

DIARY

1944~1945

Captain Eric Bernard Horton 77095
1827/VIII F 2/1499

Preamble written by son, Captain Paul Horton

Captain Eric Bernard Horton, POW Diary was written whilst in German OFLAG 79 at Braunschweig (Brunswick) Quereum near Hanover and the Weser. Previously home of a German Parachute Regiment and close to Herman Goring Aircraft Engine Factory, also manufacturing V1 & V2 rocket bombs.

Eric was incarcerated as a PoW at OFLAG 79 on 04th June 1944.

Liberated by USA Ninth Army 12th April 1945.

Eric was a POW for a total of 512 days, with 312 days at OFLAG 79.

Eric was captured on the Greek Island of Leros by German forces 16th November 1943. He was wounded in the back and shoulder by shrapnel from a mortar round which killed an SAS Major who was firing a machine gun with Eric feeding in the ammo belt.

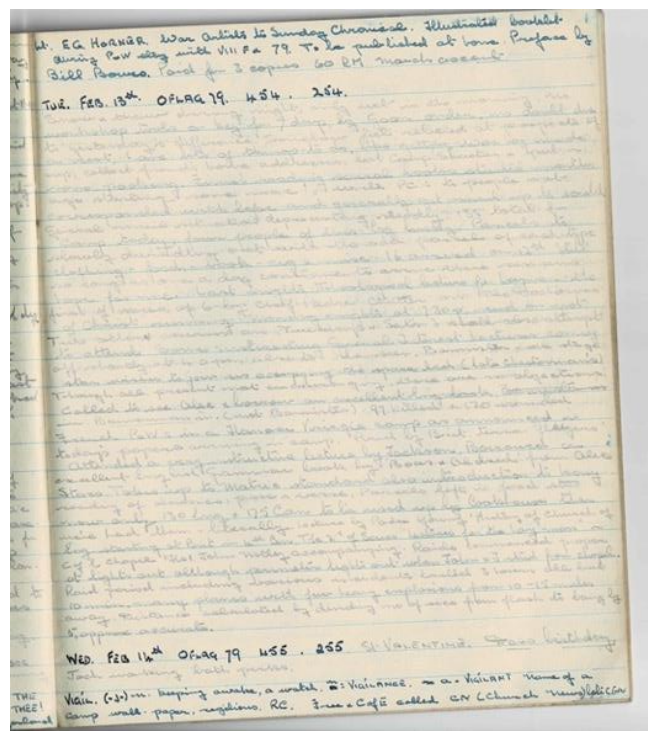
All drawings included are by fellow prisoner Gordon Horner – his drawings were published privately in a book after the war titled: *“For You The War is Over”* printed in 1948. Fellow prisoners had the opportunity to subscribe to copies. Eric paid for six copies.

Image to the right is a sample page from Eric's actual diary.

Some words may have omitted
as they were undecipherable.

Anything typed in red is for clarification.

Green is reference for Brunswick Club.





Transferred by German Army to a Greek hospital in Athens thence later, by train to PoW camp. (A period of seven months with no information).



His newly wed wife Mary Augusta (Nee Brown) received a telegram advising that Eric was missing in action. Tuesday 16th November 1943. Sometime later a further telegram advising that he was a PoW.

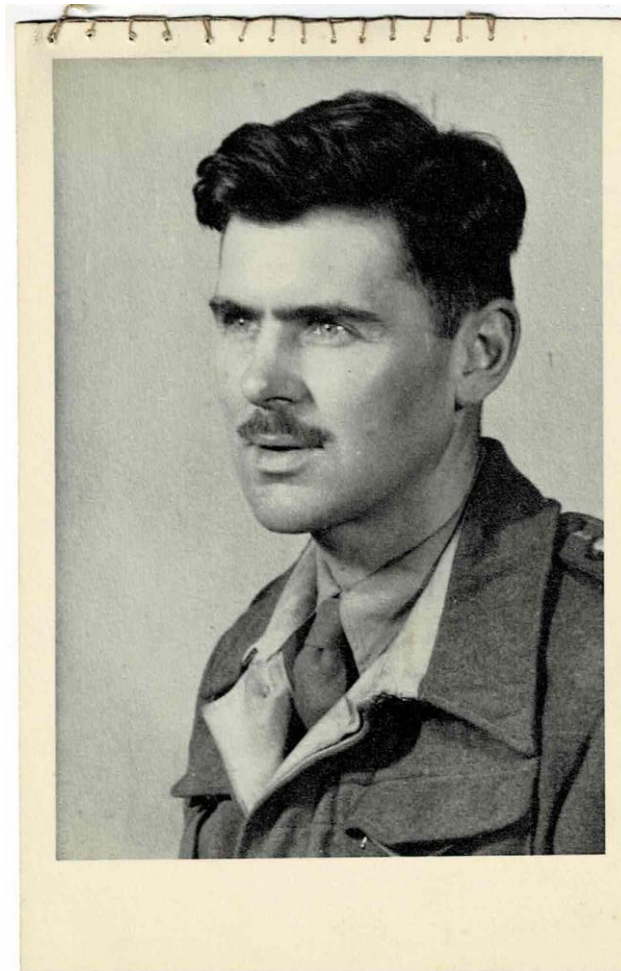
The diary's first entry is 1st January 1945, although Eric had been in the PoW Camp since June 1944.

The Prisoners banded together to form a Club "for under privileged boys" in London once they were liberated, as a legacy. Was to be called the "Brunswick Boys Club".

References to the meetings and discussions and fund raising can be found on pages: pg 3, (pg25- 1st Feb), (pg32 -15th Feb), (pg43 - 9th March), (pg56 - 30th March), (pg58 - 3rd April), (pg60 - 6th April), pg74 and pg75.

NOTE: Maps, drawings and photos were not in Eric's diary, added for clarity.





84

To:- MRS MA HORTON.
"SANDOWN" 29 PEPPARD RD
CAVERSHAM.
READING BERKS
ENGLAND.

FROM:- HORTON EB CAPT.
1827/VIII F
OFLAG 79. 2 COY.
GERMANY.

6 JUL 1944
OFLAG 79

24/12/44.

This photo of Eric was taken and processed in Oflag 79 and posted as a Post Card to his wife Mary.

Charges to pay _____ s. _____ d.
RECEIVED

POST OFFICE
TELEGRAM

Prefix. Time handed in. Office of Origin and Service Instructions. Words.

No. 0336 13 OFFICE STAMP

From 7/46 P m 99 59 7.20 LIVERPOOL OHMS 47 To _____ m

PRIORITY - CC = MRS M A HORTON SANDOWN 29 PEPPARD
ROAD CAVERSHAM READING =

REGRET TO INFORM YOU OF NOTIFICATION RECEIVED FROM
MIDDLE EAST THAT CAPT E B HORTON ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNAL
WAS REPORTED MISSING ON 16 TH NOVEMBER 1943 STOP
LETTER FOLLOWS SHORTLY STOP = UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE
FOR WAR + of do of do of do "TELEGRAMS ENQUIRY" or call, with this form B or C
y. Othe CT 29 16 TH 1943 ++ and, if possible, the envelope.

(1122087) Hcs(90)

Charges to pay _____ s. _____ d.
RECEIVED

POST OFFICE
TELEGRAM

Prefix. Time handed in. Office of Origin and Service Instructions. Words.

No. 002 OFFICE STAMP

From 8/10 m 83 583 7:10 LIVERPOOL OHMS 42 To _____ m

PRIORITY - CC MRS M A HORTON SANDOWN 29 PEPPARD
ROAD CAVERSHAM READING =

OFFICIAL REPORT RECEIVED THAT CAPT E B HORTON
ROYAL CORPS OF SIGNALS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED AS
MISSING IS A PRISONER OF WAR . LETTER FOLLOWS
SHORTLY . = UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR + c
For at office of delivery. Other enquiries should be made at this form, and, if possible, the envelope.
CT 29 ++

(1122087) Hcs(90)

Telegrams received by Eric's wife Mary Augusta Horton (Nee Brown)

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CAMP OVERVIEW

Brunswick Querum near Hanover and the Weser, close and wide of Pied Piper fame. We knew the popular lines of around psychology poem before the first month of our stay was up.

Arriving early Spring. We laboured up from Quereum Halt, under load of personal belongings tied to our lagging bodies in most cases by Red X parcel string. Into a Hoar Belisha type of Luftwaffer camp.

Our meagre allotment of four high, stamp roofed, barrack blocks soon became overcrowded. A trampled perimeter path shows itself alongside the wire laying bare the ground of all its beautified grass. That is how the camp developed generally. From a place of considerable natural beauty its bareness produced together by Kommandant's orders uncovering illegal digging operations behind bushes and by inmates stufa activities. Surrounded on three sides by high firs, our worldly outlook is restricted to a flat quarter of Western landscape, encompassing short length of autobahn and distance bridges, canal, warehouses, and factory, bounded by the edge of Brunswick and distant Hanover.



OFLAG 79 Brunswick campgrounds

Our immediate neighbourhood, a previously punished aerodrome showing signs of US Army Air Force accuracy, with its several burnt out hangers. Our more intimate lives and Kreigie home entries round the bedhead – living room. '52' A temporary home of many similar days. Better than most, pleasantly bright in morning sun, cool during the hot dusty summer afternoon but damn cold during the bad winter spell when steam heating was restricted.

Ext Coys. Bomb August 24 Ind CH Hops Nightly Berlin flight. Socials Theatre.

Monday 01/01/1945
POW 411 days BQ 211 days
OFLAG 79 (Brunswick – Querum)

Hard frost and snow, ground bright weather, sun all day. Midday alarm and several patches of bombers clearly see bombing to SE, markers and clouds silvered strips floated across the camp. Two German planes crossed at incredible speed; the sound follows a considerable time after. Many of our own fighters leaving vapour trails across the sky above and around us. German Command admits mosquito raid on Berlin last night as we thought.

Camp entertainments are mostly of nightclub variety. *Rum Pot* production morning, afternoon, and night. Scrap book of 1944 Willies Music Hall. General interest lectures. Binbonie's Marionette in Hospital for 2 Company only.



Tuesday 02/01/1945
POW 412 BQ 212

Mary Brown (*wife*) received letter from Joe D, on Xmas leave from Italy. One month. Writing me. Invited to stay at Sandown.

Cold spell continues. Anxiously awaiting bread issue on Thursday to replenish my fast diminishing loaf and allowance to repay debt on jam deal. Visit to the Electrical and Mechanical Company shop now in larger premises upstairs House 2L next door to library, crowds of pushing officers' largest proportion being VCO's mainly around the food counters.

No sale for cigarettes at this end, plenty of exchanges bread for butter, biscuits for butter and milk for jam – dried fruit and all kinds of swopo. All kinds of clothing and accessories. Pants, vests, towels, shirts, PoD jackets, coats, mackintoshes, Jap fasteners blouse for 150. I should like very much boots, shoes and slippers all to be bought for cigarettes up to 280 the highest price.

11:00 Yellow and Red alarms just blown, until planes appear, few take any notice. We in 52 rely on the door watchers from 3 Company in House 7 opposite. When they go in, tis time for us to shift.

Precaution I take is to put on BD blouse with valuables including razor in pocket and see that coat is handy. Feel more secure when distant crumps heard, or AC is blown. These alarms continue to arrive just before or during mealtimes.

To keep feet warm when sitting on door side bed I put each foot in a RX box – keeps off the draft effectively. The first monthly issue of LC and PC arrived. Shall endeavor to purchase more LC's for Mary (*Mary Brown*), Pop (*Francis Daniel Horton*) and Bank, the only scope for cigarettes to be found on Company L+M boards.

Mary Brown to Palace with Maise, Peter (*Maise Bowyer nee Horton – Eric's sister and nephew*) and Pop "Babies in the Wood". Received cheque 10 pounds save time during week.

Wednesday 03/01/1945 **POW 413 BQ 213**

Much warmer, thawing fast all day and after dark. Sandy have made a very good reflection for marg' lamp from ten cocoa tins. After a hard day's nail pulling from can crates went to cinema in old library with Hall and Notley. An American just married couple, rich girl – poor boy provides the usual problem features, cooking, financial, budget backed by both sets of in-laws, all problems easily swept aside to live happy ever after. Francis Dee the beautiful young society wife. Comfort improved greatly by change of room but only room for 150. Right atmosphere created by orange lights and organ short sound only before commencement of big film.

Our meal tonight is tin of cottage pie between four, at present heating on room radiator, issue turnips, boiled potatoes, and tea brew. Valentine of end room, House 1, handed over tin of apricot jam for 2/3 loaf to be received Thursday week, very trusting of him, Sandy H runs him down, but I find him most obliging to present. He spends a lot of time knitting and crocheting blankets and caps as promised to do for me if I can find the wool – reasonable enough! He certainly can get anything in exchange for bread. Evidence in the form of bales of straw, bears out the rumour that further Kriegies (*Kriegesgefangenen – german word for Prisoner of War*) expected soon.

We are to have two old boys from room 53 in here if the new ones arrive, means another bunk between the windows. Sacks, as canteen rep, for rooms 52 and 53 in this evening with limited supply of razor blades, saccharin, salts, and notebooks. Saccharin (SACCHARIN) coming in thro black market and Arthur.

Thursday 04/01/1945 **POW 414 BQ 214**

Fast thawing during night and remainder of day with sharp frost tonight. Busy after lunch putting cardboard over broken door windows South end of corridor to keep out draught and warmth in. Preparing in camp to receive 300 new PoW's expected to be

Americans, either two old occupants of 55 or two new boys coming in here making us up to 14 again. Another bunk for two in only possible place between windows makes a lot of difference to comfort of this room and there much discussion between our present members, question at point a) to take in two known well behaved members of Room 55, Dusty Williams and Jimmy James or wait to see if full number of new boys as advised actually arrive. If they don't, we may escape having anyone in here at all. Incidentally 55 is a very cold room from which all present members are trying to escape, new K's or no.

Welcome bread issue before lunch. Raisin potato cakes as lunch time sweet. Not successful first time. Not fast enough fire and made too thick, maybe better done as a biscuit with more flour. With aid of English sugar and eight BM's I found in cheque book, Jock and I attended last night of Rum Pot's New Year show, quite enjoyable with meat-roll pies and potato snack with coffee brew.

Lengthy letter to Pop and family, to Lloyds bank yesterday bought two LC's from E&M today 19 cigarettes leaving one for MB (*Mary Brown*) come Sunday.

Friday 05/01/1945
POW 415 BQ 215

Frost again after two days thaw. News gives us an American major counterattack against German Offensive West from Siegfried to through Luxemburg. Allied Troops advancing on the Mandalay and Americans bombing Japans industrial centers. Our contact with the fronts is expect 300 US PoW's in near future and tremble when sirens issue their frequent warnings by day and night. More than coincidence how alarms most frequently take place during midday and evening meals. Using (cigarettes and butter bulk issue) stew pot for salmon kedgeree, our innovation of much inspired by home memories, using tins again for tonight's meal, stew, bully, cottage pies, potatoes, savings from pea soup and a thinking of stews as Mitch borrowed it yesterday and Harry has just been rejected for tonight.

THE IRISH WAY "I'm bringing this Parnell (*Gladstone, Parnell, and the Great Irish Struggle*) book along too" says Craig as he walks out the room on his mission. Frequent, but mind you not always, use of 'bring' when we say 'take'. Scrap book of 1944 15:45 in Rum Pot Annex, very good entertainment, news items, song and music introduced by John Metcalf. First see JM not in feminine role and recognized with little difficulty. Emery Freddy Brown, Louis Geduld, etc. Posted letter to Pop. Two evening red alarms, after the meal and following lights out. The first planes directly overhead appearing to circle South to West X North where AA flashes and continuous rumbling appear to come from the West. The second waves had every appearance of a Berliner but running into an AA barrage South of the camp; though many flashes seem only few and faint noises heard. Slept badly, bitten round neck again by love bug, chased by lantern – light unsuccessfully.

Saturday 06/01/1945
POW 416 BQ 216

WAS STERN A CONTEMPORY OF SWIFT?
Stern 1713-68

Swift 1729
Defoe 1660–1724

Enrolment day for new session of educational program 10:00-12:00 Room 39 House 2L. RG university great hall on smaller scale for same purpose. Spoke to Morgan, of 'Corn is Green' for first time, accepted offer of loan his book on engineering for mature. My main reason for being present is to take course applicable to AMIEE and London Matric, in this order of importance. Should very much like to get Matric, language a stumbling block, a disliking for hard work and concentration I must overcome. Have a textbook on German but greater knowledge of French. Enrolled Applied Maths, Calculas, Trig, Geometry, Physics HS+S, French. Obtained entry form for Matric in June and indent for books from RX and other organisations. Returned overdue book "*Excerptions in the land of Genesis*" to library. 15:30pm quick look in Indian Theatre to see beginning of Aladdin run through, being assured by Terry Burls that DR definitely going on tomorrow, I left in favour of light music recital by Gramo (*gramophone*) Club basement of House 2L, under the ORS who will continually kick up hell of a din above us.

A good programme including:

Blue Danube – By Philadelphia Orchestra,
Beguin the Beguine – Sung by Gladis Swaithert written by Cole Porter,
Die Regiment Stochter Overture – By Donizetti
The Linden Tree – By Schubert
Tales from Vienna Woods – By Strauss
I can give you the starlight – Sung by Mary Ellis written by Novello
Never say goodbye – By Davies
Overture Operetta – By Grigri
Shepherd Hey and Country Garden – By Percy Grainger

Sunday 07/01/1945
POW 417 BQ 217

Fulfilled a resolution by rising for wash and shave before breakfast not so difficult and makes much more time for work, its abject. Jack and Tom fall out to extent of demanding their half of the parcel. Tom's recent habit of being nastily obnoxious often with strong language and friendly the next moment has bought Jack's wrath upon his head. Has annoyed me recently for that matter practically everyone in the room has felt it. For instance, the Craig stand up at breakfast. This morning's do started by falling boots at 07:00 followed by two doors slams, a slanging match in the watchhouse conducted into a still sleep, to annoyance of it's sleepers. Tom felt the danger of Jack's temper and superior physic, quietening down and has been very quiet for rest of day.

Prepared fire and potatoes for lunch cooking with fish cakes to be cooked by Jock and me in attic.

Red alarm stopped Free Church attendance at 11:15. Finishing off notes on John Buchan's book '*Island of Sheep*'. Have my first book on '*Oxford Group*', '*Life Began Yesterday*' by Stephen Foot.

Room decorations taken down considered an exchange offered on our Company E&M sheet, ½ bully for ½ marmalade. The marmalade, I have been using it for past two weeks breakfast only expecting it to last another fortnight, the bully, although better point value and food would disappear in one meal – No I'll keep my breakfast spread.

15:30 Dress Rehearsal of Aladdin was first class entertainment, all the old favourites on top form Bruin, Linton, Merriman Hardwick, Geduld, Davies.

MOTHER, DO YOU STILL GROW?

*"Mother, do you still grow?"
I let the measuring red drop –
Do I still grow?
This afternoon I suffered and
From unkind words
And yet I smiled:
Last year I would have been proud
To make a sharp reply.
This morning I set aside
My own desires
To help someone else.
Last year I would have cried,
"I'll have my way!
Let others yield to me!"
Do I still grow?
Yes, child, I think so..
But how slow and hard
My growing is!*

From a poem 'Growing' by Mary Dickerson Bangham, quoted by Gilbey in 'Getting Help from Religion' read by Oflag 79 Dec 44 – Jan 45.

*Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favour fires,
But if it has to perish twice
I think I know enough of hate
To know that for destruction, ice
Is also great
And would suffice.*

Do we improve with time? As we should, or stay the same? Which is unconsciously difficult; or deteriorate, which is only too easy – THINK.

Another verse from the same book makes one ponder upon bottled up hatreds, bitterness, antagonisms, and grudges. From ROBERT FROST. Collected Poems (Henry Hold and Co 1930)

Gilbey, in his chapter XI headed "Faith's Greatest Obstacle", quotes from "Selected Poems and Parodies by Louis Untermeyer".

*God, I return to you on April days
When along country roads you walk with me,
And my faith blossoms like the earliest tree
That shames the bleak world with its yellow sprays.
But now the crowded streets and choking airs.
The huddle thousands bruised and tossed about,
These, and the over-brilliant thoroughfares,
The too loud laughter and empty shout:
This mirth mad city, tragic with its cares –
For this, O god, my silence and my doubt!*

Quips about the camp and old favourite songs, duty room today, all hands to German stew tonight. 19:30 to Rum Pot annex for a light concert conducted by James McFallen 'Twelfth Night', inspired by Shakespeare, choral singing, storytelling and play reading, short ghost and merry making, Dickenson. Has given me ideas to celebrate January 12th with Mary and family at home, a good round up of festive season. The cake, the brunch, the snapdragons, 12:00 take down the Xmas decorations, masked and disguised party. The three different types of parties, Elizabethan, Dickenson and Cosmopolitan.

MORGAN "WHAT IS THE CAPITAL OF SWEDEN?" – CORN IS GREEN

Monday 08/01/1945
POW 418 BQ 218

Shave before breakfast, blade getting fairly blunt on its third week but must last out the month. Early to props room no advantage as tools not available until 10:15 by Jack Green. Preparations for 18 add – into Company, continues, clothesline from alcove to corridor ends, promised Buckley black out would be done soon.

Fecar Tim to have a busy time with syllabus AMIEE, Matric, Company odd job man and keep on props job as well, diary alone has been a full-time job to present! Parcel issue 15:00, new type can, lucky with klim (*powdered milk*), marmalade, milk chocolate, bread issue, Jocks's turn to take the loaf, we split the extra, comes in very useful making very pleasant 'bash'.

Received from canteen, one very small white baker lite container of hair brilliantine bought for sake of container and small block of Goon soap like plasticine, bought because short of soap. Some parcels, English and Canadian don't now contain soap. Red X camp reps removing soap from parcels that do contain it until sufficient stock for a general issue.

Loaned Jock my can of sugar for E&M, obtaining raisins and prunes former he keeps, the latter go into common pool he therefore owes me 25-8=17BM on 25 ½ cigs on 2/3 can sugar. I remember (to myself and shamingly) when he refused to loan me a can cheese for barter a short while ago.

Finished Sunday letter to Mary, luck still out on mail situation, 'must get something tomorrow' my daily comment.

Tuesday 09/01/1945

POW 419 BQ 219

Mary Brown (*wife*) letter to me sitting before fire Mum and Dad asleep either side of fire. Stephen up for the day. Snowing.

A surprise search of Houses 1 and 7 (the hospital), commence immediately after morning parade. No-one allowed back into these houses until search finished, luckily just before lunch. Occupants of these two houses thrown on tender mercies of friends for breakfast and shelter from very cold if bright weather.

No work in props room basement of House 1. Three additional in 52 for breakfast. Meet Don King in Art Club Exhibition not realizing until after that he was one of the waifs killing time. Called on him after tea to apologise and chat. Apart from losing Stuffa (*brand of cooking apparatus, but a homemade version*) and few chips of wood also minor looting of food and cigarettes, they have not suffered severely.

At Buck's persuasion from Room 53 next door, have covered broken window of South corridor door to keep out cold draught, also plugged wall North end of corridor for new drying area, now between Buckley and Olding, the later most unreasonable, an exhibition of Kriegie state (of mind) one can get into. Tom C is another case and John N a minor case, easily annoyed, a state of mind the church padres are combating in weekly sermons.

Attended first lecture of AMI Mechanical Engineering course on Physics, does for AMIEE also. Astounded by my lack of knowledge and bad memory.

Lunch time kedgerie by EBH another success with the syndicate. Used tin of salmon, 1/3 tin of egg flakes, 4 spoonsful of milk, keep stirring over attic fire. Sax in as usual during evening, cheerful.

DON KING

Home - Caversham Heights (Reading) near bus stop great friend of Reg Woods (*MB's brother-in-law*) ex. Hemdean School and Reading Grammar. Captured BNAF 19__? Family moved to Haddock house Emmer-Green near golf course, wife Murial, a Glasgow girl, family living in a City Centre flat. One son about year and a half now, Malcolm, younger brother friend of Mac Brown (*MB's brother*), Staff Officer Lt, at Catterick – going with girlfriend from Catterick. Don knew in later life most of the girls I knew when we were young at Hemdean School; Beryl Brooks – O'Brian etc., Sid Taylor and sister, the Nobel sisters, Greenslade of Cam Bridge so-on, knew Betty Brown when the Brown family lived in Uplands Rd, Caversham Heights.

Tuesday cont/...

Called on a fellow named 'Sadler', a recent arrival from Western wall, member of the 7th Armed Division, joined since WD. Thought he may be one of the Reading Grammar School Sadlers as home shown as London and Reading Grammar, but no! His wife a

Reading girl, in fact Caversham girl, home Peppard Rd house opposite Travellers Rest pub, Peppard Hill. Don or Mary may know her, name nee READING.

Front tooth aching badly. Cook house taking bully from can and M+V from English parcels for central mess. One tin a meal between four.

Wednesday 10/01/1945
POW 420 BQ 220

A busy day and evening before time to fill this diary up. Spent most time in props room on job for Griffiths of Gramo Club. Jeff Brown back and doing some work. Plugged wall at corridor end for Buck's clothesline and shifted cupboard back to wall. Heating Officers elected for each House and Camp, Derek Bassett assistant to ours and not popular in Room 52. Room 55 up to present has been having bad time as last room on the circuit. Present experiments and adjustments of inside radiators taps is attempted to equalize quantity of steam to each room. Of course, ours is being cut down and we have a poor opinion of the process, fancy Bassett has a bias and all such Kriegie things.

Reviewed Tech library book. Evening meal consists of bully stew steamed by CH, and pud for special treat.

CHIETI – Town in Italy?

Thursday 11/01/1945
POW 421 BQ 221

Awoke to fine show falling causing RC to in corridor. Allan has. w majority of room approval, increased steam gap on radiator taps (against camp orders) he imagines the Heat Officers won't have the intelligence to observe the change. Personally, am not in approval of altering radiators on our own initiative until adjustments has been concluded.

09:35 walk over to find props room still shut, called on Don King reporting Sadler not the one we know from school. 11:15 cram class in Engineer's basement room with Allan and Toney, lecturer Loosley. Albert loaned me an Otto-Onions French book and can borrow a more elementary French Grammar from Ben both luckily in this room. Have a small sawing job on hand for Hospital. Am behind with exam (Matric) entry must catch Jerry Morgan before he posts them. Find myself very busy with learning and living. The latter part takes most time, eating, cooking, electing, washing etc. Have to take Valentine his lb of bread, 2/3 loaf to be exact, have gained 1/3 last week having to ration myself the same way for coming week, not so bad as first seeming, to live on 2/3 loaf and a bit per week.

Pantomime has been cancelled entirely. Bruin and Geduld went sick on last performance with extreme cold. Can't expect much else though a shame such a good show could not be seen by all in camp.

Friday 12/01/1945
POW 422 BQ 222

Frost thaw carrying on from last night throughout the day, awful mess. Jack Butler threatens to leave room as reduced heating, we hope we'll not freeze before he leaves, also that Tom goes with him. Jack and I move over to window bunk if vacated. Before tea today he emptied suitcase of kit, loads of it apart from four running changes, has received three N of K parcels last year.

Room is still rather chilly due to this radiator adjustment. Have today been cutting up can crate sides for Col Marshall to make into bed tables for hospital, using saw in Rum Pot.

Borrowed Matric Syllabus from Jerry Morgan last night, study after lunch today have the promise of it again tonight.

Making a dinner plate of popular design for myself from a Healthy Life tin, had plenty of practice doing it for others.

Saturday 13/01/1945
POW 423 BQ 223

Breakfast – ½ doz prunes, two thins slices brown bread and butter with marmalade, mug of tea. I remember Mom warning us at home in the past not to go without our breakfast for fear of feeling faint during the day.

A freezing wind has made grounds into one large skating rink, following the thaw that cleared snow from roofs but not completely from the ground. Education Programme starts Monday, have to copy off my own subjects. Trying to get odd jobs finished off by then but fear not possible.

Rum Pot has been closed down for reason or reasons at present obscure except that SBO (*Switch Board Operator*) rules that shows have to close down on raid alarms and they don't want to, in fact their chief attraction is the reverse. The Theatre is taking over the two large adjoining rooms decorated and furnished by Rum Pot after a lot of trouble, intended use for afternoon shows. Appears that root of the trouble is received by SBO from GB that raid casualties were due to carelessness on part of the Kriegies as well as the USAAF, if the latter is indeed admitted. Room commanders meeting, chief love of contention this rooms still radiators, no support from other rooms, even opposition from Room 55.

This diary becoming a record of room personal feuds though expressing the general camp tendency it will stop. We all annoy easily on slightest provocation, a bad habit I hope will be easily shed on return home.

Called on Mattherson 1/46 for entry for AMIEE. 15:30 2nd visit to cinemas "*Meet the Stewarts*" enjoyed even better the second time, husky dialogue heard and understood better, sat next to (LRDG) Bell who makes loud obvious remarks in advance of the film.

Very good French instructional book loaned from Ben Thompson.

Sunday 14/01/1945

POW 424 BQ 224

TOM'S BIRTHDAY

Another frosty day although bright and cheerful, ground even more slippery than ever.

Sardines on toast for breakfast by John N and Jock over attic fire. One tin of sardines between four. Am a day behind on my bread ration hope to make up on Monday's extras, shall have to cut out these bread swaps with Valentine except that he always has an attractive deal, has promised me raisins and prunes for ½ loaf on Thursday.

10:00 Free Church service sermon by Padre Thomas of the low husky voice. His subject 'escapism' from Jonah to Thunder Rock i.e., Jonah was told by our Lord, or as we would say in these modern times 'he felt a great urge' to go and warn Nineveh of its impending doom for wickedness, he started but, on the way, finished the job straying off to Tarshish. A storm arose during his boat journey when the crew, blaming Jonah cast him out where upon it was calm. Jonah was swallowed by a great fish (Note: no mention of a whale). After three days the fish vomited up Jonah upon dry ground, he having repented. A 2nd time the Lord instructs Jonah to go and preach unto Nineveh, which this time he obeys (there is a parable at the end of Book of Jonah not fully understood). Thomas was right about the book only taking 5 or 10 mins to read. He also stated it was one of the world's finest short stories, the modern counterpart being, an American play "Thunder Rock". In this a man wearies of the world taking a lighthouse keepers job on Thunder Rock, Lake Michigan, in fair words – he escapes. A tablet there displays the names of several shipwrecked persons who appear to this escapist keeper, they themselves being escapists. The radio announces war on Sept 3, 1939, reminding the keeper of his own faults. A play to see having now read Book of Jonah.

Skating upon old basketball pitch, rest of camp just as slippery. Picked up Aladdin's scraps from props shop for Stuffa fuel, so ends the pantomime.

Yellow alarm at 10:30 some time since last one. Copying Matric Syllabus in letter to MB (*wife*). 19:30 supper over and the day fades out, a lot done if not all intended.

Free Church at 10:00 was a good start, an hour earlier than usual C of S at 11:00 then across to props room to start clearing up and collect fuel for small Stuffa. Cleared cigarette debt of two with Valentine, meeting the fellow who gave notebooks; further extending his generosity by refusing to take further payment, odd job for Buckley, took course programme of SBO's board, copied further from Matric Syllabus.

The lime-washing of English Society room ceiling had to be postponed, yes, of course – the raid from 11:40 to 14:20. Brunswick or South caught the first rumbling load, formations passed ominously overhead, luckily for us without unloading, other targets were NE and second load on Brunswick. Plenty of AA bursting high up around them but more seen hit.

Picked up some scrap wood for cooking tonight's meals. Allen and I in house kitchen, not such a thick smoke haze as usual. Our two bricks worked well. Two meat roll slices a piece, dollop of fried potatoes from pan, issued by one spud, saved the rest, and a good helping of turnips, this followed by our weekly treat trifle made an excellent meal for our captivity stomachs. Saved a portion of trifle for eat with late brew, only just.

Radiators in room still insufficiently warm for comfort. Sit on bedside with feet in ½ RX box to keep off draft, shall have to contrive a larger and better guard. Looks as though Jack B has decided against moving from room so goodbye to our move into his lighter and warmer position. 19:50 RED ALARM blowing.

Monday 15/01/1945
POW 425 BQ 225

First day of Education programme, Matric French class at 11:40, the instructor failed to turn up. Handed particulars to Coy pay rep. for 10 pounds from German account to be sent to Mary, told her in PC posted this morn, a full day with other courses. Imagine I feel as an art student at university would if suddenly feel if transferred to reading for general science degree.

Tuesday 16/01/1945
POW 426 BQ 226

Cold weather continues, ground slippery as ever.

Props room until 11:00, came up to find a 'Red' on, and planes droning overhead hastened to our house in time to clear a few odd jobs, put on BD (*battle dress*) blouse – great coat, grab a book and dash for basement when local AA opened up. However, the lunch of pea soup arrived on time to be consumed by all, raid or no. Strong rumour that the Kommandant is being changed.

Blankets from Hospital and Indians have arrived. Food prices are changing as cigarette runs out without prospect of further supplies. Only rumour is 9,000 at station. Pah!! Spent most of evening in dark. A total of three Red Alarms today apart from Yellows and Purples.

Wednesday 17/01/1945
POW 427 BQ 227

Spoke sharply to Jock this morning for no apparent reason. Find it very difficult to like or agree with him. We seem to have joined the multitude of disagreeing partners.

12:15 missed French class 2nd time and this my own carelessness going to wrong place at wrong time. Prepared attic fire for lunch cooking 2/3 meat roll fritters and 1/3 bully rissoles all between four. Have to disguise the fireplace with sand to avoid its continual removal by German snoopers and OR's cleaning up. We leave the bottom bricks at sand level, the others behind the beam handy. The sand is for ARP banked up against each wall.

Three letters from Mary, one from August and two from November breaking recent dearth, thank goodness!

Old Gubbic (Major) deprived of his Coy command, moves from Rm 54 (The Col's) into the Coy's coldest 55. Major Snell takes over the Coy as from this morning's parade when he sprang the Light Infantry words of command at us. "Company – at ease" for attention.

Both radiators put on one turn by Hall and Webster with majority of rooms approval. Though enjoying the benefit I'm not in approval – a moot point.

Find days packed to overflow with these courses and trying to keep on props job. Wash and shave before RC rising from bed at 07:45. Collect tools and workshop key by 09:30 then work on props until first lesson at 10:50 or 11:40. These continue until tea at 15:00 then sometimes back to props for an hour.

Mary's letters cheerful and full of early returns, Sax continues very optimistic. Joe doing fine.

Attempt to make potato biscuits with mashed spuds, milk powder and sugar fried turned out as small pancakes; not as intended but down well.

German issued blankets to bring average scale to two German ones each officially. Thereby giving an average of three each including private ones.

Terrific advances made since January 12th by the Great Russian Advance, hundred odd miles, now between CRACOW + BRESLAV still battling along. Everyone bashing on strength of it. As someone remarked everything going well today, News – Radiators and evening meal of bully stew. We hear General Fortune, our Kriegie CO, has had a stroke.

My bash consisted of thick slice of bread – butter – apricot jam and raisins. This mixture of raisins or cheese with jam is a good thing, worth trying back home to see if our then less finely tempered tongue will still respond with such alacrity.

All quiet up to 22:00.

VC Offenbrugh XVIII A
VI C Largest Ofley yet, all services

Thursday 18/01/1945
POW 428 BQ 228

Props until 11:30, found two letters waiting my return to the room collected for me by Mitchell. One from Pop and second from Mary, both October. Arthur (*brother-in-law*) in hospital, Peter Bowyer (*nephew*) going to Hemdean School mornings only aged three. Pop wastes a 1/3 of his letters, his writing quality keeps high.

A good feeding day. Barley for lunch, half bowl full to which I add butter, raisins, salt, sugar and milk. Allan and John have made up the evening meal for bake and steaming bully pie and a biscuit fruit pudding.

No Matric French this morning, instructor failed us again, only one other member there. Enlightening myself on French and English Grammar from Otto Onions book.

After eve meal: - The bacon pie not bully as first thought was excellent, and extra vegetables turned up – turnips, pink and white, in addition to usual potatoes (three). That in itself sufficient to give a tightness but an exquisite pudding to follow has almost laid me out. Eat with sprinkled sugar, little butter and treacle sauce just topped the meal. Due to restricted diet no doubt we enjoy that food we get to its utmost value. NZ chocolate extracted from parcel at source for toasting at Trubau was re-issued today. ¼ each all-round, mostly ground up for brew on spread, I favour the latter. Water has disappeared from the camp since check parade, not unusual occurrence, returned early enough to wash from waist down.

Friday 19/01/1945
POW 429 BQ 229

Thaw continues to flood the campgrounds, high winds, rain, and snow. Putting black out on entertainment office windows. 15:45 to Operetta in Rum Pot annexe with Jock. Theatre orchestra and choir. Several stops due to lights failing, looks like a wind fault on overhead, lots of bad joints made at time of raid repairs 24th August.

Evening meal fried bread, tomato sardines also sardine rissoles. John and J cooks in basement passage find a fast fire and hot pan the best. Lunch was salmon kedgeriee in tin of salmon mixed with milk and a little salt. Other three partners very keen on the kedgeriee, and it replaces salmon fish cakes tomorrow evening.

German news admits Russians fighting inside Germany, Germ Government boundary – won't be long now!

Two classes – Magnetism and Electricity and Trigonometry both easy within my standard. My turn to heat water for tonight's brew must be off.

Saturday 20/01/1945
POW 430 BQ 230

Sun rose over Ho 5 and treetops lighting up the room at breakfast. A ray falls upon my bed corner lighting up the lovely countenance of my lovely waiting wife in her place upon the bed head shelf. The sun rises more South than West of this camp.

This morning work in props was cutting up lengths of battens for Col Marshall and his hospital bed tables. Left in his room Ho 5 when returning to own to prepare for midday hot shower. A great event, looked forward to and talked about for days before hand. After several false start. today is the day. 10:00 to 12:00 we trek across to Ho 1, undress upstairs wash house, dash to downstairs one for a five min soap under lovely hot water. Two to a shower comes useful for washing each other's backs. Wondering every moment if Red warning would cause steam to be cut off, Yellow was on before starting but AC went instead so we finish ok. Returned to room for pea soup lunch.

Afternoon classes Applied Maths and Physics in Engineers Room 7/3 until teatime. Props after tea for three thins slices bread and butter, apricot jam and raisins.

Sunday 21/01/1945

POW 431 BQ 231

A grand bright day, white frost under foot, skating enthusiasts using ice hockey sticks on basketball rink. Trying to catch up on arrears of odd jobs. Allan's bowl etc.

Failed to attend C of S service. Thursday Padre Hamilton has been moved from the camp, they are to be combined with the Froe's. Letter and PC to Mary. PC asking for books on Matric and AMIEE syllabuses. Obtained a dud electric bulb for Tony to change and use in English Society room. Getting an additional bulb to put in parallel with room light. Tony lime washing ceiling of English room.

Col Burns suggest we are fat starved and putting margarine into German stews a good idea.

Monday 22/01/1945

POW 432 BQ 232

Another bright if cold morning. Put can butter into the breakfast biscuit porridge in addition to salt, sugar – Klim, excellent effect.

26 Americans arrive in camp this morning, said to have walked from Belgium, another batch coming in now 12:00. Yellow alarm also blowing, the second this morning. A mug of beer issue each, feeling very tired and fed up myself in spite of excellent news from Eastern Front. Smashing advances by Russian Armies.

English parcel issue without the awful threat of emptying all tins materialising – a great sigh of relief.

Another annoying phase on, perhaps missing church Sunday has something to do with it. These outstanding jobs also apart from rising pile of washing in weather outside below freezing. Goon hand towels changed this morning. Feel like eating all my chocolate and condensed milk at one go. A bash hard to stop once started. Find condensed milk diluted very good on oatmeal porridge two breakfasts of these coming along this parcel week.

Putting washing water to warm then swat Maths. Jock wins 2nd prize of condensed milk, egg flake, peas and chocolate in raffle run downstairs for a complete parcel split into three. Tickets are one can biscuits each, Mike was only one of the winners 46.

This evening's raid came after the last meal for a change, Yellow – Red – door rattles – Yellows and all clear, lights off during raid.

Tuesday 23/01/1945
POW 433 BQ 233

And another grand weather day. Camp newspaper coming into being. Props making wooden stand for them. A busy day on lessons. Trigonometry and Calculas instructor indignant that few people presenting prep examples for correction.

Going round rooms in this house for English member details, a lengthy job I've been putting off for several days.

German film 'Death at Nine' a courtroom thriller, not very good, three star under our classification XXX. Evening meal of meat and vegetable stew, three to a tin with fresh vegetables added when made up by cook-house, excellent filling and warming.

Canvassing for members details for Engineering Society as House Representative, means going into each room, completed now thank goodness including two from the hospital.

Wednesday 24/01/1945
POW 434 BQ 234

Green form of required books from YMCA to Capt. Solomon's 2/14 before tea. Cutting out French and Physics by Jackson – hope to keep up to class standard in others now and clear odd jobs. Finished list of Engineers in House for Price. Russians up to line of Oder.

Thursday 25/01/1945
POW 435 BQ 235

Good skating and sliding weather – freezing all day – light snowfall. Tom Chesterman left room today, joining a group of four in end room of Ho. 5 with camp Q. Capt. Reg Hawkins.

Haircut by Ray in props room 16:30. Sandy and Jack finished camp newspaper notice board. Eager crowd gathers round maps.

Finding difficultly with Calculas, require a lot of groundwork.

Friday 26/01/1945
POW 436 BQ 236

Shorter daily entries show shortage of time, days long! Full up. Sometimes fear release day will arrive before I've caught up on all the jobs to be done, but not for long. Given the chance I'd drop everything, including kit, to get home.

Very cold this morning, piercing wind penetrates through all bed coverage, two blankets, the mat, ground sheet and odd shirt, pullover – scarf. Very fine snow falling before lunch.

Returned to room early to finish off salmon and pea pie for cookhouse baking, pudding for combine by Notley.

Saturday 27/01/1945
POW 437 BQ 237

Very cold and fine snow falling lying thickest yet upon the ground, 2"-3". Food tins in the windows have 1" of snow piled upon them. Cleared up several outstanding jobs.

Blackout in latrines, smaller thermos mug, creaking bed, brown-paper blind to keep out night draft at head of bed, stop door from rattling. When cooking lunch chips and omelets two German stooges challenged us as "verbooters" ya ya! Result don't do it again.

Basement room very crowded and smokey Allen and I down there this evening over the two-brick fire with fried potato cakes and meat roll. Done before rolled call to avoid rush.

Russian advance continues, also attacks on Western Front by English Armies. Yellow alarm after supper.

Sunday 28/01/1945
POW 438 BQ 238

BOR orderlies returned from Brunswick Hospital with rumours and reports of German staff talk of war being over in three weeks! Certainly, news good enough for Germany to pack in tomorrow but they don't.

Made potato bread and flour pudding for supper. Also includes raisins and treacle. Good breakfast off Jock's raffle winnings, salmon and garden peas. A John Notley pie as supper first course – good eating.

Snowing very fine flakes. Gramophone recital "Contrasting Moods" not attended. After tea to "Roll on the Day", bits and pieces from Italy and times when the war's first Armistice was imminent.

19:35 sitting down to quiet evening study when red alarm blows. Lights off yet so may not be too bad. Yellow yesterday, they stayed on until AC.

A grand supper of meat pie ½ tin and pud 1/3 tin. Have cocoa mixed and slice of bread spread for supper.

Very cold tonight, sitting at bed with feet wrapped in shirt inside. Canadian RX box to keep off cold draft. 21:50 and lights have come on after two hours off. A Berlin raid by all indications. Has upset my letter writing to the good wife.

Monday 29/01/1945
POW 439 BQ 239

Cold as ever. The Calculas instructor threatened to pack up if people don't do their prep.

Just before tea a jet-propelled plane passed close overhead – awful row.

Have a thick cold letter 21 August from MB. Goons opening all tins, strawberry jam, milk etc. Taking twice as long to issue parcels.

English Society lecture by Major Clayton LRDG ex civilian surveyor in Egypt and Tanzania on triangulation and organisation of a General Survey and Mines Department. A good job for a young fellow to get into especially, the field sector. Healthy outdoor life full of up-to-date ideas and a modern healthy life.

Jock collected an excellent English parcel – Spam, new type cocoa butter and two packets of dates.

Tuesday 30/01/1945
POW 440 BQ 240

Last night a great deal warmer, enjoying a comfy night's sleep. Cold very chest heavy in morning so went sick seeing the para doctor at 10:00 being weighed at same time. Few months ago, I was 9 stone 8lb (in Cairo 11 stone), now 55kgs or 8 stone 9lbs. Handed in Trigonometry prep to Frankenberg in Law Society room.

Collected enough mixture and tablets from MI return to room for shave and wash.

Pea soup for lunch. Heating's tonight made a list of baking's and steaming's for the three room syndicate for record purpose. Phil just announced no turnips for tonight's meals as Goons were unable to deliver to camp due to raid yesterday morning.

Letters (postcards) to MB and Kath (*MB's best friend*). Gift of new notebook from Jock! Snowing again after tea, catching up on classes.

Wednesday 31/01/1945
POW 441 BQ 241

Through another snowfall last night, today is much warmer even thawing from trees making marble holes in snow beneath. Heard a Summer bird singing away in fir trees near Ho. 1 and 2.

Each morning I collect theatre workshop tools and schlussel (*German for key*) from guardroom outside wire taking them down to props room and give floor a scrape with ply. Also fill pockets with 'perks' before Sandy the shop foreman arrives. Today we have a present in form of burnt-out chair from the workshop, Jock obtained from OR he is teaching to play piano. Contains some useful hardwood difficult to come by these days.

10:30 back from workshop to hand in Trigonometry homework when yellow alarm blows. Bad weather for bombing. Dull sky looks like snow. The snow fall turned to rain and fast thaw, everything wet.

Full of energy perhaps due to large lump of English sugar taken to bed last night.

Cleared up several jobs such as sharpening Mark's scissors and my own, put shot of brown paper down bedhead to keep out icy night drafts after windows opened. Bed is rapidly coming an enclosed area with covers each end and head blind. Increased room light by cleaning electric shade. Next job is to finish shower room black-out while weather is mild.

Some cigarette parcels have been received today, very few, cold much better. Obtained English raspberry jam from Valentine for 2/3 loaf in two installments. Find pieces of chocolate very tasty on bread with butter and jam. Now have small reserve of biscuits, raisins and choc for journey home! When? That the question. I often wonder and now allow thoughts to wander to close future in general. Believe the time is near, more due to Joe's effects than Monty (*General Montgomery*). 09:30 pouring with rain.

Thursday 01/02/1945
POW 442 BQ 242

Thaw all last night carrying on today, fear it may affect allies advance, especially Ruskies. Collected tools early to props room and attended Loosley's extra lecture at 09:45 doing Boyle's Law for expansion of gases, not clear yet, reading it up in S for the C.

Whole camp short of running water on ice. Murray, the Coy Theatre Rep, in with School for Scandal photos, ordered a set and get three fairly good.

Germans admit advances by Russians East of Berlin now within 100 miles of the Capital. Though no alarm on, we can distinctly hear rumbling and the usual door shakes.

600 odd letters for older Kriegies arrived in today. 50 odd for this camp. Allan-Thompson and Butler lucky in this room. English jam to Jock.

Weather turned very windy and wet.

Proposed to form Oflag 79 Boys Club in area 20 miles from Mansion House as lasting memory of 79 and continue contact of PoW's therein. Approx. cost for 400 members would be 5,500pd. Boys up to 21 years old. General meeting 9/53 on Wednesday 14 February. Visit Boy's Club office to register as helper. Make sub of 10pd to capital cost per annum, bankers order to maintain. Visit the club at home. Assist camp leader if possible. DON'T FORGET ALL ABOUT IT.

21:30 having sat in the dark for 1 1/2hrs the lights have come on just in time for the evening coffee brew. Comes expensive since I've eaten my mixture. Sounded like a Berlin do tonight.

Friday 02/02/1945
POW 443 BQ 243

Early morning raid seemingly by odd planes. Lights on and off several times during night with one red etc. Plane heard and two explosions perhaps AA. Distant and near rumbling throughout night and day. My theory of these is blasting tank ditches for the last line of defense. Yellows and AC's going incessantly throughout the day as well.

Parcels rumour at station blasted this morning, instead there have been damaged 150 in our present store by damp due to thaw. Cheered by two letters of October from Mary and Phil. Doris's baby has arrived 15 October 1944 a boy named after me – ERIC!

Lovely hot shower is hospital by arrangement with Jock, who helps there. The way to get perks is to do the work apparently.

All snow gone now, and thaw continues, expect advancing front to show up now.

Thompson and Notley Coy. Reps for Boys Club.

Saturday 03/02/1945
POW 444 BQ 244

Perimeter and house light out several times during night but no raids. Lovely bright morning and warm for February.

Goon workmen putting mixture of glass and ply in corridor and alcove windows, a good thing but it upsets all blackout arrangements done up to now. By the way things are going on both English and Russians fronts my opinion is we'll be moving from here shortly. I'm getting my kit together in anticipation.

Sunday 04/02/1945
POW 445 BQ 245

A bright spring like day with cheering frost for the advancing hosts.

Alex Stones called in for few moments. We are expecting German rations to be cut, bread – sugar etc. At present getting plenty of turnips which fill one as fried, boiled and baked. In pies and bubble and squeak found to be best.

The Camp Kommandant has been changed. Present one ex Austrian Army a Subaltern German by name of Zower.

Spent a few moments reading camp newspaper in Ho. 5, quite interesting and snappy news items, short story, post war planning, beautiful pictures girls and boy. Happy cartoons.

I'm doing steam and baking check for three room syndicate 50-51-52 distributing 7x7 points between us. Must be careful not to let more than allotment slip through.

Issued with bed linen one set per 2.45 officers. Not expecting to see any back. The Goon War Effort take curtains and rugs from civilians and return to us as our bed linen!

Evening stew very good, containing among other expected vegetables the unexpected onion, or more likely garlic, a very pleasant increase. Garlic has been coming in through black market.

Another raffle going on for Canadian RX food parcel Monday. The Syndicate taking two tickets at canned biscuits per two tickets, and of course Jock has won on his own relying on his usual good luck.

Monday 05/02/1945
POW 446 BQ 246

John and Allan, the Syndicate cooks busy on two pies and a pudding for tonight's meal.

Mild weather continues. The usual raid last night and lights off and on during night.

Jock's Canadian parcel today, the last Canadian issue of present stock I get next Monday, seems a long way off.

Shortening the personal break issue to pay off Valentine for Raspberry jam, owe him a 1/3 on Thursday. Can get almost anything for bread, on our E&M boards. Kam for 2/3 loaf – jam etc. Very tempting but one needs the bread.

Think warmer weather produces languid feeling and very touchy.

Another coat hanger to Engineering Room door. Sharpened Lofty's scissors.

Attended English Society lecture by Jackson on Plastics as one of an unusually large gathering in Highland dancing room below cinema. Matric, Math's and Calculas before tea, a contrast in Math's finding the latter a little easier after coaching by Frankenberg.

Tuesday 06/02/1945
POW 447 BQ 247

The bugle blows for evening roll, approaching close of a languid listless day in which the only comfort is everyone else feels the same. Jobs mount up instead of clearing. Would rather pull nails from battens than repair my own and Mitches knife, out lectures because I've not done prep, go to play – reading instead of fixing black-out.

The hoped for improving climax and collapse of East and Western fronts help general unsettledness, what is going to happen and when is it going to happen, then what will happen to us!

'Hay fever' by Noel Coward was good night entertainment, one of those plays to see post war. Went with Jock after tea, 15:45 in Rum Pot. Allan Linton takes male part of Sorrel's friend. Standing for the Foreign Office Diplomat, in Radio play form conducted by Bannister. They have stage up South end of RP now; place is different each time I go.

The new Commandant come Station Master shouts 'on-parade' for the eve corridor check – must go. No raids, Jock making potato pudding for baking.

Wednesday 07/02/1945
POW 448 BQ 248

My opinion of Coy. honesty goes up, left soap, sponge and loofa in wash house overnight and still there this morning!

Allan making salmon pie for today's unlimited baking also bread and butter pudding – *can't get off this food business, exclude in future entries.*

One cigarette parcel for lucky person in this Coy. 48 for the camp. So much for the 6-10 bags coming in, Van-Burton not the lucky person this time.

Amusing rumour of local Valhstrume being played by brass band to the front. So long as fighting troops are moving away from this area, we are delighted to hear it. 'Bag Happy' has the requisite no. of contributors for after-war publication. Another book by Homer passing round camp also on same lines.

Having sat next to cheerful Tommie Thompson for last dozen lectures it needed Tony Drier to see 'Reads' and Sons of Reading in his hat to bring home the fact that he is the "Thompson" Maisie (*sister Maisie*) wants me to look for. Also the same Thompson of Vincent's referred to by George Hurst at Trubau. Have to meet Lloyd Davis now to complete the Reading circle. Writing letter to Maisie tonight.

Hot shower in hospital as part of Jock's 'perks'. Think Sandy Lane is annoyed because ping pong biesles have come back.

Despite yesterday determination regards food entries it must be recorded how even now cakes and tarts are being baked.

The alcove table presented an appetising sight before steam and baking were taken off to cookhouse. Now after supper I feel happily full of salmon baked pie and potato bread pudding. Jock's cake looks good also, although he maintains it is not cooked sufficiently.

Thursday 08/02/1945
POW 449 BQ 249

A grand bright day, warm as spring, most unnatural and disturbing for the fronts.

Finished Bucko's waste box and getting on with trestles. 15:30 saw two German films, the first short very silly, the second long most tragic, a second Betty Davies.

Borrowed Frankenberg's book on Calculas, not such a mystery now. Red X rep visits us tomorrow. Parcels, fuel, soap, Xmas parcels, reminder of tin stove, barber, hospital, church, showers, reports of long-terms, blankets, paper, rollcall.

Kommandant issued new list of orders to be allowed, die the usual natural death. Snap checks, obey bugle only. Night checks on bed.

Mark brings in renewed rumour of 4,000 American parcels in vicinity. Mark also tells us about the terrific Argentine parcels intended for four persons.

Kept awake by several raids and one bug. I'll have that blighter before many more nights out.

Heavy crumping about Hanover on Magdeburg distance and one burst of closer AA put my socks on and crept back with no further incident.

1/3 loaf to Valentine ¼ to Tom's for jam and fruit.

Friday 09/02/1945
POW 450 BQ 250

Found new wash and shave time 11:30, bathroom practically deserted, plenty of water, can see when lunch ready and clear up odd jobs, most important it saves getting out of bed early and an early start for prop tools.

During this morning's raid with distant crumps, I made a bread-and-butter pudding for Jock and I then wash shave and change vest.

A December letter from Mary, the latest yet, written on her birthday. They don't appear to be getting much mail from us but mentions the camp photo, room group presumed. Red X rep visited camp for 2 ½ hours, a Swiss unable to speak English or German, new to the country and not very informative. Considers we are lucky to have present stock of parcels. Told us two fleets of lorries organised by Red X from Geneva and Lubeck (in Germany) ready to carry parcels by road to camps. List of calorific values posted on Coy below very interesting, must list them in war diary if time.

Large Western offensive started across Siegfried line.

Saturday 10/02/1945
POW 451 BQ 251

Sun rises earlier and sets later. Change in routine today having identity check by Germans on ground floor. Von Karnity conducting with cards and photo. Commenting on the fluctuating of mustaches. Return to room shortly after.

Looks as though the search rumour is false. Tobacco store broken into a few days ago and several thousand private cigarettes and lbs of tobacco stolen. Three thousand found by two OR's in a roof yesterday. An officer's pip left in store as clue.

Impending march just another rumour. Identity parade over in an hour and prop tools out by 11:20. Physics lecture by Loosley, lousy wet day but colder, looks as though the expected frost is approaching.

Evening meal of very good meat and vegetables stew, only two more of them and we run out of Red X food.

Very heavy crumps during the night about 23:00.

Sunday 11/02/1945

POW 452 BQ 252

BIRTHDAY KING FAROUK (of Egypt) and TED JOHNSON

Trouble getting tools, German's say for use in 9/26 only straightened out later by Camp Interpreter – Peter Cornish. Coy E service Hs 9 basement 11:00.

Sermon by Young on Graces before Lent. Heat water by props room and wash clothes. Languidly of camp occupants increases with food shortage, prospects of living only on German rations not cheering interest in next week's food. Shall change bread for sugar with Valentine.

EG Horner a Sunday Chronicle Artist has been illustrating our wall papers, bag happy and others now producing one of his own for publication after getting back home at Rm 26. Preface to be written by Bill Bowes, scheme approved by SBO. 150pds to Horner for publishing rights, putting myself down for ½ dozen 'Back Issue'.

The O I/C Red X parcels (German) took check parade on our floor tonight. Walked fast and obviously not counting, turning to Coy CO, Maj Snell at end of line saying "Are they all there?". A general slackening of other German institutions now apparent. On the last Identification Parade, Von Karnity is supposed to have asked an Officer without identity disc if he wanted one! No? All right!

Quiet night, not even the factory din.

Monday 12/02/1945

POW 453 BQ 253

Misty, light fall of snow and rain during night.

Good helping of biscuit porridge for breakfast.

Very short roll no doubt due to combination of Smokey Joe (Menday) and Bulk Issue. Second of Plastic lectures by Nicholson? For English Society in Scottish dancing room basement of House 9 Signals. Surprised at very wide range of uses for plastics.

Doing a great trade in bread for jam, booked up for two Thursday ahead, must be careful not to overdo it as calorific value of quantities obtained in each are not so good. Believe I'm feeling the effect of restraint.

Goons refused to allow tools out today. Frankenberg – my Trigonometry and Calculas instructor in hospital. Calculas taken by Haley, much better instruction, has the school master touch.

Lights OK all evening. Yellow alarm about 23:00 when a first thought Berlin raid dropped a heavy bomb 5-10 secs away shaking the camp and occupants. Even the majority stayed abed, so blasé are we becoming.

THIS ABOVE ALL: TO THINE OWN SELF BE TRUE, AND IT MUST FOLLOW, AS THE NIGHT THE DAY. THY CANST NOT BE FALSE TO ANY MAN: FAREWELL MY BLESSING SEASON THIS IN THEE! Hamlet

This above all by Eric Knight. Spinx Books. Berne, Switzerland.

Lt. EG Horner War Artists to Sunday Chronicle. Illustrated booklet during PoW stay with VIII F + 79. To be published at home. Preface by Bill Bowes. Paid for three copies. 60 RM March account.

Tuesday 13/02/1945
POW 454 BQ 254

Snow and thaw during night, only wet in the morning.

No workshop tools or key for seven days by Goon order, no doubt to due yesterday's difference. Somehow feel relieved at prospects of a rest have lots of things to do, like getting War Log made up, collect friends home addresses, list camp societies, and put in some packing. Finish reading several books started months ago starting some more! Will write PCs to people not corresponded with before and generally get mail up to scratch.

General mail situation depreciating steadily. 138 total for camp today, four people of the Coy lucky.

Parcels to slowly dwindling out with the odd parcel of each type clothing – food – books – cigarettes and miscellaneous. 16 arrived on 12th still so long as one a day continue to arrive there remains hope for me.

Last night's Theological lecture for Layman the first of series of six by Chief Padre Chutter on The Doctrines of Christ running Monday nights at 19:30, raid or not.

Two other courses on Tuesday's and Saturday's I shall also attempt to attend. Some interesting general interest lectures coming off shortly at 16:00, also to be seen.

Bannister and the stage star wishes to join us occupying the spare bed (late Chesterman's). Though all present not encouraging, there are no objections.

Called to Alec and borrow an excellent English book. Bannerman in (not Bannister). 97 killed and 120 wounded French PoW's in a Hanover Kriegie camp as announced in today's papers arriving in camp. Raid by British terror flyers.

Attended a very instructive lecture by Jackson. Borrowed an excellent English Grammar book by 'Boas and Aldred' from Alec Stones. Takes up to Matric standard also introduction to heavy reading of classics, prose and verse.

Parcels left in food store now only 130 English and 175 Canadian to be used up by Cookhouse then we've had them – literally.

Lecture by Padre Young 'History of Church of English' starting at Britain in 4th Century. The 2nd of series of 'Lectures for the Layman' in Church of England Chapel House 1. John Notley accompanying.

Raids commenced proper at lights out although perimeter lights out when John and I returned from chapel. Raid period including various incidents lasted three hours all but 10 mins, many planes with few heavy explosions from 10-15 miles away. Distance calculated by dividing number of seconds from flash to bang by 5 is approx. accurate.

Wednesday 14/02/1945

POW 455 BQ 25

ST. VALENTINE and DOSS's (*Sister Dorothy*) BIRTHDAY

Jock working bath perks.

VIGIL (-J-) m. keeping awake, a watch.

m = VIGILANCE.

a = VIGILANT Name of a camp wallpaper, religious. RC. Free and Church of England called CN (Church News) late CI-IV

Thursday 15/02/1945

POW 456 BQ 256

11:00 feel better after wash, shave and clean boots, now up to date after sit back by last night's raids that lasted all evening from supper beyond midnight. Five hours of yesterday's 24 was red warning and another five hours yellow. Today tends to beat the record. A red on now. So regular and frequent are full warnings becoming that very few take notice until planes or AA heard.

Jock Webster is getting on well in his best affected style with the stage star of School for Scandal – Alastair Bannerman. It's amusing to observe the style (and its change to basic style or lower when things not quite right).

Peter Craig moving in Rm 68 today, no reason given except the known fact that all partners are harping to each other, too much contact. It breaks up a Moosburg Contract. Albert would make a good partner for any reasonable fellow, like myself. Easy going, willing worker.

Subtracted 150RM and 10 shillings yearly to Boy's Club Brunswick. After Col. Dunhill's inspiring appeal at yesterday's meeting the camp is responding generously, mine about the average.

Parcel general info now official, 1500 parcels, cigarettes and diet parcels dispatched for us. When they will arrive, we do not know.

Band Show of Tommie Sampson 15:45 today was good. Around London's prewar clubs and their regular bands. Café Anglaise – Harvey Roy. Morsigrean (?) Lew Stone. BPoC - Henry Hall The Donchester – Jack Jackson, Mayfair – Bert Ambrose featuring their regular or special artist as depicted by ours. I.e., Glover, Dannie Green, Tom Meehan and the two tooth one of School for Scandal with the extra strong voice. Bob Hope stage name or not, unknown, predicted as Americans No 1 humorist put over doubtful jokes. Jersey Lounce – Betty Langford etc. During the show I thought it would be a good idea to intrigue MB into doing morning (or evening) exercises to be copied and completed by my admiring self-appreciating form opposite.

Jock has audience from Bannerman for stage part (thought the Scottish 'school' would out). A clear night without raids.

Friday 16/02/1945
POW 457 BQ 257

Bright sun after morning parade. Still on holiday from props, half term educational WE 19th.

Nearly lost five rations of porridge this morning due to George's and I banter on business hand in.

Bringing war log up to date.

Rumour that camp moves to Harty mountains to make room for refugees. Other reason to keep all PoW's as hostages. Lots of other rumours not worth mentioning.

Morning walk around camp to read five PoW's and news boards, a cold job although sun still out, weather is slowly freezing up again. No heat in building this morning which may be due to official warm period commencing, on the much-advertised fuel drive due to loss of Silesia, Poland and disorganisation of transport admitted by Germans in their papers. BUDAPEST falls to Russian advance. Obtained more material for war log.

Chat with Alex in Society Room before returning to room for tea. Windows rattling with distant blast somewhere West unseen even in bright sun and clear sky. Treacle issue two dessert spoonful (medium) each for the week.

General Interest lecture by Brithon on Russia. Yellow during talk, AC before dark. Radiators on heat.

Of all rumours the move one is worst of all, and they always come at times like these to upset us, Billy Match sticks, Ben's boyfriend from 1 Coy and room below us, usually an authority reports that Goon sentries have seen warning order to move us 100 klm's by walking at 20klms per day (12.5 miles). Our first thought is to bash all food reserves, then what essential kit to avoid dumping. None of us would do more than ½ hr walking with any weight attached.

Saturday 17/02/1945
POW 458 BQ 258

A grand Spring morning. 05:30 check parade makes a good eye opener clearing the lungs – birds singing to the shining sun. Beams (sun) stream over the breakfast table few moments later, after dash away upstairs on release by 2G's. Heat again off.

500 cigarettes stolen from Red X store last night; the second lot taken, culprits of first theft not yet found. 11:00 Goons demanding extra check parade by sounding of gongs at sentry boxes. First time this occurred though order has been posted several days as warning. Passive disobedience policy being adopted. Eventually everyone inside rooms or at least buildings, most watching sentry guard empty parade ground. Running commentary from window sighting. Assistant Commander at the gate.

Puddings and pies have been put in for steaming. A combined meat by Notley and mixed pudding by Jock and I consisting of three potatoes, powdered canned biscuits, spoonful flour, ditto sugar, three prunes, a dozen raisins and few prune kernels not forgetting spoonful of butter.

11:20 on 4G's blow for inside parade. Return from Hayman's lecture by Ackroyd in Church of England Chapel Ho 1 during which a full sequence of alarms took place: lecture continued by marge lamp.

John and I returned to room and cocoa brew by wading across mud patch. Allan storing his store of prunes, conversation turns to food in form of biscuits and porridges made from all kinds of biscuits from dog to H+P's. Here we are all hungrier than hunters with nothing literally nix to fill our stomachs.

Radiators are off and feet cold, best thing for one to do is to retreat into bed.

Sunday 18/02/1945
POW 459 BQ 259

Miserable, damp, wet day. 10:30 Free Church in cinema. Sermon on danger of doing without God. Return to room to hear German issue rations are to be cut by 20%, that and no food parcels left looks as though the Church is going be busy.

Sunday lunch consisted more of turnips than anything else despite four large sized potatoes and ¼ tin size of sardines, with butter and generous sprinkle of salt a tasty meal is supplied to our undersized stomach, appreciated on its journey by a sharpened palate. It surprises one how fast a turnip can turn to gas! One of the worst foods for repeating. Reminds me of Howenstein latrines (*military latrine*) halfway up the back stairs.

14:00 second visit to Tommy Sampsons band show 'Night Ride'. Paid Maj Stanley (Sigs Ho 5) a quick visit before lunch for log entry and display photos.

Rooms spirit very low due to rumoured ration cut – cold – no food parcels. Attempting to construct a special smokeless stufa – super heated burning air.

Dusk and still no heat after a heatless day – miserable life. Tonight's meal is German stew, at least bulky!

Monday 19/02/1945

POW 460 BQ 260

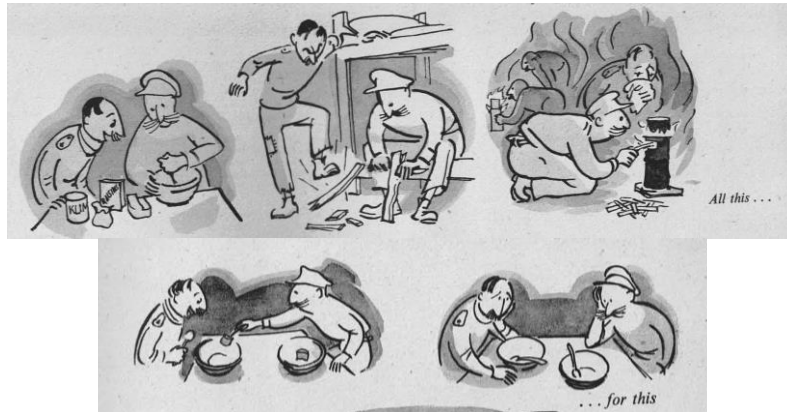
A gloomy humour prevails throughout the camp with cuts in rations and no heat.

Everyone down in dumps ready to believe the worst rumours:

1/ Vast quantity of Argentina butter said to have been used in cookhouse for cooking purpose queried.

2/ Half a horse stolen from cookhouse yesterday, this is absurd.

Two snoopers came into props room as last of a beam was being chopped up for stufas we may have got away with it, don't know yet. Coming away for lunch with my box of floor sweepings I feel like a fussy old char, with her straw baskets of bits from the family table.



The weekly letter to Mary and reading the excellent English book (grammar) lent to me by Alex Stoes (a new English course by Boas & Aldred). Difficult to concentrate when feet and hands so cold.

16:45 Returned to a bone chilling room after Engineering Society lecture by _____ on Car Dynamotor control (3rd brush and Compensating Voltage Control) a very interesting and enlightening lecture given with electrical diagrams in a comfortably warm basement room of the hospital.

A grand smell coming from tonight's baking's and steaming's in cookhouse. We have a pie and pud for the great four.

17:00 the man who turns on the heat been and gone without immediate results. It looks to me as though the Goon Kommandant has trouble brewing in the cold hungry camp. Feel like doing a bit of passive demonstrating myself, not so good humoured either. The swill queue and distribution is being organised.

19:30 layman's theological lecture by Padre Rogers (the tooth-talker) verses Padre Chutter posted to Dresden. Raid and AA during talk conducted by lamp. Lights on after return to room in time for brew before bed.

Tuesday 20/02/1945
POW 461 BQ 261

Papering for Hostlers exhibition in old Tech H room Hs 9.

Letter from Pop mentioning Sumners Hawk and 3,000 prisoners in Oflag 79 October letter, they have not heard from us since July 44.

Have put down the new ration cuts which came into force yesterday:

GERMAN RATION CUTS

- Potatoes cut by 1/5 from 500grams daily to 400grams
- Bread from 300grams daily to 250grams. 2/3 loaf on Monday and ½ Thursday
- Flour from 50grams weekly to 18grams.
- Cheese from 62.5 weekly to 50grams.
- Jam from 175grams weekly to 130grams.
- Cereals from 200grams to 175grams.
- Vegs from 30grams weekly to 20grams. (Barley, millet etc)
- Turnips from 2400grams weekly to 1800grams.
- Meat from 230grams to 210grams.

1gram approx. equivalent to 0.04ounces approx.

50grams = 1.8ounces

200grams = 44ounces

Evening layman's lecture by Padre Rogers in Church of England chapel Hs 1. A muddy walk there and back with John Notley across a rain swept camp. Most of lecture given during an alarm without lights, dealt with Reformation period – Henry VIII.

No lights – no brew – bed down in the dark – short period when planes over and local AA spent in shelter chatting with George Hurst and Arthur Wiecegisbol (?).

Wednesday 21/02/1945
POW 462 BQ 262

A fine day, sun and wind to dry a large wash in hot water provided by Jock from hospital, showers: pyjamas, shirt, pullover, Goon towels, socks and handkerchief, almost dry by evening.

19:30 now filling in diary feeling comfortable warmer after meat pie supper with Allan special soggy pudding (too much flower). Feet in Red X box, coat and one glove on, scavenger pump of heating system faulty will not be in order tonight – so Goons say, only a raid recess, now to send us all straight to bed.

Have plenty of writing I want to do were it not for cold i.e., letter to Pop. Physics notes – war log, Physics prep and book notes.

Intend making margarine lamp for our use and our fat of course. Words with Jack Butler over a button and cooking. Cheese issue 4/5 a round each.

Night raid 24:00 to 03:00.

Radiators: Right on – Anti Clock then back 2½ then on 5½.

Thursday 22/02/1945
POW 463 BQ 263

Three new Kriegies arriving from Italy and Vienna, glad to get away from there and raids. Chemistry featuring in raid program.

Dull morning 14:00 Markers towards Hanover, distance too great to see planes. Very loud bomb explosions, doors and window frames rattled.

First long talk with South Africa Sig Lt (elderly) from Stoney Mason's room below. Name CE SEALEY of 214 Montpelier RD DURBAN. Invited him to stay at home on way back to South Africa.

Busy copying out Jacksons physics lectures during ½ term week from 19th.

Water off after the evening raid.

Friday 23/02/1945
POW 464 BQ 264

Apparently, no water in the camp. Cold mist.

Last contents of food parcels being issued from cookhouse, raisins and prunes in barley porridge, meats into stews, after this we are really right out.

Lecture by Lt/Col Booth about two years spent on Philippines 1936-39. Not during present fighting (see Lectures Attended section 15).

Heat coming on, an event! Look forward to a good meal of meat pie (1/4 mess tin) and bread and butter pud (1/3 Klim tin) both put in for cookhouse baking, the pud has egg – milk – Condensed, butter and nutmeg in it.

New boy arrived in camp two days ago after walking 12klms from railhead outside Brunswick, finds his brother here, previous presence unknown.

Another offensive starting or has started wcf 09:00 this morning by 1st and 3rd British Armies on Western front. A toast to them! And us.

Ben refused offer of 20RM for March 4th sweep ticket.

Lights off again for usual mid-evening period 19:00-21:00.

Saturday 24/02/1945
POW 465 BQ 265

Double count on morning check. Swept Ho. 1 basement clean of H.O. Starting on hospital base.

Cooked turnips – potatoes and two small pancakes (from Yorkshire pud mixture) from Jock for lunch. Menu coming down fast now.

Mess meeting for Coy room reps in alcove under Phil Bill 13:30 next week's menu finishing off the parcel stock.

Meet Don King at Hoteliers Exhibition, hearing via his December 16th letter that our combine photo has arrived with Mary. Discussing plans for holiday after getting home – Regent's Palace – Strand Coffee House, hire of car etc.

Evenings much lighter, black-out put back to 18:00.

Sunday 25/02/1945
POW 466 BQ 266

Unusual events with refusal from guard room to issue any room keys – exhibition, Engineering Society – law – workshop etc. Later a whole bevy of Goon officers and tonnes of guards flooded the camp. Everyone sent indoors and identification parade started. Since a show forceable injury such as bayoneting, or shooting has not yet been displayed the parade has not progressed far and we look like having a late lunch if any.

Taken opportunity myself to have a good dusting of bookshelf at bed head. Have a good collection of tech and general interest books now, about a dog. German, English, Tech, Trig, School Math's, French English, Diet mostly loaned from Alec Bell and Hall. Craig collected S for C yesterday promising to re-lend it in a few days.

Have given both pairs of boots a good polish – the usual Sunday treat, but this parade fair to wash out.

Church 19:30 all over now. Took Goons from 10:30-15:00 to check up whole camp. Rather a bad time from our point of view for Foreign Office Investigating Officer to arrive re our complaints. General policy here was of passive non-co-operation. Purpose of Goon check is to identify the missing officer and see if more than one. Some state or other of alarm has existed all day without serious evidence of bombers, nobody has taken any notice.



Heated last of meat roll by mixing into butter tin with three times volume of mashed potatoes, raisins, sugar and salt – steamed eaten with boiled potatoes. The whole would have made a tasty satisfying meal for one, whereas it has to be shared out between four.

Letter to Pop and PC to Mary.

Monday 26/02/1945
POW 467 BQ 267

A dull windy day. This day last year I noted that news in Italy was Neturno landings, today Germany is awaiting the last attack from E+W, 8th Army is along Poe in North Italy – terrific advances in a year.

Obtained tools and key from guard room usual time without trouble. Chilblains better tonight after a very itchy day. Classes recommenced after a week's ½ term holiday. Haley much better for Calculas than Frankenberg, in hospital, with sugar diabetics.

Reading John Talbot's article on "Convoy to Murmansk" on news board also article Maj Taylor on "Start Lines" E+W European fronts. Attending Talbot's lecture tomorrow.

Internal glow produced by good filling of German stew, includes beans, potatoes.

Tuesday 27/02/1945
POW 468 BQ 268

Strong rumour that 3,000 letters arrived. Heavy wash done in basement of Ho. 1 using hot water by Prop's room bucket over plywood fire in corridor. Shirt, pants, vest and pillow slip hung up in Ho. 8 to dry. Lunch of barley and potato stew. Don't know if to add sugar and milk or salt, compromise salt and sugar. Best porridge made ourselves for breakfast from 1 can of biscuit each much better and more than we used to get from cookhouse.

Weather great deal milder today – almost warm. General state of alarm. Education classes are dwindling to three + two. Trig classes packed in partly due to Frankenberg going into hospital. Matric and French finished at ½ term, I have books on these two subjects.

Two raids during night sounding like Berlin. The second batch passing over very low and loud. Had the bed not become so warm and comfy I'd have gone down to shelter with Marcus the Greek, did a quake in bed until clear they were going over and not assembling. Few rounds of AA let off at tail end Charlie.



Wednesday 28/02/1945
POW 469 BQ 269

Feeling weak and tired after a grand hot shower in hospital. Small supply of mail and parcels arriving in yesterday and today. Myself lucky with delightful letter from Kath. My October and November PC's arrived home to her Xmas day (one).

Thursday 01/03/1945
POW 470 BQ 270

Started a grand sunny morning turning later into rain and strong cold wind – very boisterous.

Haley (instructor) failing to arrive for class. Gramophone concert “Initiation to a Waltz” packed 1/4hr before due time.

Bread issue on time. A last issue of four cigarettes per person, nonsmokers in room stand down in favour of smokers, a noble effort than first appears since much can be obtained for 3-4 cigarettes on market these days i.e., a ration of treacle – a goon mug – fat margarine.

The 1st outside check parade. 17:30 Supper. 18:15 menu Jock and I – fried cheese on bread, chips, prune pudding and tea brew.

Friday 02/03/1945
POW 471 BQ 271

Very windy night, trees blown down the tops of others whipped off – useful for fuel they soon disappear, holes blown in rooves tiles strewn about. Clear sky for parade, followed by snow showers, terrific snow blizzard just before lunch.

Barley soup lunch. Cookhouse brews run out today leaving only mint and ersatz coffee for issues.

Continual state of alarm one sort or another.

Albert very kindly presented me with RX notebook for study purpose.

Saturday 03/03/1945
POW 472 BQ 272

After a night of almost continuous raids and parameter blackouts the morning springs forth bright and clear in brilliant sun. Very cold on parade but houses unusually warm with heat on. Sun streaming into our room also helps, except to show up the dust clouds raised by bed makers. A present of two razor blades from Jock (!).

Collected tools shortly after red sounding and wandered back map looking when many formations of USA bombers came over a clear sky surrounded by fighters. Incendiaries dropped near large buildings to West, also leaflets closer. Brunswick bombed and many markers streaking the sky. Exciting while it lasted, spent some time in shelter.

Walter is off and I've missed my bidaily. Book Saturday for the camp, an attempt to increase library stock. Ted Johnson (Rm 52) Coy librarian gives us of 52 a preview of old plays such as "Fanny by Gaslight" and "NW Passage" etc. have collected Hungry House and put in six others hanging around my bed.

Smoke now rising from fighter drone to West. Evening meal – fish pie last of the parcel foods, already out of brews and started on mint tea tonight, a scently smell attached, having trained on no sugar or milk diet. I don't find the MT so bad.

Attended 2nd rate Crazy Gang show in Rum Pot. Geoff Slade accordion turns a band the best part of show in spite of Tony Watson included.

Feeling very limp and tired. Goons introducing new system of bugle calls wcf tomorrow and new mealtimes opening the old cookhouse outside first gate. Expecting difficulty getting meals during raids now.

Western front onto Rhine and Moselle.

Sunday 04/03/1945
POW 473 BQ 273

Another night of various alarms. We don't get out of bed except for flares and bombs nowadays. Snowing hard but not freezing.

08:00 Communion old barber's shop, basement of Ho. 9 with John N. Return to room for late brew first day of new (or older) cookhouse. Bannerman gets bread toasted in Rm. 50, of course Jock wants his done. Am told that dried toast goes further than bread, lately.

Inside RE for a change, 18:00. Evening parade in corridor tonight as outside it is trying to rain and snow together. Today has been a black Sunday – miserable for everyone. Meals disarranged by Goon control outside cookhouse apart from the meal itself being

sauerkraut soup (not too bad). Other food oddities are toast (a meal old) to make it last longer. Bread dried to rusk state on radiator, salt on everything.

A night of mixed red and yellow and AC alarms.

Monday 05/03/1945

POW 474 BQ 274

Change of routine. German's taken over bugle calls, instigating a series of new ones. Also new timings for parades and meals. Cookhouse closes down at 16:30. The disadvantage of Goon control outside of cookhouse becoming apparent.

Two Frenchmen repairing our roof. The Goons definitely mucking us about with mealtimes. No heating except weekends. No brew for lunch and only boiled spuds to eat. Jock and I feasted on cheese pie steamed over stufa with turnips some done some not, result a stomachache, mint tea leftover from afternoon.

Tuesday 06/03/1945

POW 475 BQ 275

Another dismal day. Weather started off fine and bright turning to hail later.

Everyone feeling weak and languid not getting accustomed to reduced rations. Cookhouse is becoming better organised on simpler menu of German coffee for breakfast, BP's lunch, mint tea and stew or porridge for supper.

Raids started with red at 20;30 staying on until early hours of 7th. Nothing around here.

Wednesday 07/03/1945

POW 476 BQ 276

Felt better this morning after our own arrangement of biscuit porridge consisting of a canned biscuit each ground up fine and soaked in two Klim tins full of water overnight. Jock brings it to the boil for 10min after and before noon parade ready for breakfast, eaten with butter, sugar, milk and little salt it makes a good meal compared with others these days. Having used up my reserve of canned biscuits now starting on last tin of English.

Mark Ogilvie Grant has started a strong parcel rumour of 1,500 x medical in the Karlsbrook truck supposed to have been located nearby, at least a change.

Weather much better today. We hear that Garrison rations have been cut. Cutting lectures this afternoon to get washing done. No baths.

Thursday 08/03/1945
POW 477 BQ 277

Another dull, cold miserable day. Hunger gnawed with twisting pains right side and stomach though more accustomed to shorter rations. This hungry life makes everyone suspicious of others, cutting the bread – issuing the stew.

A foreign office rep staying in Camp to improve relationships – no results as yet. His first remarks were on dirty conditions of camp and officers in it, giving us an excellent chance to complain again of no brooms, soap, water or laundry to mention the most important.

Jock and I are not yet down on our haunches tomorrow morning we have biscuit porridge for breakfast, some of tonight's stew goes into a Klim tin for meat and veg pie with potato crust for baking tomorrow night together with bread-and-butter pudding using last but one of egg flakes, 1/3 of a tin.

Ogilvie Grant's parcel rumour has been squashed. To counteract this an official notice has appeared to affect. RX are using their own lorries to convey parcels and medicals to PoW camps.

Friday 09/03/1945
POW 478 BQ 278

A lovely day, the best this year with clear blue skies and bright sun on morning parade. Still cold and pools frozen over but fine outlook making us feel much better.

A good biscuit porridge, two English PF and one can making a Klim tin full makes a lot of difference also.

Just time to draw tools when red alarm and not too distance rumbling heralds the new day. Return to room in order to make bread and butter pudding.

The front maps make interesting reading. Western front tucking into the Rhine North and South only about 1/3 of its length left free on East bank. Now for the crossing and liberation and home. On other side Joe has cut off Danzig entirely and with it half Prussia. Italian front moves slowly in bad weather.

House occupants line the sunny side of the wall, well wrapped, reading.

Boys Club have collected 9,131pds Capital and 500pds regular yearly donations towards founding our London Club. Maxton Graham has written a letter to The National Boys Club (NBC) London for advice.

This weather keeps up may get up to date with studies and notes. Gave the sheet, blanket and famous pyjamas a good airing in sun and wind.

Meals today have not been too bad chiefly thru our own efforts i.e., breakfast biscuit porridge, lunch – fried bread and few chips. Supper the big meal, Goon stew rebaked

with potato crust and b and b pudding, ½ barley issue being kept by four combine for tomorrow lunch, ½ of that left kept again by Jock and I for tomorrow breakfast. Still cocoa and sugar left for the bed warming brew with 2 ½ slices of dried toast and treacle.

One Kriegie captured in act of turning on heat Ho. 6. A terrific rumour rampant, has to be verified correct.

Saturday 10/03/1945
POW 480 BQ 280

Great days in history of warfare. The world awaits Allied troops to cross the Rhine and finish off Germany as a Power. Even Germans themselves. Stettin and Danzig standing on a front only 40 miles from Berlin. We stay put ½ way between both fronts spending the most miserable days of our existence.

The smallest amount of food any of us have been reduced to. Minimal amount of heat. Water flowing intermittently. Weather cold wet and dull. Rooms too cold to sit in for reading and writing. Above news only bright spot and warm dry beds to retire into at night. Unable to concentrate on lessons or work. Spend most time messing about with meagre rations. Saving some here – heating it up there, frying and toasting. Boiling turnip peels. Duty room for coy, main job jug and potato carrying. Good helping of mixed veg stew for lunch consisting chiefly of millet with potatoes and two thick slices of bread added, burnt tongue and roof.

Coy CO's meeting can't bother to remember points.

Sunday 12/03/1945
POW 481 BQ 281

14:00, morning dull but appreciably warmer making conditions much easier to stand. Now more fully appreciate trails undergone by Antarctic explorers.

Church of England 11:15 Roger's sermon on the "The Centurion who did his duty" i.e. In charge of triple crucifixion, digressing onto looking for the best in people as applied to our life here in camp.

Return room and help Alan cook lunch of fried bread, chips and turnip peelings previously boiled for 3/4hr by Jock, tea brew from hot water up from cookhouse. After lunch as small wash of hanks, socks and hand towel in cold H2O and minimum amount of soap. Now warming up sitting on bed with feet in RX box and great coat wrapped around knees getting into fit state to write a letter to the wife.

In the news that RX sending supplies out from Switzerland to PoW camps in Germany by road transport. We watched the autobahn for lorries with our name. One parcel each would require a 10 tonner, so we don't expect too much.

All clear sounding after short alarm a few distance rumbles. 18 nights in succession Berlin has been raided each time passing one, or both directions overhead. Sign of the times.

Sandy repairs his traveling box. Jack plots short lengths of string for I think making a 'Semorah'.

Monday 12/03/1945

POW 482 BQ 282

Haircut by Ray.

Tuesday 13/03/1945

POW 483 BQ 283

Have caught the food dreaming complaint. Last night I was home round the round dining room table sitting next to Pop with Mom busy carving from huge roast opposite.

Then again finding 100 squashed cigarettes in the old French café billet and swapping for sugar and treacle. Everyone talks about food they have had, are having, or going to have. Good examples of tenses there.

Rhine Bridgehead enlarged.

A second minor row with the old soldier continually borrowing water, when tis only laziness not to keep his own. As result he brings in many other items, I have no objection to, and he threatens not to borrow anything from me again. How long will this last?

Berlin 22.

Wednesday 14/03/1945

POW 484 BQ 284

Warm bright morning. Up and tidy early. Heated some of last night's barley over stufa for breakfast, on top landing. Catastrophe yesterday after spending 3/4hr scraping together ingredients for a super bread and butter pudding, it was pinched from alcove table before going down for baking. Thorough search with aid of camp police failed to reveal any trace of pud or container. What a world, what a camp!

Heavy raid nearby after lunch believed Hanover, lasting about 3/4hr bombs continually falling. German foreign office Rep staying in camp lengthy time. Tall fellow wearing a blue leather great coat. Luftwaffer.

Paid props room a visit this morning appeared to be very helpful.

Turnip soup tonight. A cheese issue surprise packet $\frac{3}{4}$ of a round per person. Jock and I eat half for tea and intend frying up the rest on bread for tomorrow's lunch.

I fear this portion of diary is not going to make interesting reading for Mary when back home, the main idea, but explain that it's due to the same reason as falling off in class interest, and for that matter any interest.

Lack of vitality bought on by the food shortage. Three cuts closely following each other. The first German issue reduction. Running out of Red X food parcels, a more gradual change because of personal issues. Then the 2nd German reduction in practically all items, bread – potatoes – barley – cheese – sugar etc. We are getting accustomed to less eating and feel much better than first shock. But on other hand the morale has suffered a severe shock and we are unable to do things previously possible.

A fellow in 1 Coy, ahead of us on morning roll collapsed – flat out – as result of running onto parade!

Thursday 15/03/1945 – “The Ides of March”
POW 485 BQ 285

Better weather than yesterday, really warm in the sun. Noticed trees budding and grass showing a new greenness. Birds more plentiful, noisy and greater variety. Walk with Donald Rider and plans for meeting at home month after getting back. Addresses exchanged.

Rumours of Rhine Bridgehead broken out.

Feel very tired in evening. Better filled tonight with German meat stew, baked potato and raisins and bread and biscuit pudding w/ treacle. Fried issue cheese on bread for lunch with potato biscuits. Secret of biscuits is to cook on dry plate or pan, may be good idea to powder pan with flour.

Heavy bombers around here late evening within 20 miles usual large bombs. Houses rocked with blast but comparative small noise. Sky flashes to NW, somewhere S of Hanover.

Friday 16/03/1945
POW 486 BQ 286

Looks like being another fine day as sun shines for breakfast. The meal consists of cereal, ½ slice of bread with one potato, salt, and mustard spread.

Heard from Asst Camp Adj myself that 360 more British Officers arriving here from Hadamar (near Koblentz on Rhine). Rumour improves this by lunch to two batches of 300 and including General Fortune with staff!

Evenings much longer with approaching spring. Not quite so warm today but very cheerful sun.

The usual raid time also steadily retreats into the night. Have beaten the warning tonight by having brew and toast in bed, even a short read from James Jean's *“The Stars in Their Courses”* before lights go off, usually 5-10 minutes after warning which has just gone. Approximately 21:00 supper taken by daylight with blinds up. 360 Officers expected any moment. Went to talk by Capt Macdonald on his experiences as freelance Air Ferry SA, Amusing.

Saturday 17/03/1945 – St Patrick's Day, Ireland
POW 487 BQ 287

Looks as though fine weather is over for a few days. Roll call in corridor due to wet weather. Self not such an early riser this morning, wash and shave after breakfast.

Last night I awoke and spent a lot of time planning the future caravans MB (*wife*) and I are to own someday (CF index). Intend making it a paying proposition.

Put in three baking's for tonight's meal – a meat and veg pie each with potato crust (egg painted), filling saved from three evening soups mixed with savings from two lunch time potatoes, and a bread-and-butter pud using very small amount of Yorkshire pud mixture instead of milk to thicken, 1/3 tin milk flakes.

Accommodation stores coming for new arrivals.

Sugar 3½ tsps. full.

A night for distant raids and some nearby smaller bombing also believed machine gunning of autobahn or adjacent aerodrome.

Sunday 18/03/1945
POW 488 BQ 288

The escapee back; in Goon clink, believed caught at Osnabruck approximately 25 miles West of Hanover making for Holland.

Terrific excitement after lunch with cheering proved to be a truckload of parcels at local station. Unloading party left immediately, on a Sunday too! Type of parcel unknown as yet.

Identity parade tomorrow 09:00.

No workshop tools today and looks like being an easy day tomorrow. Made two simple stufas for Buckley and Bannerman, the later saves him continually borrowing from us. New wood arrangement for John and Allan the extravagant pair. They get a weekly ration to use how they wish. Will make them realise how fast it goes and perhaps then economise.

1st cigarette issue of 25 at 19:30 since Jan 8th smoked one, to barter the rest.

Monday 19/03/1945
POW 489 BQ 289

Parcels total 1500 + 500 medical, soap, cigarettes, and small quantity of bulk coffee (enough for two or three camp brews). The SMO is taking a lively interest in food distribution and the cooking of it.

Full program not out as yet, but policy is for meats, fish, porridge, sugar and tea to be cooked centrally. Personal issues as a parcel is sugar, biscuits, jam, chocolate, cheese, condense milk. Cocoa, soap and ____ are to be issued on pro rata basis to Coys. Cocoa maybe made up to ½ tin each from Hospital reserve.

OR's being allowed out by Kommandant to collect wood to be used for cookhouse. German's held identity parade this morning 09:00, with our co-op, it was over in 3/4hr.

This truck was in a bad way – dive bombed, machine gunned and pilfered to extent of 120 parcels. Still, we get the bulk – thank goodness to extent of ½ a parcel each.

Weather daily warmer. Bone stew and boiled spuds for lunch. Notice of two more truckloads of parcels on way from Geneva. Hospital staff are now to be fed and drunk on normal rations only and not use items from medicals. English tea issued at 15:00, grand!

Letter card posted to MB (*wife*).

Tuesday 20/03/1945
POW 490 BQ 2890

Frantically calculating how much less bread I can live on in order to purchase jams, marmalade and cocoa. Of the loaf and 1/6 weekly issue it's not too difficult to spare 1/3 of a loaf, beyond this tis definitely a belt tightening job. Have two deals on at present 2/3 by weekly installments for tin of jam from Jeff Brawl, 1/3 sharing with Jock for tin of egg flakes (1/6) from Ted and Ben. Now Ted has an attractive American made lipstick, a nice gift for Mary, value approximately one loaf!

Room occupants busy stufa making, knocking about with tins and wire. Hall Notley have a super model. Mark busy on his bed with one. I've made one for Bannerman and Buckley next door.

Have made out list of kit to be reclaimed soon as possible amounting to near 100 pounds. Also, the ideal Kriegie parcel before forgetting the usefulness of certain articles. 700 letters and sack of private parcels arrived in camp, things looking up. ½ parcel issued in great excitement this afternoon and lot of bashing going on. A few eat everything. Most of us are thrifty after first lick.

Wednesday 21/03/1945
POW 401 BQ 291

Yellow and red alarm before breakfast. Most unusual. During parade large bombers and fighter formations seen passing from W to E North of the camp leaving vapour trails. Distance bombing heard. Gate guard room moved out past kitchens.

No key or tools on first application. Discovered to my misfortune that cocoa and 200% sugar make an excellent bash. Swapped ½ condensed milk with Peter Craig's strawberry jam. Lunch of chips and thinly spread Welsh rabbit (not rarabit) tea brew.

Five American Air Force brought into camp before lunch bought down in area on Sunday and Thursday. In England last Sunday March 18th! They should give us some up-to-date guff.

Camp looking much tidier after combined efforts of Goon and SBO perhaps due to General Fortune's expected arrival.

Weight by Hospital scales = 53.5kg.

Thursday 22/03/1945
POW 492 BQ 292

Entry before breakfast on even wash and shave. Jock surprised my morning reading of James Jean's Expanding Universe chapter of his "*Stars in Their Courses*", by a milked cup of piping hot tea, to warm the cooling toes. In addition, he has performed my promised job of putting out the jugs at Camp gate for breakfast.

Time now 07:45 and sunshine streams in the window. If this goes on together with my present feeling of wellbeing, I'll have no choice but to like him a little. Since writing previous few words he has blotted his copy book several times. No! He's just the worst type of Brunswick Scotchman who lives in Edinburgh.

Bannerman our young elephant actor falls in and out of the room kicking stools and table adlib. Jock fry's himself a can biscuit for tea and I take a portion of chocolate and strawberry jam on 2.5 slices of bread. Both minor bashes at times like these. Only lost 1.5kgs since January which is encouraging.

Is a lovely warm day, people picnicking in the sun alongside hospital wall. Meet Taffey Bell in seat of Office Library and exchanged addresses. He intends spending 3.5 weeks after getting back home as long weekend at The Elephant Pangbourne, so we have arranged that he writes arrival and we then get in touch by phone and either/or meet for tea in Reading. We take then on a ride Oxfordshire side of Whitchurch. Sitting in the sun by Hs 9 we chat on London eating houses; I learnt location of Simpsons, for lunch, or Three Vikings both in, or on Piccadilly. Fortnum and Mason's for tea definite dates.

Evening: feeling grand after a lovely supper of 1st Red X parcel food – M+V stew, pea soup pie and bread and butter pudding baked marvelously by cookhouse. Mint tea, able to keep ½ M+V stew for breakfast and lunch tomorrow.

53.5kg stripped (+ 5 for clothes)
2.2lb per kilo

Friday 23/03/1945
POW 493 BQ 293

Early morning resolution made lying in bed to sleep under hedge at home in spring to appreciate the glories of God and his countryside. The Universe, luckily made notes on back of the menu at the time, otherwise should have forgotten. Cold hands and draught

blowing into the bed. These overcome by frequent rests – good for the eyes as well as hands and allow under layer of sheet to fall down between book and body.

Points decided upon (1) Keep the thin notebook for more and often arrive home programme. Afraid that otherwise I shall forget to collect or return items loaned and on loan, and dates and resolutions made. (2) Continue with the classification of authors to improve knowledge, a point for the aforementioned notebook. (3) From now on, in bag or at home keep a notebook, a sheet of stiff cardboard handy to bed for jotting down these bed thoughts.

Discovered the truth of 'after impressions' as described in Dunn's. Expanding with time. Already decided to read to Mary in bed. James Jean for a start, of course providing she'll let me? (on a time switch).

Lastly, I may give Jock coffee and toast in bed Sunday morning. 1,000 odd letters arrived in camp last few days.

Red alert after breakfast shortly followed by yellow. Sounds of heavy raid somewhere approx. 50-70 miles off, Osnabruck? On Western front? Told Jack Green when bombardment eases our next information would be from personal contact with our own troops.

A glorious day everyone sitting or walking in the sun, even a few sun bathers, garden diggers stripped to the waist. Camp drying out quite respectable. Issue of brushwood for personal stufas. Tommy Sampson plays outside for first time this year.

13:45 E&M food depot reopens with a burst. Indians bring forth their stores of food and brews, now the only people in camp to receive their meats and brews from parcels.

Porridge for lunch was a real treat, up to all the Kriegie tricks adding sugar – salt – raisins – English margarine (for butter) and watered conie-ally cocoa brew. Swapped condense milk from Bannerman just in time. Allen generously gave me four teaspoonfuls of Klim for my sugar – cocoa brew.

Reds and yellows blowing all day. Cut Magnetism + Electrical lecture to hear Tommy Sampson under the fir trees. Finished Jock's library book "*The Stars in Their Course*" by James Jean being very much impressed. Believe it to explain the link between religion and science, have noted it to be re-read.

Everyone weary like myself having taxed our reserve strength walking in the sun. It has been a glorious warm sunny day. Phil Loosely on Technical library duties allowed me to look around the shelves taking out two English books. No other science one's and waiting lists months long.

I expect the war for us to be over in three weeks from now!

Supper – pea soup and mint tea. Added breadcrumbs to portion of PS kept for breakfast.

Meet Tom Chesterman now a hospital patient, sitting in the sun. Gastric and anemia. He is now officially returned to this room when discharged. An advantage as we remain at 11 benefiting on food and brew issues by jugs. He gave me a brief discount of his visit to Brunswick hospital for x-ray and specialist.

Not dark until 19:15 nowadays, supper by daylight helps the cooking and issues. Blackout put up after supper. Glad to get extra daylight morning and evening.

Saturday 24/03/1945
POW 494 BQ 294

Another glorious day. This is the weather allies have been waiting five years for and look like making full use of it; over the Rhine and spearheads into Germany.

After lunch: Feeling full and grand as result of saving one can of jam tin of M+V stew from night before last reheated with bread and potatoes added bringing the ration between us up to two scoopfuls each. Coffee brew of used grounds from cookhouse, all done over my wee little stufa in corner of basement room.

Cold shower before tea in our own shower room, possible due to raid when water pressure always increases, warm sunshine streaming in. Notice I'm just a skin bag full of bones which stick out at all angles, had a good scrub down with English soap received today by cutting the cards. Four bars shared between the room, also lucky on the sheet drawer, two short in the room, now have two.

Saturday afternoon tea treat, good English marge, strawberry jam on two whole slices.

Several commercially minded businesspeople in business life's, especially Colonials offering to send commodities to one on present bookings. Powder milk from NZ. Confectionery from Canada, crystalised fruits from SA. May try a little from each. The snag is money in advance on the Canadian deal but I'm going to risk it.

Sunday 25/03/1945
POW 495 BQ 295
Palm Sunday

Yet another glorious day. Tommy Sampson's dance band playing between 18:00-19:00. Took Knights book "This above all" to read in the sunshine beside Allan Hall, roughed out a letter to waiting wife I expect to see very soon.

Saunter back for 15:30 tea brew (English) with the Sunday special tea I try to keep up with something special. Today two thin slices of bread some good marge and real strawberry jam over spread with grated chocolate. The same to last of a PF tin of biscuits, sugar in tea, feel grand enough to help shift the piano to hospital and music stand to Rum Pot.

Put in name for Isle of Man kippers order form in season.

Evening Free Church SV Attic Hs 5 by lengthening sunbeams. Padre Rogers short address by Chief Chaplin Thomas, on the last ditch!

Saw Sandy re key. Taken over laundry duties again. Called hospital to see Tom Chesterman – Ward 18 looking better.

Letter to Mary (*wife*) and PC to Jean (*sister*). Very tired, hope to sleep better than last night when bug hunting.

Monday 26/03/1945
POW 496 BQ 296

Cooking up saving of salmon kedgeriee in barley and potatoes on top North landing for breakfast, my economical stufa lasts over RC, saving another match. Repaired Tony's knife and wander back to room via spectator board reading new article by Coup de Frejac and their short story.

Bacon – sausage pie lunch up from cookhouse grand! Received from Red X two Gillette standard razor blades, ¼ black boot polish, shaving soap in the room but not for me.

German rumour that sea - born landing made by allies at BREMEN.

Beginning to understand integration at Calculas class under Frank Haley. This orderly life of study and work has its advantages (apart from disadvantages) and I have learnt hell of a lot wish it would be kept up. List of books forming connecting link will help a lot. Always busy never a spare moment.

17:00 waiting for eve roll call after taking back tools – booking three crates of Canadian foods and two assorted chocolates COD from Canadian rep Rm 88/5 (opposite SBO's building) then George Hurits address (Guildford) a steady wash and treat for the teeth w/ Macleans and rest upon the bed, couldn't move another yard – feel so faint.



Jock has another burst of generosity giving me a German canteen razor blade. What next? Even these last me the month. Shall be taking home a supply at this rate. Received two Gillette standard razor blades as my share of Red X toilet parcel that travelled with last consignment of food parcels to arrive. Other items included – shaving soap, soap, toothpaste.

Spent all workable parts of evening tweeken supper and lights out, due to usual warning at 20:30, mixing a pie and a pudd for tomorrows lunchtime steaming. Pie a mixture of savings with chopped bread crust plus liberal helping of salt, a little mustard and fat. The pudding should be a good one: two crushed iron-ration biscuits, the better breadcrumbs, three potatoes, handful of raisins, pinch salt that goes into everything, sugar, and most of Jock's treacle. Nearly fills a 1lb can butter tin.

Resolution: when home; rise early and study before stove, fire or what we have in bedroom to warm room up for MB (*wife*).

Tuesday 27/03/1945
POW 497 BQ 297

First in room to rise, chiefly to release water 06:45, put stew ready for heating then to sit on bed finish off Mary's letter and Jackson's notes, also this diary hence above resolution. Though a fine day tis not too warm. Planes making a row on adjacent aerodrome.

Trying on new pair of battledress trousers, for which I'm very grateful to the Red X for sending (Size 7 h 5'7-5'8 Waist 33-34 breach __) they should be too small around the waist but of course there not. Too long but that's ok with putties, no need to trouble the overworked tailor's shop with these. Shall go back to the ragamuffin pair again except for special occasions.

Latest PoW rumour: That all Kriegies detained under convalescent conditions in England for periods depending upon health approx. a month. Place maybe Colchester (North of London) PT HQ. To prevent Kriegies from over bashing. A good idea except for the delay and seeing and staying with wife and family.

Supposed German war rumour. Patten's spearheads take Kassel! Only 130klms from here and war proposed to be over in five days.

Doc Fasgate returned from medical conference in Berlin when he received two parcels in 10 days – Heaven's delight | and reports well on parcel efforts to arrive before long.

98 air raids up to present this month according to John Notley's record, the record month.

Wednesday 28/03/1945
POW 498 BQ 298

Closing days of the Greatest World War?

Early rise and study sitting on edge of bed. Jackson's Physics. Weather deteriorated but still quite fine and dry. Good enough for the advancing front's Patten and Eisenhower in West crossing the Rhine and thrusting deeper into Germany proper. Causing chaos in the German Armies. Russians in the East advancing on Vienna and Danzig.

Days of stupendous daily news, each may be our last in captivity. Good prospects of food parcels arriving early. Fasgate's Berlin conference guff given official mouth. Contact with medicos from other Stalags: Marlags and Dulags show some camps better and some worse off than us. One in particular has received many bomb casualties and out of parcels for many weeks. On other end of the scale, Moosburg, the large transit camp is on a full parcel and good stocks.

A million parcels wait distribution on our area from LUBECK. Swiss Red X here with their own trains into Germany to stock these centres. Lorries are working to supply camps by road. We are 2nd on priority in this area.

German Foreign Office is helpful at this stage of war (why not?). Their rep, Hertzog in this camp has been here several weeks and looks like staying. He has obtained several improvements, or should we say these things have happened since his arrival. What we look upon as rights that should have been received long ago i.e. A laundry (limited), walks for policed personnel, previously refused by other Kommandant's. Limited supply of firewood. Goons tidying up campgrounds – filling in bomb holes.

My present line of study consists of Matric Math's under Hank Hayley a class of two, more like personal coaching. Calculas – Integration I've slowly getting the hang of by sitting in on a class of three also Hank and occasional loan of Count's book. Jackson's Physic lectures Inter Day standard and copying lecture notes. Less frequent to Loosley's Physics coaching class chiefly for AMI Mechanical Engineering. Hunt's Applied Math's classes are too fast and I haven't the ground work but attend regularly and catching up by loan of mechanics book from Gardiner Room 58. English, considered the most important, there are no classes, only an excellent book by Tonie's old HM (Boas) on permanent loan from Alec Stones and a good short civil SV English book from Tech library. Boas is the ideal Matric English book and other excellent for Post Office English Dept Inspections like myself who took little or no interest in school English, and worked overtime since leaving.

The Matric Snag No #1 is language i.e., French. Matric course didn't even start and I've slacked attending higher standard partly due to prop's room work (bad English). I have permanent loan of Otto Grammer a key and dictionary without looking at them. Albert Plews here is expert old. French student would help. Allan and Peter King here offered as well. Where is the time coming from? Give up props work? I dare not for sake of wood perks apart from jobs done for self and Coy. MAKE TIME.

I find the longer days a great help in the making (of time). During the past winter it's thought some excuse can be made for lack of study, the food cuts and very short evenings due mostly to raids. Bedroom lights by day and night. Cold weather on top of poor feeding without room heating. But no excuse for not starting last spring (1944) at Trubau when much of this spade work could have been done.

Now I almost feel alright to leave this place with so much undone into a big, if welcoming – victorious friendly country of birth. Garden plots springing into being like Gypso and canal bank scene. Mustard cress the only fruits so far. I have some radishes and peas to go in with two nasturtiums. Hurry!

A letter for collection at 15:00 who from? Mary, Nov 13th wishing me a Merry Xmas. 16:00 to 1/2hr Gramophone Recital by Griffiths, the Gramophone Library man, subject 'Birth of the Blues'. Obtained loan of gramophone and 12 records overnight, further still 1/2 doz new needles, not to be advised as they are most scarce used only for recitals. See what a little job done way back does with a decent fellow. Promised to help crate records for return to Red X on cessation of hostilities (!). Albert turns the handle after the pea soup supper. Quite a good selection Griffiths has looked out for me.

SBO's Camp meeting tomorrow, must take notes. Swapped with Ben, five cigarettes for 1/8th tin of Klim (1/2 Cocoa tin). The smokers crazy to celebrate good news make excellent market for thrifty and nonsmokers. Large amount of bashes going on. Allan on condensed-milk, Albert has only bread, Jock his treacle. Even I take small helpings of dried cocoa – milk – sugar mixture, in other words 'eating my brew'.

NO BERLIN RAID.

Thursday 29/03/1945
POW 499 BQ 299

BREAD ISSUE

Early bed read of much needed English Grammar. Continue on strong cocoa w/ sugar and milk, mugful to Jock. The dry brew mixture greatly improved tummy empty feeling.

News flash that road transport at Corp gate with 800 food parcels – two more following. What a false rumour as it appears to hold toilet and stage lighting, but even that maybe wrong.

SBO's meeting 21:44 attic Hs 7. Truck dope. YMCA carrying toilet paper and stage lighting equipment ordered by SBO in Nov 44, no food. Has been unloaded and returned to Lubeck with request for a load of parcels.

Teatime talks on food with Alistair. The places to lunch in TS. Old fashioned food – sides of beef etc. Simpsons in the Strand. Piccadilly Simpson's is more up to date similarly SCOTT'S in Panton Street (from Leicester Square to Hogmarket). Teas at Burg yards on Fortnum and Mason's. Skates were included on YMCA truck also trailer load of wood.

Friday 30/03/1945
POW 500 BQ 300

Good Friday

Wash and shave afor breakfast. Reheat veg + bread stew in basement before and after parade leaving it to simmer. Ersatz coffee quite tasty nowadays, acquired!

Low flying plane about 23:00 last night gunning the adj. aerodrome during short red alarm. S-kin arrives in Camp w/ rumour that allies four miles from Hanover?

No tools allowed on Good Friday. Hot shower downstairs and wash large laundry by catching shower water in a bowl.

Obtained addresses in war log of Alex, Peter King and James Duffy.

The Brunswick Boys Club raising money by 'help yourself' raffle. Have promised a crate of Symonds beer and tin of HP biscuits up to value of 3 pounds approx.

17:00 sharp hailstorm followed by bright sun and evening bugle for RC.

Cooking fish cakes for supper, material taken from lunch fish pie. Trees in full bud and grass where untrodden very pleasantly green. More advanced than have should imagine.

Saturday 31/03/1945

(BEFORE EASTER) (MORE BREAD)

Reading Civil Service English in bed, early rise and shave. Red alarm before parade and Brunswick raided by heavy bombers and heavier bombs during breakfast. From cooking veg and bread stew in basement I took shelter in reinforced basement. Jock's stuck it out upstairs shaming me into dashing up with food finding state of things not so bad.

Tools and key for props collected. A friend of Titch sketching the lathe. I finished two swizzle sticks. After a glorious milk and sugar tea and blackberry jam with shredded chocolate on my 1/12th loaf bash.

Attended lecture by Boddington about running a teak concession and heard of elephants in Burma. Dash to get tools back by 17:15 helped by Sandy. 13:30 haircut by ex-barber Ray – Weather not so bright but daily getting warmer.

Allies continue racing towards us releasing 1,000's of other Kriegies en-route. Rumour has it they be East of Weisen and Good Garrison expect US troops to arrive Easter Monday.

My trouble is bread shortage for any journey, next issue is on Thursday. Received from this YMCA lorry myself: Notebook, roll of white toilet paper, one razor blade and a pencil, all much appreciated.

Sunday 01/04/1945
POW 501 BQ 301

Easter Sunday

Majority of room off to early communion 08:00 Albert – John – Ben – Allan – Tony and Bannerman. I'm up dressed and sitting on tidied bed going to copy out Jackson's lecture after a quick shave. Jock has obliged this morning by making a common cocoa brew. Like everything else he baked twice as long as anyone else. Small talk and general daftness. I'm finding difficulty in following the good resolution of learning to love him in spite of his faults, all of which are apparent to me, i.e., lack of true generosity, mercenary, showiness and trust of others.

Easter treats in way of eggs, is an egg – biscuit and bread custard (!).

MORE BASHES

- 1) Honey and cream (Devon) on toast or bread and butter,
- 2) Stewed bananas,
- 3) My special toast and bread and butter, strawberry jam,
- 4) Banana and cream,
- 5) —

Lunch into which will be placed the cookhouse trifle, same again for supper. Jock is providing a ½ tin of egg flakes for scrambling at teatime.

14:15 a dull afternoon. Late church (Free) made lunch a long job brewing up custard (biscuit – bread and egg flakes) and the saved stew. (Veg soup – bread and potato) only just finished clearing up and washed self.

Expecting good news on Allied fronts tonight. The only fear is they might call a temporary halt to bring up supplies. We hope this to be the last big push encompassing the whole of Germany – it looks like it made a resolution to keep in the future years to remember these hardships and give thanks for deliverance when it comes, i.e., to fast this lent on rations as near the present equivalent as possible and abstain from all immature pleasures. Resort to nature early morning walks etc.

The rations weekly one brown loaf, ¼ pound marg, ¼ jam, ¼ pound of sugar, salt, one pound of meat, nightly potatoes – millet – barley on small content meat stews, ½ quality tea and coffee brews. Boiled potatoes and hot water lunches. Tea less sugar or milk for breakfast etc.

Monday 02/04/1945
POW 502 BQ 302

Easter Monday

Clocks forward 1hr

302 days spent inside this mile boundary! What is it like outside? News is terrific. The Western Armies sweep towards us, now at Munster-Kassel and points almost due South. The Russians advance into Austria to take Vienna.

Has been a miserable windy day. Finishing up with rainstorm then clear skies. Optimistic profits put our future stay here at eight days, other pessimists six weeks. Mine is 10-14 days long enough for me to save some 'Thursday' bread to bash.

Talk with Peter King on temporary duties. Physically feel fagged out. Early to bed, almost in daylight with 1st day of new time gives us an extra hour in the evening. Many planes passing over and low flying strafing of Autobahn with cannon fire. No-one stirred from the room.

Tuesday 03/04/1945
POW 503 BQ 303

Wet. RC in passage.

'Help Yourself' Raffle for PoW Brunswick Boy's Club raises 2,000 pounds+.

Poor lunch consisting of saved stock pot soup and two boiled potatoes on a thin slice of bread and marg. Supper much better: salmon + barley kedgeree – meat pie and biscuit pudding. By great effort I saved the larger half of pudding to eat with cocoa brew later in bed.

News excellent but then we are never satisfied. Kassel take, Osnabruck and Munster, German news good. Conference of signals by Peter King. Planes passing over all night bombing somewhere beyond us – thank goodness! Maybe Russian support on Vienna. Though not wishing to upset Monty's programme, we do hope Brunswick escapes the fate of Kassel – Dresden – Aachen etc.

We sit here, busy idling away the days for someone to let us out. Some with spare rations it's hoped.

Wednesday 04/04/1945
POW 504 BQ 304

Thank goodness bread comes up tomorrow, the last crust for tea today and I shall be out after four days of scrimping that hasn't done me any good. Feel better today after last night's bumper supper and pudding eaten in bed.

Weather today dishes out snow – rain – hail and sun, little of the latter.

Rumour that recci units seen near Hanover!! To Bannerman's show 'French without Tears' at which the grand news was announced that 840 American food parcels have arrived. 440 are going to OR's at BQ, 400 are for us. Even if no more arrive these will provide a few more meals from cookhouse. Rumours galore rift ½ hr after 1st announcement.

Thursday 05/04/1945
POW 505 BQ 305

Dull morning. America parcels contain 50-60 cigarettes each working out at about 15 each. SBO trying to stop bartering essential foods for the odd cigarettes. Cooked rations from cookhouse going for three-four cigarettes. Trifle = four. MR rations = three. Goon rations of margarine, bread, fat, sugar and treacle none more than four cigs a ration.

Camp strength approx. 2,450 bodies. The bread has arrived this morning giving us the present normal ration of 7/6th a week. The sight of it even makes me feel better though stomach turns and rumbles to grumbles at meagre ration of 1 ½ thin slices. Am not swopping any until full loaf in hand, rationing self to 1/8 a day, thereby gaining two days ration weekly. That's pessimistic as Monty should be here within 10 days!

The American parcels (400) are being issued less, meats and fish, at 14:00 today, amounts to 1/6th each – milk – sugar – liver paste – sweet biscuits – prunes. Enough for a couple of tasty teas.

Strong rumour of rail truck at BQ, contents and destination unknown.

Repairing package case for Griffiths, the Gramophone Man. Donald Rider gave a hand with packing case and stooging while I chopped wood.

9th letter from Mary full of good news. Mail being received from here, Mary heard from Joe D home on leave. Betty Combs (*friend of Mary – wife*) expecting baby in April leaving for the US in August, it's hoped I see her before then.

The American parcels have arrived in the room – two between 12 of us involving card cutting for odd days of sugar. Jam and liver pate comes to about three teaspoonfuls others take cheese - powder milk, marge not so bad, two biscuits each. Still, it's an awful job. Roll on the Canadian parcel each. 15 cigarettes each.

Friday 06/04/1945
POW 506 BQ 306

Wet and miserable. A busy night in the air overhead, nothing dropped around here.

A small and satisfying lunch of 1/5th tinned meat-roll, mixed pickle and mashed potato. Added one small onion and mustard. Meat on sale in E&M from Indians – chopped ham – bully etc. through their no meat religion.

Obtained Dick Kinden's London address. Jock's whining gets worse, his pot scraping a room complaint.

Raffle by Brunswick Boy's Club for 'Vauxhall 10HP' tickets at 5RM each taking three.

Western front 60 miles away maximum. Daily closer.

Saturday 07/04/1945
POW 507 BQ 307

Bright morning, cloudy later. Cup of tea w/sugar and milk from Jock in bed. More cheerful note prevailing in camp. Rumour that Monty only 40klm off and bypassing Hanover! Expect him here any moment now.

Sizeable pie for lunch. Ration of marge and sugar arrive safely. Rumour that RC parcels are in Brunswick station, one truck load (4,000). Total on the way to us are 12,000 in several consignments, all by rail and all overdue. May get more by road from Lubeck. 10 hours road trip from here and all presently German territory.

28 new arrivals in camp to 2L (Mark). Goons allowing 1 postcard per officer to be sent to Lubeck on next truck (if any).

Repaired crate for Gramo-Man and small stock of wood supplied, getting loan of gramophone and records in return. A surprise letter from Mrs Pullen from Checkendon, including all the family history. Ivy married to Post Office Reading man.

Signs of Luftwaffer moving from adjacent and nearby drones (thank goodness). Planes took off early this morning and now radio location platform been taken down. Albert the Room Commander returns from Coy Conference with the grif. The camp had been ordered to move then cancelled partly because of difficulty and too late. The Commandant and Hertzog are assisting us all they can and assure some sort of eatables if not the normal ration. If more resorted again the SP&O policy will be to delay much as possible except for fighting and endangering action. Hertzog, the Foreign Office Rep, is staying until the end. There will be no more first away rackets. SP&O assumes and expects it to be by Coy's. A rumour, kiosk is to be opened.

Hope we don't miss tomorrow's lunch of 'toad in hole'. Feeling 10 times better these last few days on full bread ration and tit bits from American parcels. Today's raids have not gone 'all clear' since 10:15 this morning, now 15:45.

Sunday 08/04/1945
POW 508 BQ 308

Alarms from 11:00 to 17:00, but only Goon planes seen. Believe we can hear gun fires in distance from bombing. We still have the possibility of moving, the German Kommandant and Hertzog's assurances have only to placate and quieten us.

Gramophone and records from Griffiths also dance records loaned from Pearson next door. Nearly fell out with Jock once again, all of us easily roused these last few days of waiting. Very pleasant sitting end of house in the sun and out of breeze. Feeling much better and energetic last few days.

The camp is agog. Sax tells us the battle front is 19 miles from Brunswick (HILDERSHIME 25 miles West of BQ) admitted by German Communique. A pall of smoke on Western horizon fighter, bombers attack BQ (bang go our 40,000 Canadian parcels in rail trucks). We sleep with our boots on.

Monday 09/04/1945
POW 509 BQ 309

Rumour: 12 miles from Brunswick. Afternoon Engineer Society lecture by REME Captain _____ on latest organisation in UK. Very interesting centre at AFD Cross for training (3,000 approx.).

Returning from props with Sandy and box of tools when Red X lorry of about 6-7 tonnes arrives in camp should give us at least 1,000 parcels. A welcome answer to my Communion attendance at 08:15 this morning. In addition to this supply is official news that 2,000 Canadian parcels are in a truck at Brunswick, the Goons say will be at Querum, own local station tomorrow.

Sitting in the sun here at end of Hs. 8 I hear fantastic rumours flying around up to 3,000 parcels. Latest is SBO's notice board, not seen me. That three trucks containing 1,000 American parcels being unloaded now. This means at least ½ a parcel each though some may be sent to our adopted hard case travelling Stalag at Brunswick. An exciting event.

CONVERSATION TOPICS

- 1/ Effects of our short rations.
- 2/ Excessive peeing, showing mostly at night, cold ones. Jock up 12 times never than once myself, but that one more than usual.
- 3/ Windy stomach, put down to bread.
- 4/ Weak knees. Languid, lassitude. Think, talk and dream of food. Unable to sleep a night for crowded thoughts of tomorrows menu. Meals one is going to eat returning to civilisation.

DONE

- 1/ Map inspection of string indicated moving fronts.
- 2/ Walk the concrete and round the camp.
- 3/ Sitting in the sheltered sun.
- 4/ Food cooking over fire on stufa.
- 5/ Courses – Rm 7/3 AMIEE – MATRIC.
- 6/ Library General and Technology.
- 7/ Theatre – Rum-Pot – Symphony – Gramo – Poetry – Discussion General Interest – Engineering Society and all other types – Games in season – Volleyball – Netball – Deck Quoits – Softball – Rugger – Soccer.
- 8/ Patience – Bridge – Solo – Double handed Patience.
- 9/ Sunday and Weekly Church Services – all denominations.

10/ Meals by jugs, bowls and trays – Soups – vegetable, pea, millet, barley, mixed veg, Red X good stews, M+V. bully, Spam pie, Toad in the Hole, trifle, stewed fruit in barley. salmon kedgerree, fish pie.

Tuesday 10/04/1945
POW 510 BQ 310

A beautifully eventful day: Starts with morning mist promises well for a fine day and it is, the best yet. Sounds of battle during night increase in momentum during the day. Frequent loud explosions from adjacent drone taken for demolition, clouds of smoke coming up from drone to West after our fighter bomber raid. Garrison reduced to Hertzog and skeleton guard of old crocks.

We've had our 1/3 American parcel and a grand tea including peanut butter, jam, chocolate, sweets – sugar and milk. The US parcels are full of dainties as great comparison to solid food in the Canadian and happy mean of the English.

Spared time for lecture by John Talbot of Reuter on his tour of duty at Titio's HQ in Czechoslovakia. Very interesting. The grif from Coy meeting AB. SBO-Kommandant no question of more. Kommandant stays I/C short guard others to BQ on defence.

Confiscated articles Red X truck at BQ uncertain, lost sight of. Food H says OK for supply tomorrow. Cookhouse produced meals until Monday. Bully retain for travelling ration. Cigarette issue 3-5 per person.

Stalag BQ may have been evacuated. Bank, SBO says don't bash. Unable to keep up with situation. The outstanding items are fine day and 1/3 American parcel to play with.

Smoke on SW horizon, the direction of Hildesheim and battle front. In spite of many rumours, I don't believe Brunswick itself has been attacked, but we are most certainly in the news. The folks at home must be anxious for our safety today. Bombing, fighter sweeps and explosions of various types are going off so frequently that no notice is being taken. Even to extent of machine gun bullets passing through roof of 2L to ricochet from our latrine wall. A few cautious are sleeping downstairs in basement.

Alarms continue to work, at overtime rates. Returning to bed – Ted comes in with report of red flashes from SW, and lights go out. Majority, and of course Mark, spend the night in shelters. The rest of room stay in bed where only Allan and Tony sleep. Remainder kept awake by bombardment by US heavies (guns) on Brunswick from the SW. Louder explosions from demolition going on at adjacent drone. A historical night. A marvelous sunset.

Wednesday 11/04/1945
POW 511 BQ 311

Everyone awoke before dawn and brewing at first light, bombardment eased round 07:00 when small arms heard from direction of BQ from attic Hs. 9. Water on very low pressure, very soon basement of Hs. 1 and hot water systems only.

Sunup promises a grand day. Very quiet before breakfast, can hardly believe last night's horror. Majority of occupants didn't undress at all. Today may see LIBERATION.

Black smoke streaks across Western sky from BQ. Seen from grandstand attic, 2L.

Received a January letter from Pop, the last mail we shall get. No more mail going out from now. In fact, camp is official being closed in a quiet way although no Allied Troops or Yanks with tanks have arrived yet. Signs of battle swing around to South relieving the uncomfortable closeness of last night's shelling. Hope to work my way into black market for bread with the trumpeter (a key man). Obtained $\frac{1}{4}$ of a loaf this morning on credit already swapped $\frac{1}{8}$ for marge. The food situation not too bad.

Rumour C+D issue lunch time news. Hanover fallen. 9th Army halfway Hanover to Brunswick. French rumour that US 12k's from camp on East and 18 on N. Occasional sporadic gun fire.

16:30 camp life goes on as usual – easier if anything without classes or roll call since this morning's miss. No German interference whatsoever. Only corner boxes occupied by sentries who spend most of their time chatting to PoW's below, throwing down bread – matches and what-they-have-we-want to waiting Kriegies below.

The nervous tension has relaxed into expectant waiting for Allies to come in the gate. A toss up should they be British or American. British are North of the autobahn the American have been attacking BQ since dawn. The battle flares up with arrival of fighter dive bombers, which we watch from upper room windows during intervals of tea-pudd and bed making and other odd jobs carried on in this peculiar period.

Have eaten most of $\frac{1}{4}$ loaf obtained this morning hoping for more tomorrow. The relief Warrant Officer non corruptible, however he accepted a small gift of coffee. I am feeling much better for the slight increase in food the American parcels have bought along.

Little hopes for Lubeck truck turning up again before the battle sweeps past. Assembled web equipment with aid from Albert and Ben, now almost ready to move. Jock busy as ever knitting brows and whining voice, waxes and wanes. Have hopes for him yet.

Pudding and pie tomorrow. During the battle lull periods an occasional crump act as reminder.

Thursday 12/04/1945
POW 512 BQ 312

WE'RE FREE

125TH CAV. US Army Recci. One jeep enters camp 09:15 during my job of cooking breakfast of two thin slices of American MR. Two slices of bread and one sliced potato in attic. I refuse to leave until finished cooking, in spite of loud cheers and mad crowd around the gate. Leave finished cook over slow fire and run the fastest for last 12 months along attic to S window overlooking gate. Unable to see much so take down

breakfast for Jock and I. Ersatz coffee arrives safely through the milling throng. Added to terrific excitement are a few air bursts overhead from American 76 or tank gun.



Two Americans and one French foreign worker named Pierre.

CAPT. PLOEHN our US Liberator patrol from C Troop
125 US Cavalry Squadron att US. 30 Infantry Division, 09:00 now in BQ
BQ more or less clear of German troops.

12:00

Canary (news?), US Armour on Elbe at Magdeburg.
75 miles from Berlin. Canary (news?) posted on Coy news board.

Herman Goering Works S of BQ and Coys. Weight 13:00 51.5kgs in empty MI room.

Wood ration issue stripping from roof. Water shortages, occasionally from tops lower portion of camp. Issue of sugar and treacle. Fried biscuit for tea – gift from Jock, large pie steamed for lunch.

Letter from Pop, 13:00. Three more letters.

German sentries and Luftwaffer marched off as P's oW Ha! Ha! Amid cheers. No fighting or opposition. All packed up and ready to go. Many with push-cycles.

Lunch 12:15 boiled potatoes from CH. Steamed pie made up.

14:45 camp full of Americans in jeeps and staff car's Division OC in general. Up to five News Bulletins issued. Elbe crossed Magdeburg fallen. US spearheads 50 miles from Berlin. Konigsberg fallen – Gauleiter (*local Nazi district leader*) condemned to death for cowardice and his family to pay the price.

21:00 BBC news heard in camp between 07:00-08:00 on Goon radio. Fighting in Brunswick. Elbe crossed etc. Big Ben.

Eating warm remains of Goon stew in thermos cup on balcony South. Terrific bread-peanut and treacle bash in evening. Quantity of passing wind.

Photo taken in camps by US press. Last night's explosions were 105 shells landing in area between Quereum Station and Herman Goering Works.

Large amount of food gone into cookhouse. We expect to remain here another three days. Temporary light N end of camp and water running on ground floors.

Friday 13/04/1945
POW 513 BQ 313

FREEDOM TWO

The first dawn of freedom and liberty after a windy (rear) night. Practically all complain joyously of same complaint due to excessive bread eating. My small paunch sticks out like a football and trumpet blows frequently. I deal out Andrew's Liver Salts to the room. A tin bought from home four years ago.

Saturday to Friday 14/04 to 20/04/1945
POW 520 BQ 320

FREEDOM NINE

And still we're here. The place has a different atmosphere, looks and is, different. The Americans have gone, very quickly: causing some dissatisfaction among the three + four-year Kriegies. The Yank's (approx. 30) having been in for only three or four weeks.

The hospital including Chesterman, have been flown off. Our 'lift' is hourly expected, having been cancelled several times.

Living on the fat of Goon rations looted from food dumps, contributions from various armies. US + British – compo and 'C' type rations. One box of compo for the room of 11. And local scrounges from the surrounding countryside including eggs, fresh milk, fresh brown baked bread, ham, asparagus, rhubarb, potatoes, rice, spaghetti (not to mention cameras – watches – loads of crockery – armchairs and flowers upon the table).

Biggest racket of all is the number of cars, lorries, cycles lying about the camp and being used by individuals.

"Bowls Up" "Two from your table collect from next door"
Easier to cut into 12 and we'll cut the cards for the odd ration.

The tank that came in looking for bedsteads.
Increase in stuffing, chickens, geese, omelets – jam tarts.

Monday 23/04/1945
POW 523 BQ 323

FREEDOM 12

Weight 55.5kgs increase of 4kgs in 12 days.

We may move today. Shades of Tripoli trip and letter to Mary. Again, I'm thinking of the BG, on the way back to her and home. Sitting in the same type of plane after very hurried departure terminating 10 days of 'on and off' waiting. At the last unbelievable moment, I was almost caught napping, and literally with pants down!

Planes promised for tomorrow 1/4hr notice from 09:00. May get planes from the Americans. RAF may lift us. Planes required for operational move.

More tinned food on today's menu. M+V stew for supper! But not today; Dakota's (DC3's) flying overhead and landing at Braunschweig, civil across the autobahn, about 40, 1/2hr later 'fall in'. 20mins later we are 'airbourne' and enroute for Brussels. So is the rumour, Americans to England direct, wish I'd wangled a swop.

The story of last few days in camp is one big stomachache. To be written up later. We took off quickly, before have time to look around, are across the much talked of canal, only distantly seen from Hs. 9 and away to the West and home. Across model countryside, so tidy! With few signs of ravage on bombing, an occasional bridge blown – then nothing apart from orderly nature restrained until the Rhine is crossed so easy in one gigantic stride. Here are signs of battle. Anti-tank ditches – trenches – craters. A little cloud and on into the sun and how far from home?

POSTSCRIPT:

Written by PoW Gordon Horner in his book – For *You* The War Is Over.

The PoW's continued to live in Oflag 79 until 23rd April, there was nowhere else to go. Their orders were to "live off the land" and most days were spent foraging amongst the local farms. Frequently breakfast was started with four eggs each!! But soon the thrill of eating enormous meals was gone. The wonderful palate semi-starvation brings, quickly vanished under the daily bombardment of unlimited food, fags, and hooch. The adjacent huge aircraft works was almost completely destroyed, but the V1 and V2 experimental department remained untouched.

After several days Transport Command call for the PoW's. On the 23rd Brunswick Aerodrome was flooded with Dakotas (DC3's) and shortly after lunch the PoW's left for ever, arriving at Brussels they were switched to "Stirling's" and soon over the English Channel on a brilliant sunny afternoon.

COMPILED FROM VARIOUS ENTRIES THROUGHOUT THE DIARY

1. MOTHER, DO YOU STILL GROW?

(entry from 07/01/1945)

"Mother, do you still grow?"
I let the measuring red drop –
Do I still grow?
This afternoon I suffered and
From unkind words
And yet I smiled:
Last year I would have been proud
To make a sharp reply.
This morning I set aside
My own desires
To help someone else.
Last year I would have cried,
"I'll have my way!
Let others yield to me!"
Do I still grow?
Yes, child, I think so..
But how slow and hard
My growing is!

From a poem 'Growing' by Mary Dickerson Bangham, quoted by Gilbey in 'Getting Help from Religion' read by OFLAG 79 Dec 44 – Jan 45.

1) Some say the world will end in fire,
Some say in ice.
From what I've tasted of desire
I hold with those who favour fires,
But if it has to perish twice
I think I know enough of hate
To know that for destruction, ice
Ice is also great
And would suffice.

Do we improve with time? As we should, or stay the same? Which is unconsciously difficult; or deteriorate, which is only too easy – THINK.

1) Another verse from the same book makes one ponder upon bottled up hatreds, bitterness, antagonisms and grudges. From ROBERT FROST. Collected Poems (Henry Hold and Co 1930)

Gilbey, in his chapter XI headed "Faith's Greatest Obstacle", quotes from "Selected Poems and Parodies by Louis Untermeyer".

God, I return to you on April days
When along country roads you walk with me,
And my faith blossoms like the earliest tree

That shames the bleak world with its yellow sprays.
But now the crowded streets and choking airs.
The huddle thousands bruised and tossed about,
These, and the over-brilliant thoroughfares,
The too loud laughter and empty shout:
This mirth mad city, tragic with its cares –
For this, O god, my silence and my doubt!

CAMP PEOPLES
BQ = BRUNSWICK QUEREUM

(entry from 17/01 & 17/03/1945)

2. DON KING

Home - Caversham Heights (Reading) near bus stop great friend of Reg Woods (*MB's brother-in-law*) ex. Hemdean School and Reading Grammar. Captured BNAF 19__?

Family moved to Haddock house Emmer-Green near golf course, wife Murial, a Glasgow girl, family living in a City Centre flat. One son about year and a half now, Malcolm, younger brother friend of Mac Brown (*MB's brother*), Staff Officer Lt, at Catterick – going with girlfriend from Catterick. Don knew in later life most of the girls I knew when we were young at Hemdean School; Beryl Brooks – O'Brian etc, Sid Taylor and sister, the Nobel sisters, Greenslade of Cam Bridge so-on, knew Betty Brown when the Brown family lived in Uplands Rd, Caversham Heights.

3. FRANKENBERG

2/45 BQ

Trigonometry and Calculus instructor, Librarian to Law Society, basement Hosp. next to Engineering storeroom, Dreamy, dark hair, thin face, helpful, coached me for calculus in own room end of top floor Ho 1. Feb, went sick, camp hospital – sugar diabetes (urinal disease) Germans helping to get medicine and diet on black market for him.

4. PETER BRUIN

2/45

1 Coy. Grd floor Ho 8

Stage and music parlieyscaton. Young girl part opp Paul Hardwicks in Conductial Lilac Time, plays wind in symphony and stage orchestras. Went sick during very cold run of Aladdin for chilblains, infections may have caused foot or leg swelling and fluid, confined to hospital up to time of entry Feb 6th.

5. PADRE CHUTTER

2/45 BQ

Chief Camp Padre C of E

SA

Short and inclined to dumpiness (not stout) strong voice and good address. Gave lectures on education during England's Industrial Revolution in small dining hall at Trubau. Takes majority of C of E services and conducted series of 6 laymen lectures in 1/9 Feb 45 attendance by John and myself. Posted to Dresden Feb 1945.

6. **BERNARD ROSE** – Symphony Orchestra Concert 24/02/1945

7. **REGINALD HALL** – Symphony Orchestra Concert 24/02/1945

8. **VISCOUNT CRANLEY**

9. **COUP DE FREJAC**

A very likeable, clean shaven, smooth skinned, bright complexion and smart Frenchman of the best type. A cheerful face. Lecture in 9-53 on the 'The Macci' (Outlaws of Corsica). Article in Spectator posted 26th March 45. Dropped with paratroops in South France (Lyons) on invasion from Med.

10. **GRIFFITHS** – no entry

But we know Griffiths is known as the Gramophone Library man who held Gramophone Recitals.

(entry from 17/01/1945)



CIGARETTE RECORD

24/3 Rm 5 1 to Albert for LC + PC. 5 to Ben for 1/8 Klim -1
Rec 4 in each for Goon treacle ration. I to be owing 1 Ben. ds
2 for 1/2 doz onions Bal 3/4/45 Nil.

12a. PLUS + MINUS RECORD

(entry from 29/01/1945)

MINUS OR DOWN -			PLUS OR UP +			BALANCE	
ITEMS FROM JOCK	DATE	BM	ITEMS FROM E	DATE	BM	BM	CR OR DB
½ in English salmon and green peas won in raffle	28/01	13.5	Pud in VE 27/1 using 3 English biscuits, other items stand. 1 ½ English biscuits	25/1	+1.8	11.7	-
			Pud by John, put in for Jock 1 English biscuit spoonful raisins	25/1	+1.2	10.5	-
			Components of pud sum ie Raisins and treacle approx.	28/1	+1	9.5	DN -
Gift of one RC notebook. Thanks.	29/1	20	English Raspberry jam collect from Valentine 2/3 loaf	'1/2	+30	.5	UP +
Made a pud w/dates etc, sugar, English biscuit	'1/2	1	Made a pud with dates 3 English biscuits Marg, sugar, klim etc	3/2	1	.5	+
4 spoonful of raisins for pud to John, ½ of	5/2	1.5	½ box prunes for breakfast ¼ box	12/2	2	1	+
HOT SHOWERS	7/2	Infinity	WOOD		Infinity+		
½ can biscuit for parcel raffle	5/2	1.5	½ can biscuits for trifle	15/2	1.4	1	+
Raisins for potato pud baking	7/2	1	1 can biscuits Raisins and butter for mixed pud Sat (1/2 biscuit)	17/2	2.0	2	+
Biscuit porridge Friday morning 1 can	8/2	2.8	Biscuit porridge Friday morning 2 = 1 can	15/2	2.8	2	+
1 tin egg flakes for B&B pudding ½ tin =	9/2	7.5	1 tin egg flakes for custard and pudds = ½ tin	7-9 Mar	7.5	2	+
Biscuit porridge Sunday morning 1 can	11/2	2.8	Biscuit porridge Monday morning 2 = 1 can	19/2	2.8	4.8	+
½ can to present ½ owed for 1 issue biscuit porridge	25/2	1.4	1 English to be used in 2 English biscuit pudding	?	1.4	4.8	+
2 GOOD RAZOR BLADES	2/3	Approx. Infinity					
½ can cheese for pie	5/3	-	½ can of cheese for pie	7/3	-	4.8	+
Jock remembers a ½ can biscuit last summer	?	2.8	Cooking fat to common use ½ ration	8/3	2.0	4	+
1 box raisins gin cooking	3/45	1.5-	1 box raisin gin cooking	3/45	1.5	4	+
½ can biscuit for pudding Sunday ½ tin English egg flakes to cook	25/3	1.4	2 English PF biscuit for same pud (not yet – changing his mind!)	25/3	2.4	5	+
1 Razor blade ½ egg flakes (1/4)	26/5 '1/4	Infinity 3 ½	- - - - - Onions (boughts w/ cigs of mine)	- 3/45	- 3.0	- 4.5	+

12b. Values to go beneath Plus + Minus Record

1 tin English PF biscuits = 20BM therefore 1 biscuit = $20/13 = 1.2\text{BM}$
1 box can biscuits = 35BM therefore 1 biscuit = $35/12 = 2.8\text{BM}$
 $3/45$ of one loaf = 45BM, $1/3 = 15$, $1/6 = 7.5$, $1/8 = 5.5$, 1 slice approx.
 $3/45$ Goon marg, block =
1 tin of egg flakes = 15, $1/2 = 7$, $1/4 = 3 \frac{1}{2}$

Odd items not counted

30/1 spoonful of Klim for trifle – Put by Eric
3/2 “ “ “
14/2 Sugar and Klim for small pudd tin trifle. Also, small amount of jam.
23/2 Raisins for special MR lunch
2 meals and 30 raisins
1/3 can cheese on fried bread supper
7&9/3 Butter spread for B&B pudds.
13/3 Raisin for pud and potatoes
17/3 Raisins for pie.
Various – Mustard 1 tin shared
March Treacle (small amount) into pud (the cake pud)
20/3 Blackberry jam for pud

Put by Jock

30/1 Spoonful of sugar for trifle
3/2 Raspberry jam for trifle (2 spoonful?)
3/2 $\frac{1}{4}$ Spoonful of butter for trifle
9/2 Spread of butter for B&B pud
Feb, suspect he uses more of his own tea than mine.
Added 1 packet of raisins for Gem cooking
31/3 Treacle for pudding

13. THINGS TO SEE AND DO POST WAR

(entry from 10/02/1945)

THINGS TO SEE AND DO POST WAR	DATE DONE
1/ See Hayfever by Noel Coward (and other plays by NC)	?
2/ A weeks holiday in England's historical towns – York (Jack Butler's home), Durham, Albert Plews, (Edinburgh Jock?) read up before going	
3/ Soak prunes in raisins better than stewed (?)	
4/ Make a Kriegie pudding for Mary, in a Klim tin	
5/ Sunday evening or morning walks in country and attend parish church services	
6/ Furniture of plastics, tabletop etc	
7/ Raisins in porridge, also salt, butter and cream	
8/ Motoring holiday in ME with wife, Piddocks and his spouse	
9/ Keep a House Book for jobs to be done by: self, carpenter, plumber etc	
10/ Day on the river with folks from London. Tony – Kinden, Allan etc	
11/ Shields to stove top, the house, economise heat and gas	
12/ Attend any GJ lectures going at town hall etc	
13/ Read semi-tech books of interest to wife abed nighttime	
14/ Meet Taffey Bell at 'The Elephant' Pangbourne third week back	
15/ Read arrival home programme pocketbook	
16/ Holiday with Albert in Blackpool and later Durham – Bournemouth pal up with him and his future wife	
17/ Lunch at Simpsons, Piccadilly, also The 3 Vikings, alongside Regents Palace. Tea at Fortum and Mason's same area	
18/ The Lent fast on Kriegie foods	
19/ Visit Brunswick Boys Club when founded (play)	
20/ The nephews (<i>Stephen and Andrew</i>) to London for treat and religious education at ...	
21/ Study the Bible by reading Theology for the layman.	

14. OFLAG 79 SOCIETIES AND ACTIVITIES

(entry from 16/02/1945)

1/ The Architects, Building and Allied Trades Association

President C.W. CUBITT Maj RA. Sects' MJH CHILDS 1/47. GE/ MARFELL 8/45.

2/ The Irish Society

Patron The SBO. Col WD. BROWN MBE. Pres Lt/Col JW. DUNHILL DSO. Sec Lt IL BROWN.

3/ The Engineering Society

Pres Maj

4/ THE BRUNSWICK BOYS CLUB

Chairman Lt/Col JW Dunhill

Hon T. Maj HJ WITHERIDGE MC Hon Sec

Club Leader Bill Bowes

Original Subs total 9131pd approx. 4.7.0pd ahead + 500pd/year

Initial address by Dunhill attic roof house 1. Inspiring words by 3 OR's and few officers carried the day, officially starting the Club. Objective to originate a Boy's Club in or near London on advice from NABC (Brit Gen) in order to do something towards helping educate the trying slum boy. Received good support. Sub myself 10pd + 10/- annually.

5/ BRUNSWICK EDUCATIONAL TRUST

In conjunction with Boy's Club above.

A memento of the Indian Community of Oflag 79. Subs from all Indian Officers (VCO's) and vol KCO's of Indian Army, towards funding several scholarships for sons of Indian Army members to British Schools or Universities. March 45.

Organizer Self sub 1pd (15 RM, 28/3/45)

15. LECTURES ATTENDED

(entry from 18/02/1945)

General Interest 1st of series of three. RUSSIA by Lt. BRITHOU (Naturalised English of Salvinia and Russian birth). My opinion and many others starting most flowery, made good head way to $\frac{3}{4}$ of his time then over-spoke himself. A large subject to explain, in his own words "like a flea hopping from hill to a huge country". Room was packed to overflow – many turned away. Noticed the Irish ex 52 Craig most determine to enter. Many were confused by super-abundance of words – noted by few remarks overheard coming away.

Some points: All roads lead to Kiev. Russia the road from E-W. The battlefield absorbed invaders. Against advancement of Europe, always behind. Three main water roads to N+S. Nomads Cossacks. Russian History and modern novelists. Alex the Great and serfdom, abolished 1861. Rasputin and Empreso Troski – Gooma – Lenin – Stalin (pronounced Stīlin). Five-year plans change of policy – hard and soft. Extend to Italy – Spain – Balkans and Norway's Northern ice-free ports possible.

Absorbed countries and nations can look forward to prosperity under Russia's overboardship. Finishing an appeal note to England as leading nation (and US) to cooperate not compete. Clash may well occur in the E if competition continued.

Night flutter going full blast failed to distract from interest of lecture until speaker overreached his time. Young, slight lisping accent.

19:30 Saturday 17/02/1945

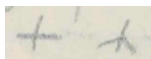
1st of Ackroyd's 'History of the Prayer book'.
With John Notley also Jack Butler and Alaster Bannerman.
Notes taken until Red and lights out.

Difference between prayer and worship. Prayer – an asking. Worship – a thanking. Humans are finite beings, God is infinite. Humans attempt to break away from the finite to infinite by following symbolism.

EUCCHARIST – sacrament of the Lord's supper – Holy Communion. Baptism breaking away from earthly limits in worship.

SYMBOLISM – the meaning of forms types and doings – shape of the built church N, S, E, W. The chancel and alter facing E to the Holy land. The Transcript NS to form the cross completed by the NAVE, in some older West of England Churches the Chancel and NAVE at slight angle indicating the fall of the head of Jesus.



– A Symbol. Also, two types of crucifixes  embracing the world and blessing.

An alters superfrontal changing colour for feasts and Saint's days. Saint's – Red, Lent and Advent – Purple for mourning, normal green for hope etc.

A wealth of symbolism unknown to the present majority in controversial to the past when illiterate masses took more notice of symbolism than modern educated masses.

The CULTIS (or French le Cult) A system of worship an attempt to break away from the present to the finite by five main methods:

1st RITUAL – A prescribed order of performing worship in order that others, or more can take part, the people to take part in the service – chants with answers, Amen. Essential to have ritual of some form in order to work together.

HIGH ANGLICAN – elaborate ritual, the danger is to mechanise ritual, becoming a slave to, forgetting it's real purpose and origin.

2nd item of the Cultis is SYMBOLISM – Representation, the cross to represent sacrifice on Calvary, danger of worshipping images.

3rd THE SACREMENT – On significant action i.e., shaking hands, performing a ceremony.

4th SACRIFICE – Meaning a voluntary, not compulsory, giving up an instinctive gesture:

- 1/ Theocentric – centered in God
- 2/ Christocentric –
- 3/ Integration – linking up daily life with God
- 4/ Sanctification – the idea of making holy
- 5/ Social – Not I but we, all a part of church of Christ.

The five things for a true Christian Worship, LITANY and LITHAGY.

GENERAL INTEREST LECTURE

(entry from 25/02/1945)

Two years in the Philippines by Lt/Col Booth.

Captured in 19th Cen from Spaniards then paid for. Of 2,000 odd islands only 365 of any account inhabited by almost as many tribes each speaking their own language. And most in very low state of civilization, hunt with bow and arrow. A Pilipino crossed as half-breed with any other makes a good fellow but no good alone.

US intention to create commonwealth and complete independence in 1946, not thought possible, yet Philippine's have own Constabulary, very good and elements of two Armies.

Very little developed mainland North of Luzon still unexplored since Spanish day. Mining of gold – lead and coal, oil present but not worked. Chief export copra the kernel of cocoa nut for gunpowder etc. and Manilla hemp. Do not grow sufficient cereal to support, importers of food and manufactured articles one in three ships call at M on Luzon, considered out of general run.

US Army not only one division for its defense, maneuvered to retreat on Bataan and hold until relief, which was prevented by attack on Pearl Harbour. US Army now attacking the same way as Japs took the islands.

16. GERMAN RATION CUTS

(entry from 20/02/1945)

Wcf Monday 19/02/1945

Potatoes cut by 1/5 from 500gms daily to 400gms

Bread from 300gms to 250gms.

2/3 beef on Monday & ½ Thursday

Flour from 50gms weekly to 18gms.

Cheese from 62.5gms to 50gms

Jam from 175gms to 130gms.

Cereals from 200gms to 175gms

Turnips from 2400gms to 1800gms.

Meat from 230gms to 210gms

GOON RATIONS CHANGES

(entry from 23/03/1945)

Wcf Monday 19/03/1945

Sugar down to 105 grams/ person/ week approx. 3.5oz

Meat up from 210 to 220 grams/ person/ week approx. 7.7oz

Peas up from 75 to 100 grams/ person/ week approx. 3.5oz

1 gram = 0.035oz or .002204lb

Notes posted on Coy boards after SBO's conference

17. POST WAR FOODS

(entry from 25/02/1945)

1/ Dates stuffed with almonds

2/ Date sandwiches (Sallie's)

2/ Non soggy puddings

3/ Millet and barley porridge with raisins

OK find the secret.

18. ROOM 52 OCCUPANTS

(entry from 01/03/1945)

ROOM 52 STRENGTH 28/02/1945

ALBERT PLEWS (The Dark) OC Room 52
JAMES (Cagney)
BUTLER (Fusima)
BENJAMIN SWEENEY THOMPSON (Fairy) and (Definite)
TED JOHNSON (The Irish Twins Not to be Disturbed)
ALLAN (Thumper Wilson)
HALL and (Lankey) JOHN NOTLEY
(Gutz) WEBSTER (Spoon-fed) and (Hilariously Noisome) HORTON (Eric)
ALASTAIR (Dumbo)
BANNERMAN
MARCUS CASTRITIS (The Greek. Try Shelters First)

19. THE DAILY ROUND

(entry from 22/03/1945)

01/04/1945

EASTER SUNDAY – 501 days a PoW

07:30 Early rise, dress, tidy and make bed. Sheets, blankets and pyjamas neatly folded and piled at one end, boxes taken from floor ranged along back of bed. Groundsheet spread over blanket pile beneath boxes.

Sunday a special floor clean so all other boxes of odds and ends from bed head corner will come out after breakfast.

08:00 Majority of room to Communion. Wash house more clear – go for wash and shave.

Daily Round as recorded by PoW Gordon HORNER:

08:15 Bugle wake up, wash & shave

09:00 – Parade. Breakfast follows: mug of ersatz coffee, ½ slice brown bread.

10:30 – Walk to exchange & Mart shop, Notice Board, walk back to room

12:30 – Lunch: Two potatoes and cup of hot water

15:00 – Mug of mint tea – go to camp library to change book

16:00 – Chamber Music concert, read camp wall newspaper, “Spectator”, en route.

Latest entry: *Ashes to Ashes, Dust to dust,*

If the bombs don't get you the S.S. must

18:30 – Dinner: ½ bowl of turnip soup

19:00 – News, German communique not much info, BBC better

19:30 – Climb into bed

19:35 – Siren as usual. Colour Red

17:40 – R.A.F passes overhead en route for Berlin, Brunswick ack-ack opens up.

23:00 – Half awake half asleep. Visions of food ...food...food...food...food

Midnight – Morpheus triumphant

20. ERIC'S WEIGHT RECORD

(entry from 23/3/1945)

DATE	Kilograms	Stones/pounds
01/05/1943	69	11
01/01/1944	63	9/13
01/11/1944	60¼	9/8
01/01/1945	55	8/9
01/03/1945	53½	8/8
11/04/1945	55½	8/10

21. ADDRESSES

(entry from 08/04/1945)

ADDRESSES	
Manx Kippers (Order form to be sent)	HR HENNAUGH Sports Store Victoria Street 10M
Canadian Confect Parcel	TS RIPLEY 165 Sacville Street Toronto Ontario
Bag Happy	FS SHAPLEY
Camp Anthology	
Horner's Book (3 copies paid for 60RM)	MAS. RJ CASSELS 4 Brick Court Temple London EC4
Camp Artist's Proof (1 copy ordered)	
Camp Bank Manager	MAS. PR MANN (R Sigs) 5 Cromford Way New Molden Surrey

GENERAL INTEREST

(entry from 24/3/1945)

1/ HADAMAR

Transit and General Fortune's Camp in Western German near Kablentz and middle Rhine. Snr Officers Camp in Schluss on hilltop. Transit camp below.

2/ HERTZOG

Luftwaffer, Foreign Office rep sent to Oflag 79 about 20th February to improve relationships between Goons and Kriegies. From consequent happenings his presence a success. ½ issue English parcels arrived. Restricted laundry started. Craters filled, camp tidy parties of Goons. 2nd Cookhouse opened. Black motor truck to Lubeck for parcels.

3/ LUBECK

Large Stalag and Red X parcel Centre 2/45.

4/ THE IDEAL PARCEL

(from a separate inserted page – no date)

Oversize slippers and/or plimsoles
2 pairs of thick wool socks and spare wool of same colour
2 sets winter woolies best quality
2 sets thin summer best quality
2 razor 30 best quality blades
2 glass razor blade sharpeners
1 thick strong mirror well framed
1 metal rescue mirror
6 sticks shaving soap, 1 holder
12 blocks toothpaste, 1 holder tin
4 best quality toothbrush nylon
1 liner pillowslip
1 liner sheet bag, button or lace up
Packet leather bootlaces long
Housewife (strong thread (two reels) brown and thread – khaki – white - black)
2 darning needles, assorted of other pins, buttons, white tape, safety pins
Ball strong twine
Bottle marking ink, 2 copying pencils
6 ordinary pencils with erasers att.
2 block erasers
Pen holder and supply of nibs (ink if allowed powder form)
Block pads if allowed, Toilet paper
2 enamel plates (large and small), knife, fork, spoons (table and tea), half pint shaving mug, 1 large pint drinking
Shirt, pants and socks
Sponge (small, compact, good quality)
2 face cloths, 1 loofah
2 neckerchiefs (silk as good quality thin material to wear in place of tie)
2 ties
1 balaclava, 1 woolen scarf, (scarf type balaclava)
1 woolen gloves, 1 pair mittens

5/ ENGINEERING SOCIETY MEMBERS HO. 8 (From rear pages of diary)

Maj. BAILEY. AW	8/51	B. Sc (Eng) AM Just CE. AM Just M-Cy E PASI. Water supply Sewerage etc. Consulting Engineer. Civil Eng.
Lt. DRIVER AV	8/52	Student Mech Eng. Shell Mex + BP. Tech Dept. Gen Eng. Eng.
Capt. HORTON EB	8/52	PO Eng Dept. Telephones. Electrical Eng.
ARMSTRONG	8/48	Student Just CE. Pupil City Engineers Dept B'ham. Eng.
BEST	8/48	B. Eng. Sheffield. Cleveland Bridge Eng Coy Darlington. Eng.
GARDNER J	8/68	Student Mech. Toolmaker. J Stove + Coy. Moulas. Mech. Eng.
CLARK RC	8/68	Architectural Sheet Metal. Crittall's Braintree, London.
Mc STOCKER A	8/68	REME George Kerst London + Luton Just Maker. Eng.
LEWIS E	8/68	AMIME. Glass. Pelbington Bros St Helens. Eng.
POSTLETHWAITE RA	8/49	BA Eng. Student Mech-Science Trip Cambridge. Eng.
TOWNSEND ROSE J	8/51	RE Field Coy
Maj. MUNRO	8/65	B Sc (EE), Canadian Army Sigs. Electrical. <u>Canada</u> .
GIRVAN JM	8/65	(Hosp 1/45) Ba Sc Min. Mining Gold. Porcupine, <u>Ontario</u> .
PERKINS JM	8/	(Hosp 1/45) Reg RE Aircraft Mech. Eng.
ROSS WS	8/	BE Civil NZ. PWD Irrigation Dept. <u>NZ</u> . Civil.
OWENS G	8/	PWD Dept. <u>Australia</u> . Cadet Eng.
ROACH WG	8/	RE. <u>Australian</u> .
Maj. WOOD PA	8/58	BA (Eng) Regular RE. (Para) England.
SHINNER JS	8/58	B Sc (Civil) Student Bristol + RE Eng.
JACKSON F	8/66	B Sc. Siemens Lighting Elec. Eng.
BABER	8/66	Student AMIMecE Allens Eng Works. Eng.
Maj. ROBINSON RD		AMIAE. Auto Eng. Own Business Mech. Eng.

DEFINITIONS

Coy – Company

Dulag – PoW transit camp for captured seamen

Ersatz – Is a German word simply meaning substitute or replacement. I.e. coffee.

Goon – English nickname for German soldiers

Ho or Hs – House

Klim tin – Dried milk

Kriegies – Kriegesgefangenen – German word for Prisoner of War

Marlag – PoW camp for mariners

Oflag (from German: *Offizierslager*) was a type of prisoner of war camp for officers which the German Army established in World War I in accordance with the requirements of the 1899 Hague Convention, and in World War II in accordance with the requirements of the Geneva Convention (1929). He was reasonably treated apart from an acute shortage of food.

Rum Pot – Community recreational area

RX – Red Cross

Stalag

Stufas – Homemade cooking stove

Wcf – Week commencing from..

V-1 and V-2 – Retaliation Weapon 1 and 2. World's first long range guided ballistic missile. Nicknamed in the UK as "Doodlebug".

