





THIS BOOK BELONGS TO

LT. LESTER A. SORENSEN

U.S.A.A.F

ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA

(STALAG-LUFT 3 SAGAN, GY.)



THIS BOOK
IS DEDICATED TO
AIRMEN OF ALL
NATIONS WHO
WERE NOT AS
FORTUNATE
AS WE

—#—



MERSEBERG, GERMANY

AUGUST 24 1944

BAILED OUT

DUMMER LAKE, GERMANY

CREW LIST

LT. COL. C. G. Y. NORMAND - COMMAND PILOT

LT. R. M. POLICH - PILOT

LT. V. K. NEUFELD - NAVIGATOR

LT. W. RUSSELL - D. R. NAVIGATOR

LT. L. GATEWOOD - M. NAVIGATOR

LT. L. A. SORENSEN - BOMBARDIER

SGT. L. ARTHURS - ENGINEER

SGT. PATTERSON - RADIO OPERATOR

SGT. C. ANDERSON - WAIST GUNNER

LT. GEISLER - TAIL GUNNER

DANN!!



MISSION 29

HERE IS MY OWN INTERPRETATION OF MISSION 29, WRITTEN PURELY FOR THE PURPOSE OF REMINISCING IN YEARS TO COME.

ON THE MORNING OF AUG 24, 1944 WE WERE AWAKENED AT 0100 BY OUR SQUADRON OPERATIONS OFFICER, TO PREPARE TO FLY. WE HAD THE USUAL BREAKFAST, CONSISTING OF CEREAL, ORANGE JUICE, FRIED EGGS, BACON, AND COFFEE. AFTER BREAKFAST WE RODE TO THE LINE IN GI TRUCKS FOR BRIEFING. BRIEFING WAS OF THE USUAL ROUTINE. WE WERE TO LEAD THE WING AND OUR TARGET WAS THE LAUNA OIL WORKS AT MERSEBERG. WE THEN PROCEEDED TO OUR SHIP (533) FOR THE REGULAR ROUTINE CHECK BEFORE TAKE-OFF. THE TAKE OFF WAS AT APPROXIMATELY 0730. AFTER ASSEMBLING IN WING FORMATION WE LEFT FOR THE ENEMY COAST. WE ENTERED GERMANY THROUGH THE USUAL "ALLEY", BETWEEN CUXHAVEN AND WESERMÜNDE. OUR HEADING THEN WAS APPROXIMATELY 140°. AS WE APPROACHED MAGDEBURG, WHICH WAS OFF OUR RIGHT WING, WE OBSERVED LIGHT, AND INACCURATE FLAK. NEAR ZERBST WE TURNED SOUTH TO OUR I.P. FROM THE I.P. ON WE WERE IN INTENSE, HEAVY, AND ACCURATE FLAK OF HEAVY CALIBER. THE AREA SURROUNDING THE TARGET WAS CLEARLY OBSERVED BY BRIEFED CHECKPOINTS, BUT THE TARGET WAS UNDER A HEAVY SMOKE SCREEN. THE BOMB RUN WAS STARTED, DOWN BETWEEN LEIPZIG AND HALLE AT 24,000 FT ALTITUDE INSTEAD OF THE BRIEFED 25,000 FT (?) ABOUT HALFWAY DOWN THE RUN, AFTER SUFFERING MUCH DAMAGE TO SHIP AND OTHERS IN THE FORMATION, WE

SUDDENLY STARTED TURNING NORTH. (?) THE COMMAND PILOT ORDERED ANOTHER RUN MADE ON THE TARGET. ON THE SAME I.P., HEADING AND ALTITUDE. ON THE NEXT BOMB RUN WE WERE BLASTED FROM ALL SIDES. BY FLAK. THE DEPUTY LEAD SHIP WENT DOWN A MINUTE OR SO BEFORE "BOMBS AWAY". A PIECE OF FLAK RIPPED THRU THE NOSE AND PENETRATED V.K. NEUFELDS TWO FLAK HELMETS; AFTER A FEW SECONDS "BOMBS WERE AWAY." W. RUSSELL WAS HAVING A DIFFICULT TIME TRYING TO STOP THE BLEEDING OF VERN'S INJURY, WHICH WAS JUST ABOVE THE RIGHT CHEEK BONE. I IMMEDIATELY CLOSED THE BOMB BAY DOORS AND TURNED OFF SIGHT SWITCHES. I DID NOT OBSERVE THE BOMB PATTERN AS I WAS GETTING VERN'S WOUND POWDERED AND WRAPPED. THE PILOT TURNED OFF THE TARGET ON THE BRIEFED HEADING; AND WE WERE ON OUR WAY HOME AFTER TAKING A TERRIFIC POUNDING FROM THE GERMAN FLAK BATTERIES. AFTER GETTING V.K. NEUFELD IN A COMFORTABLE POSITION, W. RUSSELL TOOK OVER AS NAVIGATOR. APPROXIMATELY FORTY-FIVE MINUTES LATER AS WE APPROACHED DUMMER LAKE, ANOTHER SHIP IN THE FORMATION CALLED AND SAID, "OUR LEFT WING WAS BURNING." IMMEDIATELY THE TAIL GUNNER, J. GEISLER, CALLED AND SAID, "THE WING WAS CHERRY RED AND BURNING FURIOUSLY." BOB POLICH THEN DOVE THE SHIP FROM 24,000 TO 20,000 FT. ALTITUDE TRYING TO EXTINGUISH THE FIRE, BUT TO NO AVAIL. POLICH THEN GAVE ORDER TO "BAIL OUT." L. ARTHURS OPENED THE NOSE ESCAPE HATCH AND WAS GONE. THERE WAS A DISPUTE (?) BETWEEN THE PILOTS AS TO WHETHER TO BAIL OUT OR NOT. IN A FEW SECONDS NEUFELD, RUSSELL AND POLICH WERE OUT. I DID NOT SEE LT. COL. C. NORMAND IN THE SHIP WHEN I WAS READY TO JUMP, AFTER MAKING LAST MINUTE CHECK ON PARACHUTE, AND PUTTING THE EMERGENCY KNIFE IN MY KNEE POCKET. WITHIN A FEW SECONDS I WAS "SUCKED OUT" OF THE NOSE ESCAPE HATCH. ON MY WAY EARTHWARD. THE NEXT THING THAT I REMEMBERED WAS THE CHUTE OPENING AND ME THEN HANGING IN A DEATHLY QUITE SOLITUDE. I THEN SAW OUR SHIP SAIL ON AND THEN BLOW UP.

I WATCHED THE OTHER EIGHT CHUTES DESCENDING AND THE
 REST OF THE FORMATION LEAVE US ON THEIR WAY HOME. WHAT
 A DESOLATE FEELING!! I TUGGED ON THE SHROUDS TRYING
 TO WORK OVER TOWARD DÜMMER LAKE WHICH WAS A LESS
 POPULATED AREA. I THREW AWAY MY HELMET AND RIP
 CHORD HANDLE. AS I NEARED THE GROUND IT APPEARED AS
 IF MY SPEED INCREASED. WITHIN A FEW SECONDS I LANDED
 IN THE LAKE ABOUT A 150 FT FROM SHORE. I THEN CUT
 OF MY CHUTE AND MAE WEST AND STARTED SWIMMING
 FOR THE MARSH. I NOTICED 3 SAIL BOATS TIED TO A PIER.
 THEY IMMEDIATELY STARTED OUT FOR ME. THE CIVILIANS
 WERE CLOSING IN ON ME FROM THE SHORE ABOUT A HALF
 MILE PAST THE MARSH. I TRIED TO WORK MY WAY WEST, BUT
 WAS STOPPED BY A SMALL OPEN SAND BEACH WHERE 2 GIRLS
 WERE SWIMMING. I THEN TURNED NORTH THROUGH A DRAINAGE
 DITCH, WHICH SOON CAME TO A STOP. I COULD HEAR THE
 OCCUPANTS OF THE BOATS HOLLOWING FOR ME. ABOUT 45
 MINUTES LATTER I WAS SURROUNDED BY CIVILIANS AND
 LUFTWAFFE PERSONNEL. UPON CAPTURE I WAS SEARCHED; THEN
 MARCHED TO A LUFTWAFFE POST AND QUESTIONED LIGHTLY.
 THEN I WAS PUT IN A TRUCK A TAKEN TO A POLICE STATION WHERE
 I FOUND J. GEISLER. THEN WE WERE TAKEN TO AN INN, THE
 GESTAPO HAD ARTHURS, ANDERSON, GATEWOOD, PATTERSON
 AND RUSSELL THERE QUESTIONING THEM. WE WERE PUT IN
 THE TRUCK AND DRIVEN OUT A COUNTRY ROAD WHERE A HITLER
 JÜGEN AND SOME CIVILIANS HAD POLICH: HE WAS INJURED
 AND COULD NOT STAND OR WALK. WE LOADED HIM IN THE TRUCK
 AND WERE THEN TAKEN TO A SMALL ARMAMENT MAINTENANCE
 SHOP AND WERE TOLD TO UNLOAD ALL THE GUNS FROM THE
 TRUCK. THE CIVILIANS MADE REMARKS ABOUT ROOSEVELT.
 WE WERE THEN TAKEN INTO DIEPHOLTZ TO A LARGE HQTRS.
 BUILDING WHICH HAD BEEN RECENTLY BOMBED. HERE WE
 GAVE OUR NAMES, RANK, AND SERIEL NUMBERS AND WE THEN
 PUT INTO CELLS. HERE WE SAW V.K NEUFELD WHO HAD BEEN
 TAKEN TO THE HOSPITAL AND HAD HIS HEAD BANDAGED. I WAS
 PUT IN A CELL WITH POLICH AND PATTERSON. WE HAD TO
 LAY ON THE FLOOR. NO PILLOWS OR BLANKETS. AFTER AN
 HOUR WE WERE GIVEN 2 SLICES OF BREAD, MARGARINE
 AND BARLEY SOUP. WE WERE TIRED AND SORE, BUT NO SLEEP.

THE NEXT DAY AUG 25 WE SPENT THE ENTIRE DAY IN THE CELL. OUR BREAKFAST WAS BREAD, HONEY AND ERSATZ COFFEE. LUNCH WAS BREAD AND MILK SOUP. SUPPER WAS BREAD, BARLEY SOUP, AND ERSATZ TEA. ABOUT 1800 WE WERE LOADED INTO A TRUCK AND HAULED TO THE STATION AT DIEPHOLTZ. POLICH HAD TO BE CARRIED ON A STRETCHER, NEUFELD, AND RUSSELL BOTH WERE LIMPING BADLY. WE BOARDED THE TRAIN AT 1930 AND WERE TAKEN TO BREMEN WHERE WE CHANGED TRAINS AND WAS PUT IN A BOX CAR. THE AIR RAID ALARM HAD SOUNDED AND AS WE WERE PULLING OUT WE WERE SHAKEN BY FLAK GUNS BEING FIRED. DURING THE NIGHT WE CHANGED TRAINS AGAIN AT HANNOVER. THIS TIME WE WERE PUT IN A COMPARTMENT. WE WERE GIVEN BREAD AND SAUSAGE FOR BREAKFAST. ABOUT 0930 OF AUG 26 WE ARRIVED IN FRANKFORT. WE WAITED A COUPLE OF HOURS IN THE STATION FOR A TRAIN. WE THEN ARRIVED AT OBERURSAL ABOUT 1230 AND RODE A WAGON TO DULAG-LUFT, INTERROGATION CENTER. THE INJURED WERE SENT TO THE HOSPITAL. AT FRANKFORT WE MET UP WITH LT COL. NORMAND AGAIN. I WAS THEN PUT IN SOLITARY CONFINEMENT, AFTER EATING FOUR POTATOES SLICE OF BREAD, AND FISH SOUP WHICH I COULD NOT EAT. ABOUT 1530 I WAS QUESTIONED ABOUT OUR CREW AND GROUP SUPPER WAS 2 SLICES BREAD AND TEA.

THE NEXT DAY AUG 27, AFTER NO SLEEP AND BEING EATEN UP BY FLEAS AND BUGS I WAS GIVEN A BREAKFAST OF 2 PIECES OF BLACK BREAD AND ERSATZ COFFEE. LUNCH WAS SOUP AND BREAD. SUPPER CONSISTED OF BREAD AND TEA. I WAS BEGINNING TO FEEL WEAK AND DIZZY. I HAD NOT WASHED SINCE THE MORNING WE LEFT ENG. THE NEXT DAY AUG 28, AFTER ANOTHER NIGHT OF NO SLEEP AND THE SAME ROUTINE WITH THE BUGS I WAS FED THE SAME AS THE DAY BEFORE. DURING THE AFTERNOON I WAS SENT IN TO BEGIN MY INTERROGATION BY A LT. COMM. THIS LASTED ABOUT 50 MINUTES. THEN I WAS TAKEN BACK TO MY CELL.

THE NEXT DAY AUG 29, AFTER THE SAME KIND OF A NIGHT AND BREAKFAST I WAS QUESTIONED AGAIN. THEN GIVEN PERMISSION TO WASH AND SHAVE WITH COLD WATER. IN THE AFTERNOON I WAS QUESTIONED AGAIN AND TOLD I WAS TO LEAVE THE CENTER THAT NIGHT. AFTER SUPPER WE WERE TAKEN ACROSS

THE ROAD TO ANOTHER CAMP. DURING THE EVENING WE WATCHED AN R.A.F. RAID IN THE DIRECTION OF MANNHEIM. ANOTHER BAD NIGHT OF SLEEP, AND A SIMILAR BREAKFAST THE NEXT DAY. THE NEXT DAY AUG 30, WE MARCHED INTO OBERURSEL AND CAUGHT A TRAIN FOR WETZLAR. A DISTANCE OF KM. WHICH TOOK US 8 HRS. WHEN WE REACHED WETZLAR WE WERE MARCHED ABOUT 2 MILES TO THE TRANSIENT CAMP. UPON ARRIVAL WE WERE ISSUED RED CROSS CLOTHING AND A CAPTIVE KIT, THEN DELOUSED AND FED. THE S.A.O. WAS COL. STARK OF OCALA, FLA. HERE I MET UP WITH LT COL. NORMAND AND LTS. HEUSSER, DABNEY, THODE, WHO WERE ALSO ON THE SAME MISSION. REPORTS ARE THAT WE LOST 5 SHIPS ON THE RAID. THE CREWS OF LTS. POLICH, HEUSSER, MOCKETT, DABNEY AND BUCK WHOSE SHIP BLEW UP OVER THE TARGET.

ON THE AFTERNOON OF SEPT 2, WE PREPARED TO LEAVE FOR THE PERMANENT CAMP, STALAG-LUFT 3 AT SAGAN; AFTER AN INTERVIEW WITH A LUFTWAFFE MAJOR WHERE I HAD A BOTTLE OF BEER AND SENT A TELEGRAM. WE WERE THEN TAKE TO THE TRAIN AND EACH MAN ISSUED A RED CROSS FOOD PARCEL. THERE WAS EIGHT MEN TO A COMPARTMENT PLUS HIS FOOD AND BELONGINGS. ON OUR JOURNEY WE PASSED THRU FULDA, HERSFELD, ERFUT, WEIMAR, LEIPZIG, RIESA, AND COTTBUS. ARRIVING AT SAGAN EARLY MONDAY MORNING SEPT 4, 1944. AT SAGAN WE MARCHED TO STALAG-LUFT 3 WHERE WE WERE PHOTOGRAPHED, FINGERPRINTED AND DELOUSED. THEN WE WERE SENT INTO THE CENTER CAMP AND I WAS ASSIGNED TO BLOCK 39 COMBINE 7.

2

THUS ENDS THE FIRST CHAPTER OF MY STAY IN GERMANY AS A PRISONER OF WAR. THE NEXT CHAPTER IS ENTIRELY TOO LONG AND MONOTONOUS TO GIVE WRITTEN ACCOUNT.

HERE STARTS THE 3RD CHAPTER OF MY PRISONER OF WAR TERM. JAN 18, 1945 THE ALLIES OPENED A MAJOR OFFENSIVE. ON JAN 22, WE WERE PUT ON AN EMERGENCY NOTICE TO BE READY TO LEAVE SAGAN ON AN HOURS NOTICE. THE NEXT 5 DAYS WAS A CONTINUOUS "FLAP" WITH HUNDREDS OF RUMORS CIRCULATING ABOUT. SATURDAY NIGHT, JAN 27, AT ABOUT 1930 WE WERE TOLD TO FALL OUT WITH EQUIPMENT AT 2345. WHICH WAS A "DRY RUN".

JAN 28, 1945 AT 0500 WE LEFT THE CENTER CAMP AND IN THE OUTER LAGER WE WERE EACH ISSUED A RED CROSS FOOD PARCEL. WE WAITED AROUND UNTIL 0700 WHEN WE STARTED ON THE WAY. AFTER NEARLY AN HOUR'S MARCH, THE ROAD WAS CLUTTED WITH FOOD, CLOTHING AND BOOKS. THE KRIEGIES WERE DISCARDING. REFUGEE'S FROM THE EAST JAMMED THE ROADS. THE TEMPERATURE WAS 8°F. AND MANY WERE SUFFERING WITH FROSTBITE. WE PASSED THROUGH THE TOWN OF HAMMERFELD, ARRIVING AT HALBAU A DISTANCE OF 17 K. AT APPROX. 1400. AFTER WAITING AROUND IN THE STREET FOR 2 HRS. WHERE WE TRADED A CAN OF NESCAFE FOR A SLED, WE WALKED ACROSS TOWN AND SPENT A COLD MISERABLE NIGHT IN THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH.

JAN 29. UP AT 0500 TRYING TO KEEP WARM. LEFT THE CHURCH AT 0700 STILL SNOWING AND VERY COLD. PASSED THRU TOWNS OF BURAU AND FREIWADE. AFTER WALKING 13 K. WE STOPPED OFF IN A BARN OUTSIDE DICKEHAUS. GIVE 4 POTATOES AND HOT WATER. SPENT ANOTHER COLD MISERABLE NIGHT.

JAN 30. UP AT 0800. STILL SNOWING AND COLD. GOT INTO A POLISH WORKERS HOUSE AND MADE SOUP AND COFFEE. SPENT THE DAY RESTING AT THE BARN, WHICH WAS PART OF AN INN. THE YARD WAS CROWDED WITH REFUGEE'S.

JAN 31. UP AT 0430. STILL SNOWING AND COLD. MARCHER THRU THE TOWNS OF PEIBUS AND BIRKSFAHRE. FOOD IS GETTING SCARCE. CIVILIANS ARE UNBELIEVABLY HOSPITABLE. WE ARRIVED AT MUSKAU AT 1630 AFTER WALKING 28 K. PUT UP IN A POTTERY PLANT FOR THE NIGHT. SPENT WARM NIGHT AND HAD LIGHTS AGAIN. TRADED PACK OF CIGARETTES FOR A LOAF OF BREAD. CIVILIANS FAMISHED FOR TOBACCO.

FEB 1. SPENT DAY RESTING IN THE POTTERY PLANT. SHAVED AT LAST AND A SLIGHT WASH UP. WE GOT FIRST HOT FOOD, 1/2 CUP OF BARLEY SOUP.

FEB 2. SPENT DAY RESTING AND EATING. ISSUED RED CROSS FOOD PARCEL. TRADED BAR OF SOAP FOR 16 POTATOES AND 12 SMALL APPLES. LATTER GOT 2 ONIONS.

FEB 3, UP AT 0430, WEATHER COLD AND DAMP. PASSED BY JÄMLITZ AND SCHONHAUS. AIR RAID ALARMS SOUNDED. SAW MANY BOMBERS IN DIRECTION OF BERLIN. EXPLOSIONS LASTED 3 HOURS. WE WALKED 17 K. TO GRAUSHIEM. SPENT THE NIGHT IN THE "BURGEMEISTERS" BARN. GIVE HOT WATER. SOUP AN 4 POTATOES EACH.

FEB 4, UP AT 0500 AGAIN, WALKED 7 K. TO SPREMBERG, WHERE WE SPENT 5 HRS WAITING AROUND IN A PANZER DIVISION MAINTENANCE BASE. RECIEVED ISSUE OF BARLEY SOUP. LATE AFTERNOON WALKED TO RAILROAD YARDS IN SPREMBERG, WHERE WE BOARDED BOX CARS. FIFTY "KRIEGIES" AND ONE GUARD. WE LEFT ABOUT 2130. GEN. VANEMAN, COLS. SPIVEY, KENNEDY, CAPT GEORGE, AND LT BROWN LEFT US FOR O.K.W. IN BERLIN.

FEB 5, SPENT AN UNCOMFORTABLE AND COLD NIGHT. DURING THE DAY WE PASSED THRU HOHENHOCKEN, RUHLAND, AND MÜCKENBERG. OUR BOX CAR IS THE REAL 40-8 FRENCH CAR. NO ROOM TO SIT, STAND, STRETCH, OR LAY. GIVEN ISSUE OF BLOOD SAUSAGE.

FEB 6, SPENT ANOTHER BAD NIGHT. DURING NIGHT WHEN WE WERE IN CHEMNITZ THE RAF STRUCK. OUR TRAIN PULLED OUT BUT WE HEARD BOMBS AND GUNS. DURING THE DAY WE PASSED THRU ZWICKAU AND REICHENBACH. AIR RAID ALARM SOUNDED AND WE LEFT STATION, BOMB EXPLOSIONS SHOOK TRAIN. AT PLAUE, THE BOMB DAMAGE WAS TERRIFIC. ABOUT THE STATION AND YARDS. AMERICAN G.I. P.O.W. WERE CLEARING THE WRECKAGE. PASSED BY LARGE LUFTWAFFE AIRFIELD LATE AFTERNOON PASSED THRU MARKEDVITZ.

FEB 7, DURING THE NIGHT WE PASSED THRU NUREMBERG. PASSED THRU AUGSBURG ABOUT 0700, WE BOMBED AREA'S WERE SEVERE. OUR CAR BURNED OUT ITS BEARINGS

AND WE HAD TO CHANGE CARS AT MANNHOFEN. WE SPENT $3\frac{1}{2}$ IN THE MARSHALLING YARDS AT MÜNCHEN. WE THEN ARRIVED AT MOOSBERG AT 1530. AND MARCHED TO THE CAMP. WE WERE PUT IN A "CASUAL" BLOCK, 400 MEN TO A BUILDING TO SLEEP ON THE FLOOR ON HAY. THERE WAS NO HOT WATER FUEL, OR SLEEP. WE WERE TURNED OVER TO THE WEHRMACHT GUARDS. CONDITIONS VERY CROWDED AND POOR. LATRINES WERE SLIT-TRENCHES, AND MANY MEN ILL.

FEB 8, THIS MORNING 4-P38 PASSED OVER CAMP ABOUT 18,000 FT. ABOUT 50% OF MEN SICK WITH DYSENTERY AND DIARRHEA. MORALE VERY LOW. CONDITIONS ARE BAD.

FEB 9, BROUGHT IN HOT WATER BOILER TODAY. TOOK OUT 300 SICK MEN TODAY. LIVING IN A TYPICAL HOBBO JUNGLE

FEB 10, SHAVED TODAY, FIRST TIME SINCE FEB 1, HOT BREW NOW.

FEB 11, AFTERNOON WE WERE SEARCHED, PROCESSED, SHOWER AND DELOUSED. GOT INTO PERMANENT CAMP ABOUT 2200. BARRACKS DARK AND COLD, MORALE HIT A NEW LOW.

THUS ENDS CHAPTER 3, THE STORY OF
MY TRIP FROM SAGAN TO MOOSBERG
STAMMLAGER VII A

MOOSBERG DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

FEBRUARY 1945

- 16 U.S. AIR RAID ALARMS - P-38, B-24 OVER THE CAMP.
- 20 ON STRIKE AGAINST CONDITIONS OF THE LATRINES.
- 22 LONG AIR RAIDS, P-51s OVER CAMP, MUNICH AREA.
- BACK TO CASUAL BLOCK FOR ANOTHER DELOUSING
- 24 DOWN 6 MONTHS TODAY - BACK TO PERMANENT CAMP.
- 25 P-51s OVER CAMP, GUARDS SHOOTING GOON RATIONS.
- SMOKE MARKER BOMBS OVER MUNICH.
- 27 TWO GROUPS B-17s OVER CAMP ABOUT 18,000.

MARCH 1945

- 7 REPORTED THAT AMERICANS TAKE KOLN
- 9 AMERICANS CROSS RHINE RIVER
- 13 P-51s BUZZ CAMP, LONG AIR RAIDS.
- 19 4 WINGS OF Bomber FORMATIONS IN THE EAST, B-24
- 21 HUNDREDS OF B-24s OVERHEAD, IN SCATTERED GROUP
- AND SQUADRON FORMATIONS ABOUT 16,000 FT.
- 24 GOONS PULL SEARCH - WHILE ON PARADE AREA HUNDREDS
- OF B-24s, P-38s OVER CAMP, JETS MADE PASSES.
- BELLY-TANKS LANDED NEARBY. B-24 #1 ENGINE ON FIRE.

APRIL 1945

- 1 EASTER SUNDAY IN "THE BAG", ATTENDED CHURCH
- SERVICE. AIR RAID, P-51s STRAF NEAR CAMP.
- 3 FIRST MAIL RECEIVED WHILE A "KRIEGIE", AFTER 7
- MONTHS AND 9 DAYS.
- 9 BIG "FLAP" ON. SOUTH CAMP MOVES IN. POLICH COMES IN.
- AIR RAID ON MUNICH. SEE FLAK AND 3 SHIPS GO DOWN.
- 11 EXTENSIVE AIR ACTIVITY. 7 P-61 "BLACKWIDOWS"
- OVER CAMP. 12 SHIP GROUPS BOMBING IN ALL DIRECTIONS.
- OVER MUNICH, LANDSHUT, REGENSBURG, AND AUGSBURG
- 13 OKW PRESIDENT F. D. ROOSEVELT DIED LAST NIGHT.
- 14 MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR PRES. ROOSEVELT
- 16 AIR ACTIVITY OVER MUNICH AND LANDSHUT.
- 18 P-51s OVER CAMP ABOUT 4000 FT. BOMBERS HIT MUNICH.
- 20 BIG FLAP ON. WE MOVE FROM BARRACKS TO TENTS. COL. GOOD
- TAKES OVER CAMP ON INFANTRY BASIS. INTENSIVE ALLIED

MOOSBERG DAILY HIGHLIGHTS

— CONTINUED —

AIR ACTIVITY NIGHT AND DAY. A-26's OVER CAMP AREA. P-51's STRAFING, P-47's DIVE BOMB SURROUNDING AREA'S.

HEAVY RAIDS ON DURING NIGHT. BELLY TANK EXPLODES NEAR MOOSBERG.

- 21 GATES OPENED TO OTHER COMPOUNDS. x
- 22 FRAN. LAMBERT COMES IN CAMP FROM NUREMBURG. AIR ACTIVITY VERY HEAVY AROUND MUNICH.
- 26 ARTILLERY FIRE IN THE WEST. MEDIUM AND FIGHTER ACTIVITY.
- 28 CONTINUOUS ARTILLERY BARRAGE DURING THE NIGHT.

29 APRIL 1945 LIBERATION DAY — THE USUAL FLAP DURING EARLY MORNING. VERN AND I WERE IN THE SERB COMPOUND WHEN 2 P-51's STARTED BUZZING THE CAMP SUDDENLY MACHINE GUN FIRE BROKE OUT NEAR THE MAIN GATE. WE HIT THE "DECK", BULLETS RICKOCHTED AROUND. THE SLIT TRENCHES WERE FULL. WE WORKED OUR WAY TO OUR COMPOUND AMID MUCH GUNFIRE. THE BRIDGE ON THE NORTH SIDE OF CAMP WAS BLOWN UP. GUNFIRE CONTINUED IN THE CAMP AREA FOR NEARLY 2 HOURS. SS TROOPS HELD OUT IN THE TOWN AND CHURCH STEEPLE. AT 1235 THE AMERICAN FLAG WAS HOISTED OVER MOOSBURG. RUSSIANS AND POLES RUN BESERK OVER TOWN. GI TRUCKS, JEEPS ETC ENTER CAMP AMID REJOICING KRIEGIES.

30 IN THE ARMY AGAIN, SNAFU - GIs AND JEEPS ALL OVER CAMP. EVERYONE IN TOWN PILLAGING AND LOOTING. "GOONS" SCARED OF POLES AND RUSSIANS.

1 MAY 1945 - VERN AND I AWOL. IN TOWN LOOTING. SPENT NIGHT IN "GOON" HOME. MOOSBURG IS A TOTAL WRECK. EQUIPMENT AND ARMOR MOVING THRU AT A TERRIFIC SPEED.

CONTINUED

3 MAY TRANSFERED TO "SPECIAL DETACHMENT", SNAFU'S TO AWAIT SHIPMENT. WE ARE THE LAST TO LEAVE CAMP.

9 MAY THE WAR IN THE ETO IS OFFICIALLY OVER. 1830 WE LEAVE MOOSBURG BY GI TRUCK. PASSED THRU LANDSHUT. ARRIVED AT STRAUBING, A LUFTWAFFE FIELD, SPENT NIGHT IN ABANDONED HANGAR. FIELD CLUTTERED WITH WRECKAGE OF GERMAN PLANES STRAFED ON GROUND.

10 MAY LOADED ON C-47 AT 0915 FOR RHEIMS. 170 PLANES CAME INTO STRAUBING. 4000 MEN WERE HAULED OUT IN 1 1/2 HOURS. 1225 WE LANDED AT RHEIMS. HAULED OUT TO "R-A-M-P" CAMP. GIVEN TYPHUS SHOT, BUCKED TRANSPORT AND SENT TO TRANSIENT CAMP. (OISE BASE SECTION)

23 MEN
PER PLANE

11 MAY LEFT RHEIMS IN GI TRUCK. TAKEN TO AIRFIELD OUTSIDE OF TOWN. LOADED INTO C-47 AND FLOWN TO LE HARVE. TAKEN TO "LUCKY STRIKE" CAMP FOR PROCESSING. (NORMANDY BASE SECTION)

12 MAY NOTHING BUT PROCESSING, MEDICAL INSPECTIONS, SWEATING OUT CHOW LINES. "IT SMELL'S SNAFU"

16 MAY MOVED TO SECTION "D". WE MAY LEAVE SOON, OR ARE THEY HOLDING US FOR WORLD WAR III. ??

17 MAY MORE PROCESSING. CLOTHES, SHOES ETC.

18 MAY INTERROGATION AS TO P.O.W. TREATMENT.

ADJUTANT GENERAL'S REPORTS ETC.

19 MAY PAY DAY - AT LAST \$\$\$

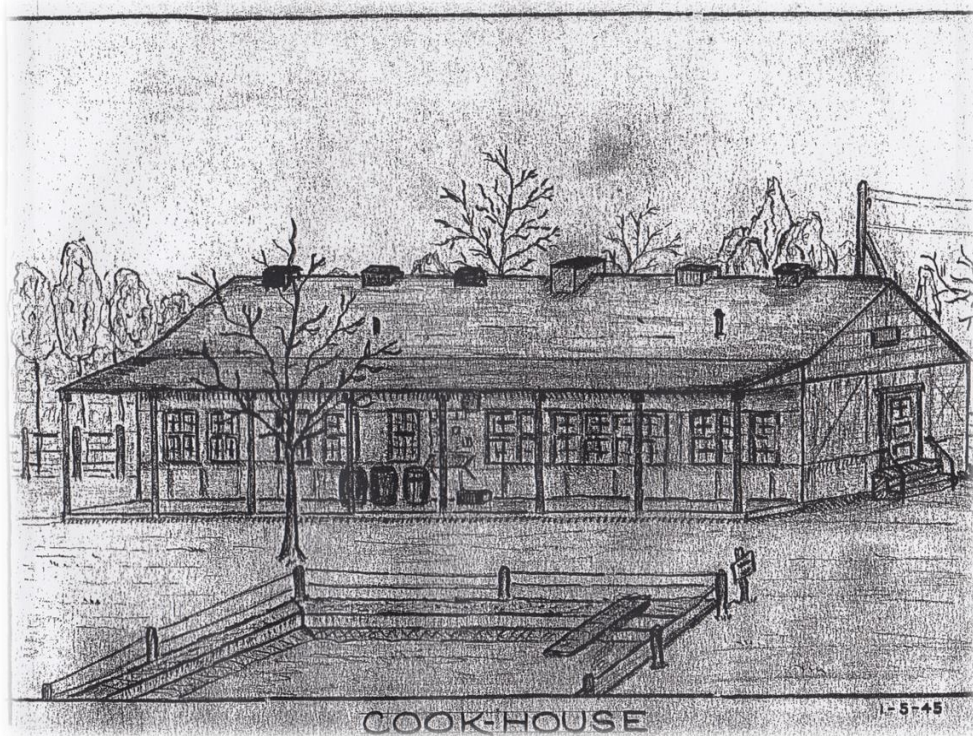
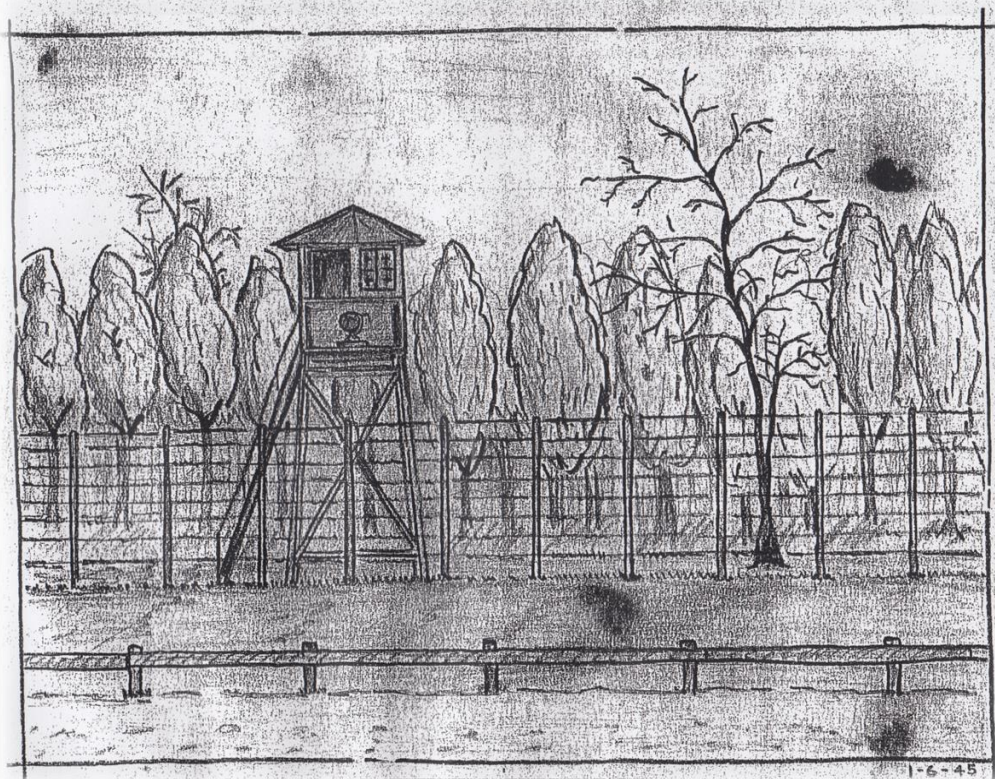
20 MAY LEFT SECTION "D" ARRIVED "15TH REINFORC. CENTER

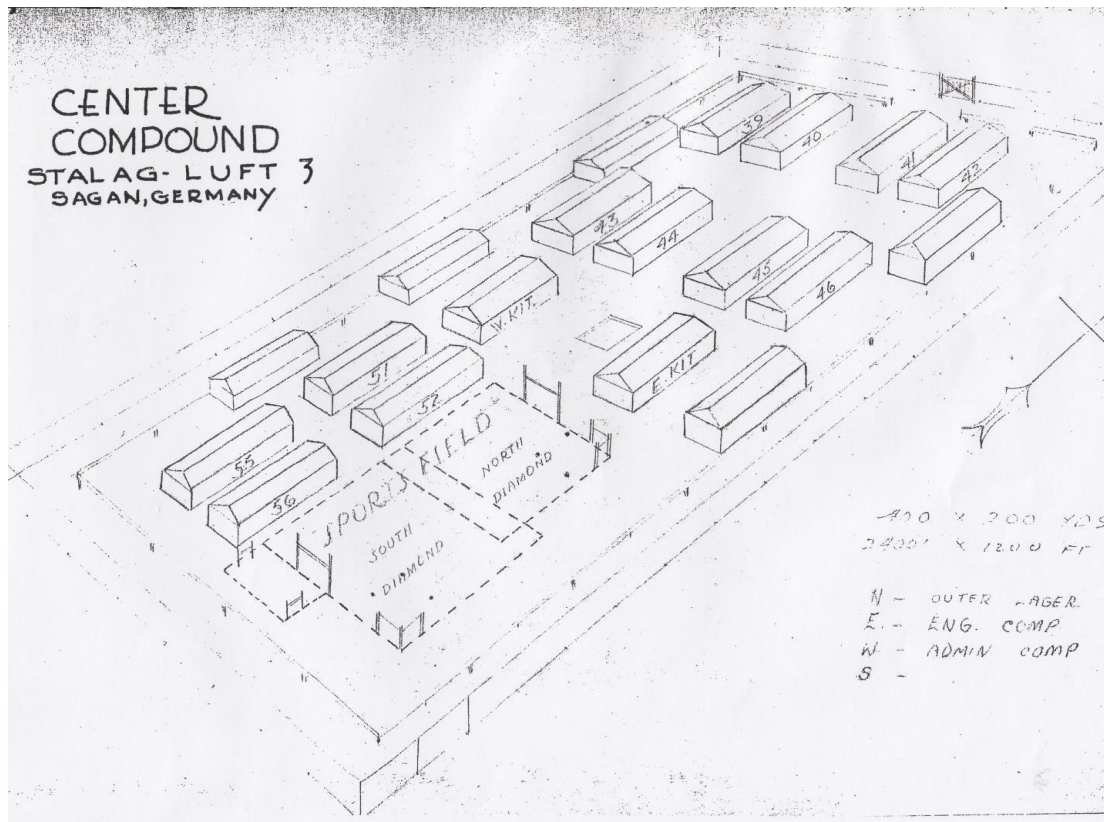
21 MAY LEFT "15TH REINFORC. CENTER, LA HARVE, FOR SOUTHAMPTON ENGLAND - LEFT VERN NEUFELD - ROUGH

- CONTINUED -

- 22 MAY LEAVE SOUTHAMPTON FOR U.S.A IN CONVOY COMPOSED OF 36 SHIPS ,INCLUDING 2 ESCORT CARRIERS. OUR SHIP IS THE S.S. CONRAD WEISER. A LIBERT SHIP OF 10,000 TONS 441' LONG 56' WIDE.
- 24 MAY JOIN MAIN PART OF CONVOY - 60 SHIPS IN ALL LAST CONVOY OF WAR - LIGHTS ARE ON ALSO.
- 29 MAY MOCK AIR RAID AND GUNNERY PRACTISE.
- JUNE 4TH - ARRIVE U.S.A. CAMP MILES STANDISH MASSACHUSETTS. - MORE PROCESSING, PAY, ETC.
- JUNE 6TH "D" DAY PLUS 365 - HOME - ARLINGTON. VA.

Three Lester Sorensen drawings of Stalag Luft III





Lester Sorensen did not have the benefit of a bird's eye view of Stalag Luft III



Maquette at the Stalag Luft III museum, Zagan (Poland), 2018

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

Personalkarte I: Personelle Angaben *Sorensen*

Beschriftung der Erkennungsmarke:

Nr. *7829*

Kriegsgefangenen-Stammlager:

Lager *L.A.* Krgsgef. d. Lw. 3

Des Kriegsgefangenen

Name: *SORENSEN*

Staatsangehörigkeit: *U. S. A.*

Vorname: *Lesker A.*

Dienstgrad: *Lt. Col.*

Geburtsdag und -ort: *22. 10. 18, Wash. D. C.*

Truppenteil: *U. S. A. A. F.* Komp. usw.:

Religion: *protest.*

Zivilberuf: *Architekt* Berufs-Gr.:

Vorname des Vaters:

Matrikel Nr. (Stammrolle des Heimatstaates): *1-761 280*

Familienname der Mutter:

Gefangennahme (Ort und Datum): *24. 8. 44, Neuhaus*

Ob gesund, krank, verwundet eingeliefert:

Lichtbild



Nähere Personalbeschreibung

Größe	Haarfarbe	Besondere Kennzeichen:
<i>1.76</i>	<i>d'braun</i>	<i>Blinddarmanarbe</i>
Fingerabdruck des rechten (!) Zeigefingers		Name und Anschrift der zu benachrichtigenden Person in der Heimat des Kriegsgefangenen
		<i>Mr. M. H. Sorensen</i> <i>4418-19 14. St. St.</i> <i>Wilmington Ca.</i>

841

60

SORENSEN L. A. 7829

Wenden!

Personal-Beschreibung:

Figur: *mittel*

Größe: *1.76*

Alter: *22. 10. 18.*

Gefichtsform: *oval*

Gefichtsfarbe: *gesund*

Schädelform: *oval*

Augen: *grau-blau*

Nase: *stark*

Haare: *d'braun*

Bart:

Gebiß: *gut*

Besondere Merkmale: *1. v.*

Deutsche Sprachkenntnisse: *etwas franzo. u. dänisch*