germany by diplomatic exchange. Newmark declared in an interview with a New York news-

paper that he owed his life to Levy. "He adjusted my parachute and tapped me on the shoulder and I jumped."

Lieutenant Levy was heard from Apr. 14 last year when he spoke with a group of American prisoners of war on a German propaganda broadcast which was picked up here by short wave radio. He declared he was in good health and urged his wife to be brave. He later wrote that he met three Hartford boys in the prison camp: George Goldstein, Leo Mascola and Samuel Laffman.

He later wrote to his wife, "American Red Cross packages bearing the labels of the Hartford Chapter are the best morale boosters in the world as far as any Hartford prisoners of war are concerned."

Lieutenant Levy, the son of Mr. and Mrs. Arthur Levy, 108 Colebrook St., entered the Army in November, 1942. He has been overseas since December, 1943. He is a graduate of Weaver High School and was employed by the United Tool and Dye Company before he was called to the service. His brother, Pvt. Norman Levy, is stationed in Indiana.

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²⁰⁷ 2nd Lt. Raymond (Rock) Newmark was the Bombardier of the Shack Rabbits. 2nd Lt. Augustus (Chris) cristiani was the pilot. Lenny did talk about "accidentally reaching in front of Pilot Cristiani helping him prepare to evacuate the plane and receiving a bullet in the bicep from the shot."

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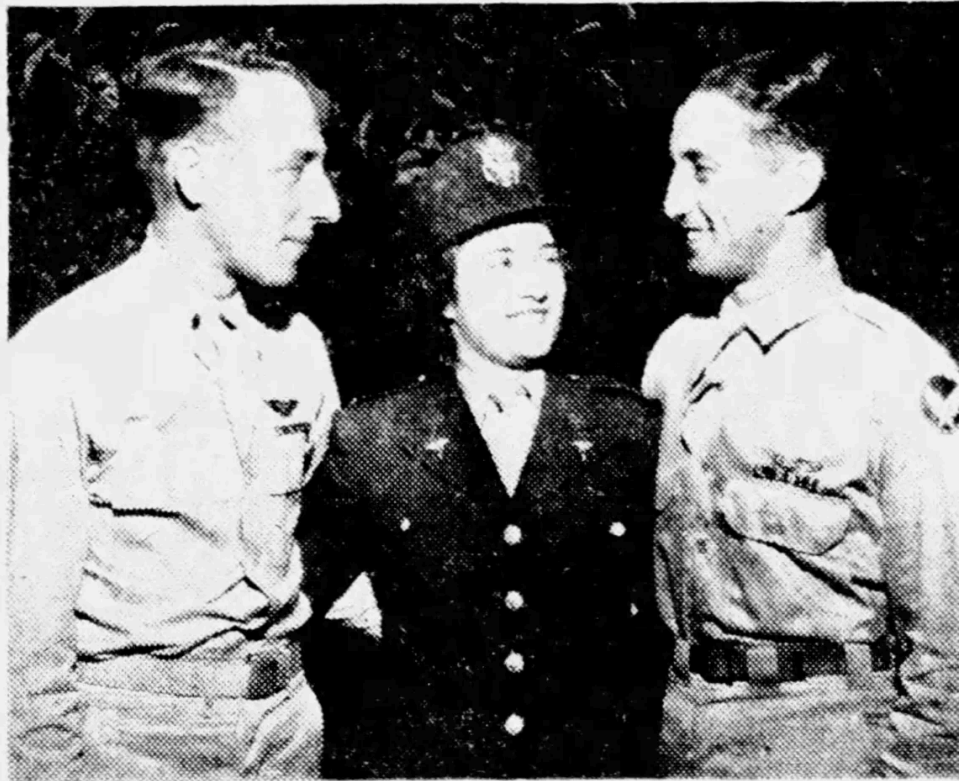
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Lenny's Return - Hartford Courant

June 22, 1945

Neighbors Hold Joyous Reunion



A newspaper clipping about the homecoming of Lenny (left) and Leon (right), with Leon's sister in the middle, June 22, 1945

Leonard "Lenny" Levy was born on July 3, 1918, to Arthur Michael Levy and Sarah Wisotsky in Hartford, Connecticut. Lenny had one brother, Norman Levy. Lenny attended Weaver High School in Hartford.

After completing his training, Lenny worked for United Tool & Die Corporation, an aerospace metals manufacturer. Lenny worked there until he enlisted in the United States Air Force on November 24, 1942. He was given identification number "T-61298" and began basic navigator training in Selman Fields, Louisiana.

It was here that one day he unexpectedly ran into his neighbor, Leon Anthony Mascolo, at the post office. Leon was also training to be a navigator. Lenny and Leon were also in the same class at Weaver High School. From the beginning to the end of their service, their paths would cross several times.

Lenny married Sylvia Geetter, from Hartford, on June 12, 1943.

After completing his training, Lenny was assigned to the 561st Bomb Squadron, 388th Bomb Group, which was based at RAF Knettishall in England. From here, Lenny flew several missions against Germany.

During Lenny's last mission, he managed to leave the plane in time. Lenny was captured soon after, at 16:30, in Neuringe and then taken to Dulag Luft and Stalag Luft 1, where he served the rest of the war. Here he also encountered Leon Anthony Mascolo, who was shot down three days after Lenny.

After the liberation Lenny, together with Leon Anthony Mascolo, returned to America. When Lenny's wife received the message that her husband had arrived in America she was sitting on Mrs. Mascolo's porch.

Dutch site



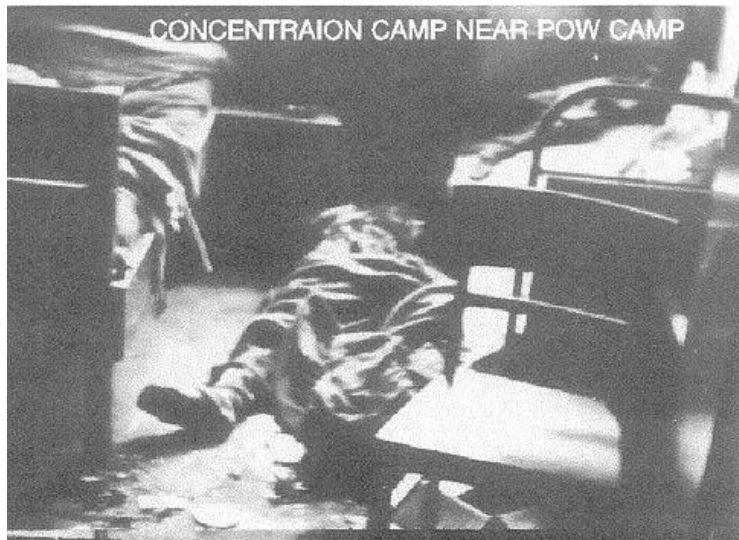
Sylvia (Butch) Geetter Levy and Lt. Leonard (Lenny) Levy

July 1945, undated

'The destruction of Germany's great war industries was accomplished almost entirely from the air. No one can stand among their ruins without a feeling of awe for the devastating power of such attacks. The courage and skill of our pilots and their crews in these operations is legendary. They deserve the highest tribute of our people'

The Honorable Henry L. Stimson, Secretary of War, 1945

Official Report²⁰⁸ on Barth Concentration Camp
by 2nd Lt. Leonard Levy AC



Barth²⁰⁹, Germany Concentration Camp

300 prisoners were liberated on May 1, 1945 by advancing Russians. Most of these were starved and seriously ill, the remnants of an over-packed concentration camp, which a few days ago held about 4000 men. Too weak to walk, they had been left behind when the other prisoners were evacuated by sea several days before the arrival of the Russian army. It is believed that these prisoners were drowned - the most convenient means of execution.

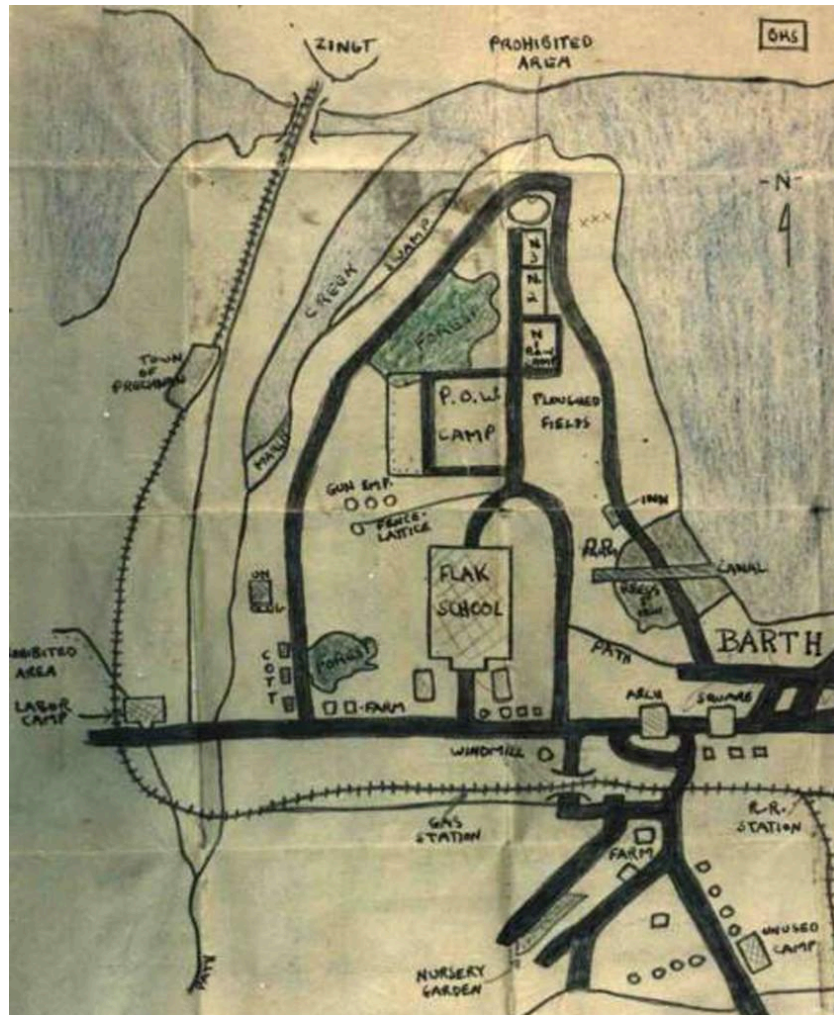
The Barth Concentration Camp²¹⁰ was intended for a smaller number but as the German army retreated, thousands of concentration camp survivors were brought to Barth. The camp is surrounded by electrically charged barbed wire.

The buildings were three story brick structures built very sturdy, and prisoners were allowed no communication with the outside.

²⁰⁸ Written in pencil by Lt. Leonard (Lenny) Levy as a free man.

²⁰⁹ Barth was the only Nazi municipality with both a POW camp and a Concentration Camp. It also had a Luftwaffe Air Training Base with anti-aircraft (flak) posts, a military garrison and an active armaments and aircraft industry.

²¹⁰ Concentration camp Barth, officially KZ-Außenlager Barth, was a sub-camp of concentration camp Ravensbrück and was in use from November 1943 to spring 1945. It housed prisoners who performed forced labour in the nearby Heinkel-Flugzeugwerke factory. A total of 7,000 people were imprisoned here, an unknown number of whom died as a result of the poor working and living conditions.



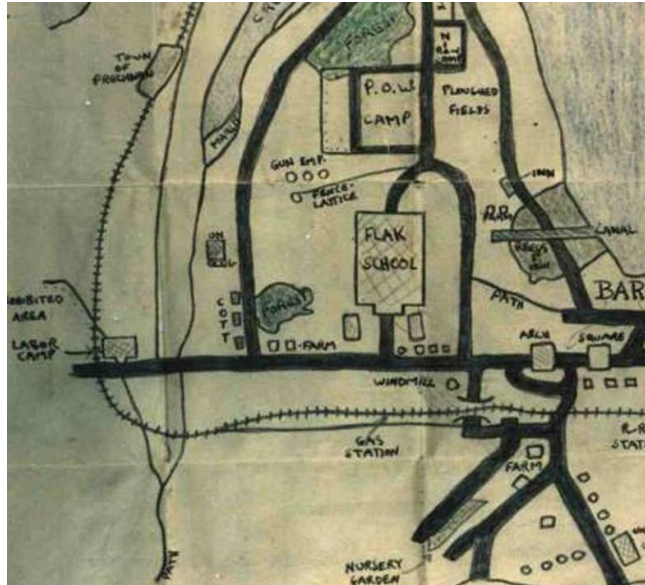
Barth Map²¹¹ 1945

Stalag Luft 1 is labeled *POW Camp* and N1²¹², N2 and N3 at top
 Concentration Camp is Labeled Labor Camp at Left

Twenty eight three decker beds were jammed into small cells. Each straw-covered bed accommodated 2-3 men. Toilet facilities were not made available after the failure of the water supply and the floors were covered with human waste and vomit. The men were forced to eat, sleep and live in deplorable conditions. Many were unable to get out of their vermin ridden beds.

²¹¹ Public Image from *Stalag Luft 1 Online* at <http://www.merkki.com/>

²¹² Lt. Leonard (Lenny) Levy was formerly imprisoned in the North 1 compound



Barth Map²¹³ 1945

Luftwaffe Air Training Center²¹⁴ is labeled *Flak School* in center

Inspecting Russian officers shook their heads as they looked at the horrible filth of the prisoners' living quarters. They remarked that they had seen much worse in Russia and Poland where millions have died in concentration camps.

Most of the prisoners had been evacuated from other concentration camps to the east and west of Barth, Germany. Nationalities consisted of Czech, Russian, Polish, Greek, Hungarian, French and Italian, mostly of the Jewish faith.

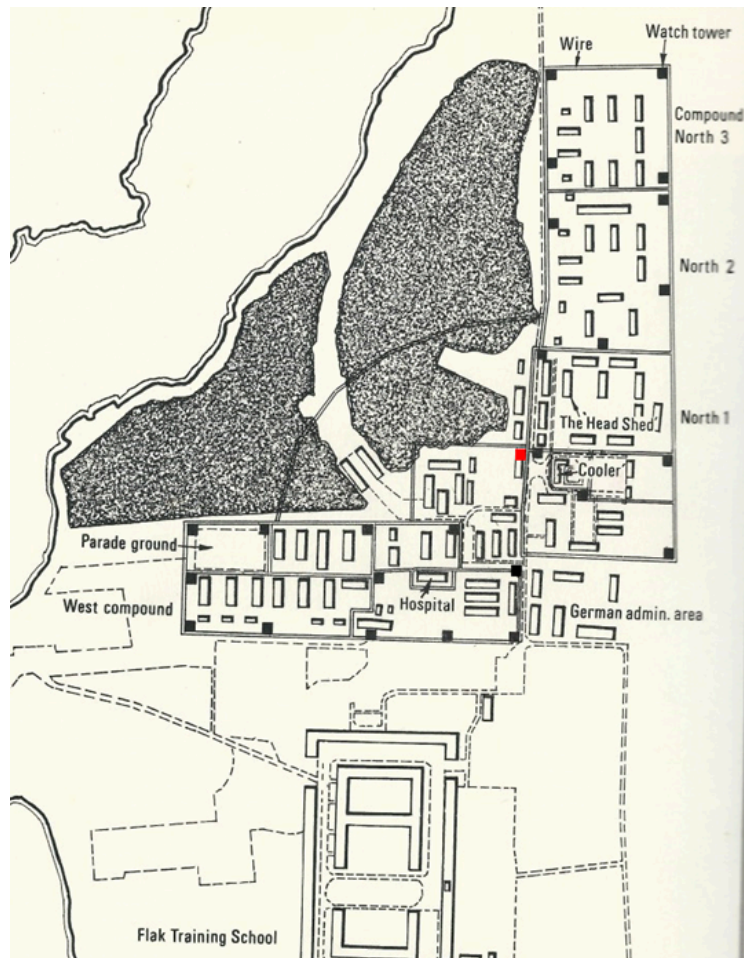
Only a few were strong enough to be interviewed. Most cases were sunken eyed skeletons covered with ulcers, filth and vermin. British and American medical officers²¹⁵ from the POW camp were rushed to remove the

²¹³ Public Image from *Stalag Luft 1 Online* at <http://www.merkki.com/>

²¹⁴ The Luftwaffe Base, Garrison, and Munitions were all under the control of the freed POWs of Stalag Luft, when the Russians arrived on May 2, 1945.

²¹⁵ Lt. Leonard (Lenny) Levy was the First Aid Officer at Stalag Luft 1; he would have been one of the first on the scene once the POW found the Concentration Camp survivors.

men to a captured²¹⁶ Luftwaffe Hospital a block away from the concentration camp.



Barth Map - Stalag Luft 1

Luftwaffe Air Training Center²¹⁷ is labeled *Flak Training School* at bottom
Stalag Luft 1 is labeled *West Compound* and North1²¹⁸, North 2 and North3

A Czech Jewish doctor from Prague said that of the 300 that were evacuated from the Poulet camp near Stetten weeks ago all had died en route

²¹⁶ Again, the Hospital had also been captured by the POWs of Stalag Luft 1. It is clearly labeled on the map that follows.

²¹⁷ The Luftwaffe Base, Garrison, and Munitions were all under the control of the freed POWs of Stalag Luft, when the Russians arrived on May 2, 1945.

²¹⁸ Lt. Leonard (Lenny) Levy was formerly imprisoned in the North 1 compound

or after arrival at Barth. He had been in a number of concentration camps since 1941 the worst being Belsen-Bergen near Brunswick. Thousands of prisoners, he stated, had died of starvation, disease, ill treatment or had been killed by the Germans in a gas chamber and cremated at the camp.

At Barth, as in other concentration camps, the doctor said that prisoners were awakened at 4:30 AM, given one loaf of bread for an 8-man breakfast and sent out to work in German factories²¹⁹, railroads and fields until 6:00 PM. They were given no food during the day and on their return to camp were given a small bowl of soup. Only the strongest were able to survive.

Only workers received a food ration. If a man was unable to work due to illness, he received no food from the Germans. Beatings were a common occurrence in most of the camps... the doctor stated. If a man fell while he was working, his comrades were beaten off if they tried to assist him. Each man was sent out to work not knowing if he would live out the day.

When the prisoners went to work they were shackled and guarded from conversation with anyone but armed guards. Their clothing consisted of thin striped gray suits, ill fitted and made of cheap cotton. They wore the same garment in winter and summer. The prisoners were rushed out for roll calls and those straggling were beaten in the head with clubs, causing the deaths of many. The men were shot indiscriminately at the slightest provocation.

Interviews

A 16 year old Polish Jew, 6 years in a German prison camp. Helpless and listless and only able to stare when questioned. Does not know where his family is. Another 15 year old Polish Jew spent eight months at the Barth camp prior to which he had been in the Stetten camp. He was in the same deplorable condition. Only 24 out of the 2000 Greek Jews who were evacuated from the Stetten camp are still alive. On the way to Barth, hundreds were beaten and left dying on the road. One man had lived in NYC for 14 years. He returned to Greece in 1933 and served in the Greek army fighting against the Italians for six months before being taken prisoner by the Germans. His father, wife, five children, two brothers and a sister were all taken to concentration camps he has never heard from them.

²¹⁹ The prisoners of Barth Concentration Camp were forced to work at aircraft factories of the Heinkel company. Ernst Heinkel was a German aircraft designer, manufacturer, and Nazi Party member. He designed the world's first turbojet-powered aircraft, the Heinkel He 178.

One German Jew who spoke English had been in German concentration camps for six years. He is 40 years old and looks 60. Since 1939 he has been at many camps where beatings and bestiality were prevalent. He was so starved that all the doctors can permit him now is a half glass of milk every hour. After receiving medical care, some of the prisoners wander aimlessly into Barth looking more dead than alive. Could not seem to realize that they had been freed. Unto the Allied soldiers in town, they bowed in humble subservience.

German women were forced to assist in the care of prisoners. They were horrified at the condition of the prisoners and although they lived in the immediate vicinity claimed to have no knowledge of prevailing conditions.



KZ Barth Concentration Camp Memorial

This memorial was inaugurated in 1966 to commemorate the incredible suffering of the inmates of the concentration camp. They were forced to work as slaves for the aircraft manufacturing company of 'Ernst Heinkel' from 1943 to 1945. They were beaten, starved and 180 of them died and were buried here due to this inhumane treatment. There are four relief plates by the sculpture Jo Jastram which illustrate scenes of everyday life in the concentration camp. From here an educational path leads you through the area of the former concentration camp.

DOK Barth²²⁰

Förderverein Dokumentations- und Begegnungsstätte Barth e.V.

²²⁰ Public Image from DOK Barth (Förderverein Dokumentations- und Begegnungsstätte Barth e.V.)



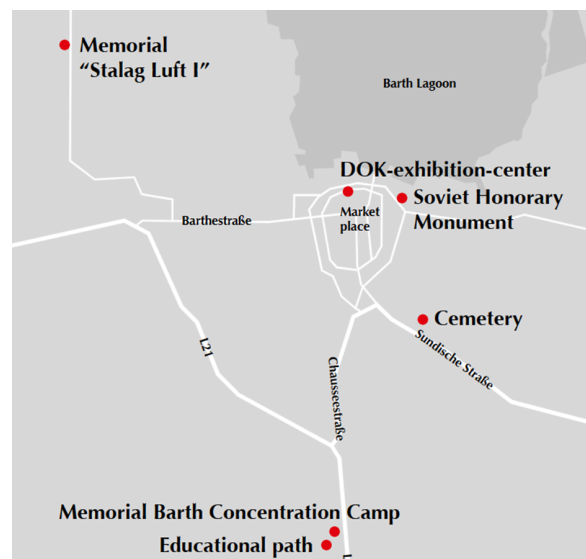
Memorial²²¹ stone for the prisoners of war (POW) camp *Stalag Luft I*

This plaque is dedicated by the citizens of Barth and the Royal Air Force Ex-Prisoners of War Association on 28 September 1996 to commemorate all those held prisoner at Stalag Luft I, sited here from July 1940 to May 1945: members of the British Commonwealth and United States of American Air Forces and their Allies from the occupied countries and the Soviet Union.

NOTHING HAS BEEN FORGOTTEN

DK Barth²²²

Förderverein Dokumentations- und Begegnungsstätte Barth e.V.



²²¹ Public Image from DOK Barth (Förderverein Dokumentations- und Begegnungsstätte Barth e.V.)

²²² <https://dok-barth.de/language/en/nichts-ist-vergessen-und-niemand-english/>