

**Diary entries from 22<sup>nd</sup> January 1945 to 6<sup>th</sup> February 1945**

Primary sources:      Captain Wesley Clare, Royal Hamilton Light Infantry  
                              Captain Peter Tattersall, R.A.M.C.  
                              Major Turner McLardy, R.A.M.C.

Secondary source:    Captain Trevor Gibbens, R.A.M.C.

Map of the route from Lamsdorf to Görlitz:

<https://maps.google.ca/maps/ms?msid=215587432852293695205.0004d874002398c2bcab9&msa=0>

## Monday, January 22<sup>nd</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

No diary entry.

### **Tattersall**

Whole camp seething with rumours & expectations. Camp loud speaker announcement at 1230 hrs that Blocks I, II, III, IV + V<sup>1</sup> to be ready to march out at 1500 hrs. Starting with Block V R.A.F. & Block III N.C.Os. Capt Stallard detailed as M.O. to accompany party. Blocks I, II & IV to follow. M.O. Capt Davidson. Later announcement that Blocks XI & X, VII & VIII, VI & IX would be following the next day.

Capt Clare	to go	č	X & XI
Maj MacLardy	"	č	VII & VIII
Maj Woolley	"	č	VI & IX

### **McLardy**

Block Commanders & orderlies re Ford's behaviour. 0900 – Russian lesson<sup>2</sup> till 0945 novel. & gen. talk. Jim re Cpl. Watson. Tuesd. appointments by Block, to Revier. Off. by 1200. Cigarette parcel – 200 Rothman unpunctured → march. Canadian Private Parcel – Nuts & choc. for march. Razor blade for march. Book Parcel → Ross's "War Neuroses"<sup>3</sup> for march. Old kit-bag from S/M Etherington. "Report of Death" for Ford<sup>4</sup> → P.M. agreed.

1200 – All men to depart to Blocks.

1210 – 2, 3, 4, & 5 to prep. to move. Cigar stump ? Morphine. Nails clipped.

New Packed my "double-shirt" pack.

2.30 – Protecting Powers<sup>5</sup> arrived?

3.15 – RAF Compound out. { Aldridge his NoteBks - Stallard ( Sledges) - Davidson

3.45 – N.C.O. // // & II & IV

? 6.0 pm while sewing 2 blankets into sleeping back notified by Colonel that I č VIII & VII.

Claire ahead & Woolly behind - off 0600 hrs. Tank-fire audible in evening. Wire cut freely behind Block II. – Had been considering socs for Clare as companions.

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<sup>1</sup> The camp was divided into blocks and each block was designated with a Roman numeral. This designation has been used throughout the diaries.

<sup>2</sup> McLardy was learning Russian.

<sup>3</sup> Ross, T. A. *Lectures on War Neuroses*. The Williams & Wilkins Co., Baltimore, 1941.

<sup>4</sup> Ford had died at 11:50 p.m. the previous day.

<sup>5</sup> Switzerland was the Protecting Power.



## Tuesday, January 23<sup>rd</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Distance walked 23 km.<sup>6</sup>

Up at 5 A.M.: Jim (my orderly) and I loaded the sleigh: by 8.30 A.M. were out the gate of the camp where we were issued – 1 Red Cross parcel<sup>1</sup>, ½ loaf of bread, margarine. I had received from the officers remaining in camp about 300 gm of tea, one tin powdered cocoa and milk, some sugar and 2 small packages of raisins. 12 noon rest for lunch. Previous parties, already discarding kit along road. The roads were good except last kms we had deep snow. At 5-30 arrived at Dominion<sup>7</sup> at Friewalde, dusk, crowded old vegetable barn. At 8:30 p.m. I found Capt. Davison in a barn with 88 sick.

### **Tattersall**

Notified 0600 hrs by Col Crawford RAMC would proceed on march with Blocks VI & IX to replace Maj Woolley who pleaded sick.

Party I - Bks X & XI - Capt Clare – Dept. 1000 hr

Party II – Bks VII & VIII - Maj MacLardy – Dept. 1130 hrs.

Party III – Bks VI & IX - Self – Dept. 1230 hrs.

Kit packed on sledge made from scrap wood. Rucksack (converted from kit bag). Haversack.

Kit:- In packs, one shirt, pants, vest, towel, handkerchiefs (5), socks (5), Toilet articles, knife, fork, spoon, tin cup (butter tin), Sleeping bag, Blanket (1). Wearing Shirt, pants, vest, pyjama trousers, Pullover, Battle-dress, Greatcoat, gloves & mittens, Scarf, Balaclava, Puttees. 4 bars Chocolate. (2 N.Z. Gift from Bill<sup>8</sup>). 4 oz Tea. Many decided that the prospect of a march was not pleasant & pleaded sick & were returned at the gate. Party III left Stalag gates at cā 1130 hrs. Issued at gate č Parcel (i) Xmas. Cigarettes 50. Tin Tobacco (i). ½ German loaf. Ca. ½ lb Margarine.

Medical Kit:- Morphine, Sulphaguanidine<sup>9</sup>, Elastoplast, Bandages, Suppositories, Aspirin, Dovers<sup>10</sup>, Sulphonamide<sup>11</sup>. Block VI M.I. room staff failed to turn up at the gate & thus start was made without the necessary orderlies as previously arranged. Thus shortage of medical supplies. Long wait until we got moving at circa 1230 hrs via Lamsdorf village. Horse drawn refugee columns ++ from Oppeln. V slow going. Signs of battle to the N & E – ?Oppeln<sup>12</sup> Thick snow, cold č v difficult pulling on main Oppeln-Neisse road. Abandoning of surfeit kit

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<sup>6</sup> *The Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War. Geneva, 27 July 1929* states in Part III, Section I Art. 7 “The evacuation of prisoners on foot shall in normal circumstances be effected by stages of not more than 20 kilometres per day, unless the necessity for reaching water and food depots requires longer stages.”

<sup>7</sup> This refers to a large farm. The etymology is uncertain but it may be a corruption of the German Domänen meaning estate or demesne.

<sup>8</sup> Bill Foreman was a Captain (Dr.) with the New Zealand Medical Corps who had been captured in Crete. Later (1947) he became godfather to Tattersall’s son Michael.

<sup>9</sup> Used to treat dysentery.

<sup>10</sup> An opium based product containing ipecacuanha which induces vomiting and sweating. It was named after Dr. Thomas Dover an 18<sup>th</sup> Century physician, also famous for rescuing Alexander Selkirk from a desert island. Selkirk’s story became the inspiration for Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*.

<sup>11</sup> Antimicrobial agent used to prevent wound infections. Also used to treat Winston Churchill who developed pneumonia while visiting General Eisenhower in North Africa in December 1943.

<sup>12</sup> Moscow announced that Marshall Konev had captured Oppeln on 24<sup>th</sup> January 1945.

commenced. Help by attaching sledge to horsedrawn waggon č refugees for 4 kilos or so. Bore right (i.e. to west) off Oppeln-Neisse road. Column v drawn out & many men fatigued. Arrived at Friederwalde after passing level crossing & pulling through thick 9" snow for 2 kilos. Other parties bedded down in barns & not seen. Arrived 2030 hrs. Halts on the way – 3 - Each circa 10 mins to enable stragglers to close up. One or two (elderly men) collapsed & were placed on waggons. Passed by bus full of sitting German wounded. Accommodation for night - large wooden barn v draughty, straw. Overcrowded. 50 men slept outside in the snow. Gunfire clear all day & night. Cold water provided. Blowers<sup>13</sup> & fires for 1 hr after arrival so some men managed hot drinks. Supper. 1 slice bread + ½ tin frozen Heinz beans. Water. Slept -? 3-4 hr – sitting up in blankets. Men were cheerful but v. cold No sick parades – no men reported sick. Distance 23 kilos.

### **McLardy**

0600 hrs Tattersal notified to replace Woolly who sick č hdche & got Borrie to take pulse & temp. (normal) (c.f. my hdche!) – Too attached to his kit! (Woolly had apologised to Tony for not coming ∴ of children. etc !! (= 1 son!). Block sanitäters<sup>14</sup> didnt even start! (nor kit)!

Collected extra drugs (sedatives 4 Bottles x Lab. Kaolin<sup>15</sup> & Chlorodine<sup>16</sup>) from Borrie's store & elastoplast from theatre & checked up medicaments for journey č Sgt Nichols i/c 29A M.I. room & Block VIII : & S/M Roberts, A.I.F. i/c Block VIII & S/M i/c VII → Cramers → my kit = Blanket roll: double-shirt sac: & kit-bag

Dept Lamsdorff 09.30 (Tatt at 1230 Claire č 10 & 11at 09.00) → Xmas Parcel : ½ G. loaf & ½ square margarine = ½ lb + 30 cigs. č S/M Roberts & 2 A.I.F. lads (old sox over boots) & sleg to Friedewalder arrd. 6.15 p.m. → into barn č barely any straw & slit doors — never able to extend knees ∴ chap on feet : Tony's air-pillow √ - alternate cramp & shivering bouts - ? ½ hrs sleep! Locked in → no cooking & no hygiene. 50 of Tattersall's, 3<sup>rd</sup>, Party, - arrd 8.0 p.m.. Blocks VI & IX slept in snow! Almost done for at snowy main-road! Innumerable mech. breakdowns in sleighs & abandoning of surfeit kit - & blowers – children picking it up in blanket-fulls! Evacuee carts overtaking us x Oppeln whence noise of ?tank-fire battle. Both Tatt & Claire's M.I. Rm staffs turned back at gate! – č all medicaments! Slept in boots 23 kms. Hn.<sup>17</sup> reports Total Departures = 1824.

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<sup>13</sup> These were cooking stoves made by POWs from tin cans such as KLIM powdered milk. A manually cranked fan blew air through a fire-box which could burn any combustible material, e.g. wooden boxes from Red Cross parcels.

<sup>14</sup> German: Medical Orderly.

<sup>15</sup> Used to treat diarrhoea.

<sup>16</sup> A mixture of laudanum, cannabis and chloroform used to treat cholera and diarrhea. Highly addictive and an overdose can cause death.

<sup>17</sup> Hauptmann. The German officer in charge of the march was Hauptmann Max Baumgardt. He was a veteran of the First World War and had a son who was a P.O.W. in Wales.

## Wednesday, January 24<sup>th</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Distance 25 km

Up at 6.15. Had 68 sick. Left at 9.30 At noon one man fainted and was sent back to Freiwalde. Road good, sleigh worked well. 6 P.M. at Prieborn, in horse barn; saw 5 padres from another camp; cooked hot meal; rats in straw. I had Synovitis<sup>18</sup> of Left Achilles Tendon; No food issue.

### **Tattersall**

Heavy morning barrage at 0630 hrs<sup>19</sup>. Men up early - some boiling water. Was offered sips of tea & cocoa. Breakfast - ½ tin frozen beans & slice of bread. Lost my service hat. Located Parties I & II. Arranged to share sledge č MacLardy + kit packed on. Capt Davidson-“fallen out” - owing to frost bitten toes. Located in empty stall, straw č circa 40 sick of his party. Many already complaining of cold, exhaustion & diarrhea. Own sick & those of Parties I + II if they thought unable to march advised to fall out here. Cā 150 - thus added to Capt Davidson’s party. Sunny but v. v. cold. Dept 0930 hrs No.2. Pulling with Mac. Rejoined Neisse rd & general direction W.N.W. Heavy going. Fatigue & exhaustion ++ after first few kilos. V hot pulling. Attempts to obtain water at village pumps. Passed by refugees on lorries & a party of civilian Jews č same. Route to Prieborn. Fair going. Lunch halt - Tin sardines, B&B, chocolate č Mac., Stuka activity ++. Party joined by 1 man who had been in Fr Kdo<sup>20</sup> for 24 hrs.

Arrived at Prieborn Dominion 1615 hrs in snowstorm.

Quarters - Men v. crowded - better than 1st night. Sick visited in barns - told to report in morning for blister dressings. Locked in - difficulty in getting out - obstructive guard. Own quarters - stable, straw pile. Rats++. All 3 M.Os together č Bakeland & Jimmy.

Supper - Tea, M&V stew. Cake. No potatoes. Farmer (owner) v. helpful. Belg, Russian & Polish P.OWs working on farm all very helpful. Chief complaints on march - Groin pain blisters, diarrhoea & exhaustion. Ps<sup>21</sup> in separate stable. (Capt Clare - last party in.)

Distance circa 23 kilos. Issues - Cold water available.

### **McLardy**

Dept. Friedenwaldt. č . 9.30. Shared tandem č Tatt (lost his hat in straw) left ?200 (40 = Geo’s) sick č Geo. Davidson č frost-bitten toes (old Raynod’s D.<sup>22</sup>) : also S/M Roberts etc. + kaolin & chlorodine! VII & VIII →, VI & IX → 2<sup>nd</sup>. Claire č --- → 3<sup>rd</sup>. Sgt Nickels voluntd to stay ! all his mates stayed behind. Water-bottle froze – cracked in pocket č stalactites on coat & trousers. Snowing till mid-day. Sgt Nickels’ Black stick as insignia & Brass and lower L. arm Julier helping pull his sleigh! Tatt – panaesthesia in lat. cut. n.<sup>23</sup> of thigh č anaesthesia. 1 man x Tony’s party joined Tatt. Spare gloves to Tatt. / 4.15 – arrd. Prieborn “Dominion” – 4 padres in 1 stable.

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<sup>18</sup> Inflammation of the synovial membrane which lines joints.

<sup>19</sup> Probably refers to the capture of Oppeln.

<sup>20</sup> Kommando. German : group e.g. Arbeits Kommando : work group.

<sup>21</sup> Padres. Padres did not have traditional officer rank designations, however, they were treated as officers.

<sup>22</sup> Raynaud’s disease is a discoloration of the fingers and toes often brought on by stress and cold.

<sup>23</sup> Sensation in lateral cutaneous nerve.

3 M.O.'s & interpreter & op. theatre chap in other stable [δmcm<sup>24</sup>] horses. Rats? Owner & his son. Pole & sleigh for sale? Belgians, etc. Good Billets. Water. Fires. Nil issued. Distance = ?23 Km. ?

1 hold-all pack per 50 men! Snow-glasses crushed.

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<sup>24</sup> Possibly Russian.

## Thursday, January 25<sup>th</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Distance 30 km

Up at 7 AM March out 9 AM. Issued bread (civilian loaf) 1/5 each. Load on sleigh came loose, one runner came off. Hard going all morning; leg painful. 5 PM had vegetable soup at Fabric<sup>25</sup> in Munsterburg. Long march up hills; then through snow. It took one hour to go 1 km. At 10 PM arrived at barn; met Capt Tattersal and padres from another group. Everything full; party completely tired; supper – tea, bread, meat.

### **Tattersall**

Small dressing parade. Breakfast - Tea & bread Dept No.1 cā 0900 hrs. 33 sick from my party left - including Al Burke, Tony Boyce, Jacobs (N.Z.). Long wait outside. R.A.F. sick 15 → Gasthaus<sup>26</sup>. Issue- 1/5th Bread. Later Bread - 2/3rd reclaimed to supply other companies. Plans changed - went westerly direction instead of N.W. (to ?Stirna). Noise of battle to N.E. Fighter bombers +. Kit on waggon for first time. Carried haversack. Sick. Diarrhoea. Blisters. Chills. Route via Münsterburg- Issue. Mixed veg soup in tinned veg factory - Polish girls. Personal friend of Hptm Max Baumgardt - arranged this. Hard pull up hill through thick snow to Altbearwalde where billets occupied so pushed on a further 3-5 kilos across country & through thick snow drifts to Aldemsdorf. Many collapsed owing to cold + exhaustion on this last route. First party arrived 2000 hrs in billets. Large dominion for Zug<sup>27</sup> 3 (self). Zug 1 a further kilo on the road. Zug 2 (Mac) remaining in Altbearwalde - most of them sleeping out in the snow. Stopped Clare + Jimmy who shared my billet č padres - across the road from the dominion & in a stable. Danger from kicking horses. Cooking facilities in house. Men v. cold. Crowded. Distance 29-30 kilos.

Supper - Tea, Bread & meat. Jimmy - all in - blisters & exhaustion. Men - Exhaustion, frost bite & hungry - but more cheerful after soup at Münsterburg which was killed by cross country pull.

### **McLardy**

Tatt = N 1., Claire = No 2. Sick-parade in stable. Bread muddle due to 900 & Rs! Depart Prieborn stables c. 0900 hrs. ?100. sick behind (no N. Roll<sup>28</sup>) - To stay at ? Lazarett 1 km ahead. - 1 chap lost his boots = sanitator. Passed 15 R.A.F. sick in G-house. Tatt: P got 1 loaf/2 – then gave back 2/3 for rest! Delay while plans altered → W. stett<sup>29</sup> N. [Tatt. claims ended up č trek through 1 ft of snow to U. Altemsdorf. Billets √ ? 9.0 p.m. Offs in stable : washing in farm kitchen] Still noise of battle to N.East & flights of + - bombers → E. Talk of now making for Glatz by my Lt. 6 sick c legs left at Weigelsdorf Gendarmerie Post by Lt. Charon (No N. Roll) 1 sick in wagon Wyatt-Mair – reported vomited Bld after I gave 2 x 1/4 gr. Morph (c/o Bladder) Soup at Munsterberg veg. factory (Pal of Hauptman) chat č Krakau girl re news – singing →

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<sup>25</sup> Fabrik. German : factory.

<sup>26</sup> German: inn.

<sup>27</sup> German : column.

<sup>28</sup> This refers to a Nominal Roll. Later references indicate that the British officers were keeping a separate nominal roll which would be used to keep track of P.O.W.s and cross-referenced with the German lists, see McLardy's entry for 4<sup>th</sup> February below.

<sup>29</sup> German : instead of.



noch<sup>30</sup> ?14 km to farm already occ. by civil evacuees Alt Beerwalde ∴ all slept out bar self & W– M. → Posten's<sup>31</sup> room in mid-floor? Hauptman B. √ Dutch Freiwilliger<sup>32</sup> in chocolate uniform occupying the sheds č civilian evacs - talked of Köln raid.<sup>33</sup> /24 kms. 14°  
Frost

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<sup>30</sup> German : still.

<sup>31</sup> German : guard.

<sup>32</sup> German : volunteer. After the fall of Holland some 20,000 Dutchmen had enlisted in the SS Panzer Grenadier Division Nederland.

<sup>33</sup> This refers to a bombing raid on Cologne, although probably not the first 1,000 bomber raid which had taken place in May 1942.

## Friday, January 26<sup>th</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Distance 23-25 km

Up at 8 A.M. Wash and shave in kitchen of house; dried socks by fire; hot coffee and apples in house; Jimmy (Sanitator) fixed barrel hoops for sleigh runners. Capt. Tattersall and I did dressings in morning; One padre in poor condition; we dressed his feet and he had influenza; gunfire seemed close; marched off at noon. Through Frankenstein; putting up road blocks of trees at edge of town. Arrived at Olbersdorf; slept in ballroom of large house. Had put kit bag on wagon, did not arrive; no blankets for night.

### **Tattersall**

Breakfast, Coffee, apples & biscuits in farm kitchen. Wash & shave. Gun fire (?anti tank) quite close. Helpful hostess. Ukrainian girl. Sick parade - 1 hr in dominion - Told we were having a rest but later to be on road in 1 hr. Dept 1130 hrs Joined Zug 1 cā 1 kilo further on via Stolz & Frankenstein (road blocks) Italian POWs to Olbersdorf. Men in 3 different Dominions. Mac had fixed quarters for Clare Self & P's in Führman house. Large reception room sleeping on carpets. Hard but good. Separated from all kit - waggon having been lost.

Supper. Tea, Meat, Bacon, Yorkshire pudding, potatoes. Potatoes & milk from the house.

Desnoyers<sup>ii</sup> – Grippe<sup>34</sup> & bad feet. Distance 23-25 kilos. Incident of Hoppies<sup>35</sup> knife.

### **McLardy**

Tatt & Claire suddenly arrived at 11.30 a.m. still gunfire. Cold +. Departure at 1030 → ample time for all cooking & dressings. 17 krank<sup>36</sup> at tail-end till Stolz (see N. Roll). → Frankenstein (mining bridges) lost for a time by the tower<sup>37</sup>: chat č 12 yr-old German girl blonde born 1933! Balaclava & handky up to nose.

4.15 arr. Gr. Olbersdorf (č Flemish girls pulling posten sledges) – chat č Frau Fuhrman → Herr F → fait accompli to Lt & Hauptman re accommodation for Arzen<sup>38</sup> & Pharers<sup>39</sup> + 2 S/Majs!! in dance-floor sitting-room č stuffed bustards, foxes etc ! Tatt & Claire both separated from their (& my) decken<sup>40</sup> etc. Potatoes, milk, etc from Frau F. 2 Padrés on couches: 10 rest (incl 2 S/Majs !!) on carpet č küssen.<sup>41</sup> Map episode? Bakon & M & V. & pancake = fatty+. Now Julier & Bentham on the sleigh. Tatt & my kit lost č Russin wagon = all my documents & blankets, etc.

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<sup>34</sup> German : influenza.

<sup>35</sup> This refers to Captain (Padre) Ivor Hopkins (New Zealand). Tattersall's notes from after the war state that he had forgotten the incident. Capt. Hopkins' daughter, Judy Taite, writes "I wondered whether there was any connection between the Padres "knife" and the ongoing burials and the need to remove I.D. tags."

<sup>36</sup> German : sick

<sup>37</sup> Frankenstein (Zabkowiec Slaskie) has a well known "leaning tower" from the 15<sup>th</sup> century. A fire in 1858 burnt most of the town and during the reconstruction the top portion of the tower was rebuilt straight.

<sup>38</sup> German : doctors.

<sup>39</sup> German : priests.

<sup>40</sup> German : blankets.

<sup>41</sup> Kissen? German : cushions.

Froggie<sup>42</sup> padre's big toe – (Padre de Noyer) 1<sup>st</sup> g.c.r. (x2) Incident of padre H. & knife! N.Z.  
chap's leadership in hay loft. No issue<sup>43</sup> – except boiled water for all.  
Sgt N. & I did sick parade by candle on house steps. 23 km

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<sup>42</sup> Derogatory term used by the British to describe the “frog-eating” French.

<sup>43</sup> This refers to the issuing of food.

## Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Distance 21 km

Left at 9.30; 3 M.O.s walked together as groups were all together. Went through Reichenbach to Neudorf; lunch, biscuits and cheese. Heavy transport on road. Three groups were at a large farm (Dominion); eleven of us in a large kitchen; slept on straw; had radio news. We had 2 hours of sick parade in kitchen while boys cooked. Kit arrived with wagon. One M.O. lost his blankets. I lost cigarettes, chocolate and socks. From 10 p.m. to 3 a.m. some men got soup. Sanitators feet very bad; no bread issue; gave bread and biscuits to man who had his food parcel stolen.

### **Tattersall**

Breakfast. Tea & bread. No sick parade - Total 59 sick left. Chiefly D & V. Exhaustion. Dept circa 0930 hrs. Parties in close order. Zug 3 last. 3 MO's together. Lunch - cheese & biscuits. Route via Reichenbach to Neu'dorf. V. Cold ride on back of horse waggon for 1 kilo. Transports ++. Men - all 3 Zugs in large dominion. Self - Crowded kitchen. Children ++. V. Warm in room. Radio news. Sick parade 1900- 2100 hrs in kitchen. Kit recovered from waggon. Mac lost blankets.

Issue- Potato soup for men - all night relays. No bread. Sgt - slept in mess. T 102. Grippe. Distance 21 kilos.

### **McLardy**

G.C.R. x1. Shave √ Total krank = 59 (incl. people B/F<sup>44</sup> from yesterday.) Dept: 9.30. My party off while I → Note in Engl. & Russian for Mrs. F. → photo & [-----]. 13 krank : see separate N. Roll.

Travelled č Tatt & West in 2<sup>nd</sup> Party - mine 5 km ahead :: no [hr] G passes → high-speed connection č Lt. just before destination. Passed 36 km from Glatz. 21 kms. Arrd. Neudorf (bei<sup>45</sup> Reichenbach) 3.30 3 Drs & Jimmy & McManus, Froggy & their sanit & 100.2° Sgt. slept on straw on family kitchen. Sick-parade in kitchen from 7 – 9.0 pm G. soldier's family of 4 boys 6, 4, 3, 5/12! Radio news in G. re street-fighting Breslau. Kit recovered from wagon :- Tatt's & Claire's devoid of food stuff: mine intact, but my blanket palliasse gone. 3 other Pharrers slept upstairs č wache<sup>46</sup>- & bacon!! Jimmy's feet gone. I uneasiest ever :: of Jimmy's walk. Good pumps behind house/ Potato soup 1000 pm to 0300 hrs! Fires in yard√/ Barns√- all 3 coys./ chewing-gum & sugar for lunch/ sleighs noticeably improved in efficiency.

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<sup>44</sup> Brought forward.

<sup>45</sup> German : beside.

<sup>46</sup> German : guard.

## Sunday, January 28<sup>th</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Distance 24 km

Tea and bread; 40 sick; went through Sweidnitz; being evacuated; roads jammed with evacuees. Had soup from train kitchen. Went on to Alt. Jauernich; everything full; went on 6 km across open moor; 40-50 cm. Snow. Dreary road, cold, to barn with no roof; no water; Sat by fire all night, very cold; much frost bite; one man had boots stolen in night.

### **Tattersall**

Breakfast - Tea & bread. Dept 0930 hrs - Zug 3 - last away Separate nominal roll - Total 40 sick. Met up with parties 1 & 2 in Schweidnitz. Refugees ++ - being evacuated. Soup issue from kitchen on train - Italian cooks. Bartering. Men v. hungry & discontented. Through Schweidnitz to Alt Jauernick. Slow cold journey. Zug 3. Good quarters in dominion. Men got down to milking cows. Quarters - in farm kitchen. Helpful host Bread & milk. Supper č Ps. - Provided 1 tin meat (for 5!!) & own tea - they provided 1 tin beans. Sick parade in kitchen 1900-2000 hrs. [Zug 1 & 2 - had to march a further 5 kilos into the wilds to very cold quarters in half built barn. No straw or water & no one slept. Hys<sup>47</sup> blindness. Must march back to main road next day. Thus separated from Mac & Clare.] Two long halts before arrival - ? cause of frostbite- very cold wind. Distance 18 kilos. Traffic control by Storks<sup>48</sup>. Staff car. ?Fieldmarshal<sup>49</sup> Slept on couch.

### **McLardy**

Cold ++ → Ear-bite ? 23° Frost. Deptd 0915. → 18 Kms via Schweidnitz. We 2<sup>nd</sup> coy – left 13 krank [ Tatt, who left 3<sup>rd</sup>, reports – Total of 40 sick see N. Roll – Met up on 2<sup>nd</sup> party (self) at kitchen-Train in Schweidnitz (shops & deserted) → thin porridge soup: Italian cooks. .... arrd Jauernack ? 7.0 pm. – Padrés & offs in the house kitchen: men č cows in stalls, & were able to milk the cows. ?1 litre each : farmer laughed?]. Lt Charon's ear-tip frozen - & 3-4 of coy! "storks" up & down the road : Fluchtlinge<sup>50</sup>. Fld-Marshall of Breslau area's staff passed! Schweidnitz bartering of bread for chocolate ∴ so hungry & grumbly → hint re "Bolsky". ? ( Richards U.S.A. on wagon → sleigh → wagon →dumped at 7.30 pm the only nearby farm!) Going well till 5.0 at Janeck. Then halt of ½ hr & later of ¾ hr → into wilds (frost-bite!) → (My fingers v. nearly so!) 7:15 pm arrd Barn & cottage ½ built Arnsdorf<sup>51</sup>: no straw : no roof. Slept in cellar twixt wall & Sgt N. on his coat č our 1 blanket & my coat on top. Chilled beans and Xmas cake by candle. Ghastly night of wish-fulfilment dreams. No Water. Blindness due to sitting all night at straw fires. 23 kms

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<sup>47</sup> Hysterical. Now referred to as conversion disorder where symptoms arise from stressful situations.

<sup>48</sup> Fieseler Fi 156 Storch were small liaison aircraft used by Germany from 1936 to 1945.

<sup>49</sup> Probably General Ferdinand Schörner (promoted Field Marshall 4<sup>th</sup> April 1945). In his memoirs (p. 421) Albert Speer states "In the face of the rapid advance of the Soviet armies it seemed to me advisable to travel to the Silesian industrial area.....On January 21, 1945, I went to Oppeln and met Field Marshal Schörner." In *Hitler's Last Bastion* (p. 302) Franz Kurowski writes " By 31/1 the soldiers of the Jauer Non-commissioned Officers School fought their way out of Steinau.....On the afternoon of this day Generaloberst Schoerner appeared at the division command post in Vorderheide." To get from Oppeln to Vorderheide, while avoiding the Soviet advance, would have required taking the route followed by the P.O.W. columns.

<sup>50</sup> German : refugees.

<sup>51</sup> Possibly Arnsdorf now Milikowice, Poland.

## Monday, January 29<sup>th</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Distance 29 km

Marched back to Alt Juarnich; arrived at 11.15 a.m. One party had soup early. The sick started to walk 11 kilos but returned. I stayed with Major McLarty (M.O.) while his group had soup and used forge in Dominion to fix sleigh; One New Zealander was blinded by smoke the previous night. Started at 2 p.m.; issued 1/10 loaf of bread at mill. Walked in blizzard and snow drifts through Streigau to Rhonstock to Dominion at Barhof. I pulled sleigh most of the day as Jimmy (Sanitator) was ill. After night march through blizzard arrived at 9 p.m.; slept in stable with postens, padres and sick; 22 sick arrived on wagon for the night.

### **Tattersall**

Issue - soup at breakfast. Haferflocken<sup>52</sup>. Tea & bread. Sick -35 left to walk 11 kilos to Streigau. Dept 1000 hrs. No 1. No sight of other parties - snow blizzard. Call in at Mill (Herr Sterner) Zedlitz by making detour - Issue - 1 bread for 10. Through Streigau & up hill climb out of to Rhonstock & past to Bohrhoff. Bohrseifersdorf Large dominion. 1st party to arrive. Quarters in stable č guards, WO's & sick. V. crowded. Clare & Mac arrived cā 2100 hrs. after a v. bad day. 22 sick arrived on wagon at 2030 hrs. Supper-Tea. Bread & meat.

Distance 23 kilos.

Lights on all night.

### **McLardy**

Deptd 0830 in snow – blizzard Claire & My parties intermingled. → Richards at farm to “Grace of God”? → 5 km back.? to Tatt’s crossroad village Janeck. (Tatt deptd) → Soup. Smiddy etc. Hauptman Baumgarten → me to Gasth. for coffee & wurst<sup>53</sup> etc. from posten. (No soup for ?20) collected in Dominion & deptd 1.30 pm (Mine 3<sup>rd</sup>). leaving 35 sick – to walk 11 km slower (č Richards U.S.A. on a wagon). Now snow-drift blizzard ---→ Mülle<sup>54</sup> for 1 bread/10 → coffee č milk & sugar & brown bread & syrup. Daughter of 12 č 2 yrs English (Eva Maria) Sister sickly chocolate → ? Müller’s decision to send 1 Bread per 5 after us. / - Hauptman. Lt. & self picked up loitering krank in slippers! → sleigh → past our (3<sup>rd</sup>) party → ~~Burgermeister~~ Orts Bauernführer<sup>55</sup> of Greben bei Streigau → Hauptmn’s play č kiddies, & taste,---→ Blizzard walk till sleigh overtook → back of lorry -> snow drift → 6.50 to Dorf<sup>56</sup> where our 3<sup>rd</sup> party supposed to stay = Rhonstock – Besetzt<sup>57</sup> → č 1 & 2, 3 km further on – 8.00 pm → horsestall č Padres in [corner]. We 3 + Sgt N. + Jimmy. Lights on all night, Jackson – blind due to Blower smoke & Hyst. 1 wagon of the sick arrd ?8.30!  
?23 + 5 kms.

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<sup>52</sup> German : rolled oats.

<sup>53</sup> German : sausage.

<sup>54</sup> German : mill.

<sup>55</sup> German : local farm leader.

<sup>56</sup> German : village.

<sup>57</sup> German : occupied.

## Tuesday, January 30<sup>th</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

#### Rest Day

Had shave and wash in the open; had sick parade for 2 ½ hours in afternoon; blistered feet and frost bite. Night was noisy and crowded; poor food; no fires allowed for cooking. Had issue of bread 1 loaf to 4 men, soup, oatmeal (Halbel flocken).

### **Tattersall**

Rest day. Rhonstock. Sick 2<sup>nd</sup> waggon 18 – spending night č refugees in Rhonstock. Bread issue – 1 for 4 men

Sick parade – 10 – 1230 hr.-(4).

R.S.M. Muir appointed.

R.S.M. Broderick } 6 & 9

" Jolly. }

Soup issue 3.30 – 9 p.m. Thin. Sick parade 3.30 – 5 pm. (3) Middle room of farm. No congenial civies. H. speech<sup>iii</sup>. Uncomfortable night. Toes – damp Frost bite – Burnt finger – Blister ‘Blowers’ ‘Fever’ D & V

### **McLardy**

2<sup>nd</sup> wagon of yesterday’s sick arrd! = at Borhof still talk of pause (ruhe)–tag<sup>58</sup>. confirmed at 1000. sick-parade in house mid-room (3 Drs & Sgts) from 10 – 12 30 (č interval for 1 loaf / 4 men) 1 incipt L.I.H <sup>59</sup>./ 1 Hyst. Blind/. Finger tip frost-bites č 12/. Much Δhh. č Blood ?20/.18 men missed bread ∴ others ‘doubled up ’! S/M. Muir took spont. charge of bread queue. → appointed S/M i/c all troops – To appoint N.C.O. i/c (1) Discipline (2) Rations. for each Coy (3) Muckers<sup>60</sup>. Pump turned off at 1200! [ Brew on borrowed blower, 2 slices b & b & salmon] obtained 1/10<sup>th</sup> & loaf for yesterday’s 36 sick. Wrote up diary. (Wore gym-shoes most day.) 3.0 – S/M Muir č required names etc.

3.30 – soup issue commenced in organised way.

Hauptman re 1) Organisation 2) Bagpipes, etc. shave in his upper bathroom.

3.30 – 5.00 – Sick Parade by Tatt, West, & Sgt N. (1 č 100.6° Block VII.) HauptFeldweibel<sup>61</sup> re organisation & S/M Muir & cooks & interpreter to keep to front : clearing up in mornings.

Soup 5.15 (½ litre G. bricks) + 1 tin peas. Tea & b & b č honey./ No congenial civies met here.

Fires out at 5.00./ Hitler speech / over–[evaluation] → no sleep till ?0400. (incl. boy-pyjama present concept x.) Richards did not appear č waggons!

Distance = Nil.

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<sup>58</sup> German : rest.

<sup>59</sup> Incipient Left Inguinal Hernia?

<sup>60</sup> P.O.W. slang. Person with whom one shares rations.

<sup>61</sup> German : Company Sergeant Major.

## Wednesday, January 31<sup>st</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Distance 22 km.

Up at 6 a.m. Tea, 1 slice bread. Left at 8.15 a.m. Weather mild, snowing. Roads very hard walking; gunfire to north. Made good time to Jauer where road blocks were under way. Passed circus with wagons stuck in the snow; very slow, deep snow; Turned west and gunfire decreased. About 1500 hours were at Kuchau. Billets good; slept in Kindergarten on stretchers for children. Told this was home area of Baron Von Richtofen. Had Halbflocken soup, potatoes, glass of wine and cherries. Did sick parade in barns and dressed 2 hands in our billets. Ashes from previous group still warm. Joined by 6 NCOs from previous party. One man run over by wagon. Traded for dry oatmeal, tin meat, salt.

### **Tattersall**

Up at 0800hrs. Tea. 1 slice B & B. Left Rhonstock č 1<sup>st</sup> party (Bk 6 & 9) at 0815 hrs. Weather mild – snowing.

Heavy going – thick snow. Approaching gun fire to the north – 29 sick came along č carts. Made good time cā 4 kilos per hour via Jaüer – road blocks & mining. Signs of battle nearest ever Refugees ++. Battle at ?Steinau<sup>62</sup>. Appeared to join up č original intended route<sup>63</sup>, turned west & signs of battle appeared to diminish. Thick snow up hill – heavy pulling. Arrived at night destination circa 1430 hrs. Distance cā 22 kilos Village Zeichau Billets – good – men 2 large barns. Issue – Bread 1/5<sup>th</sup> loaf. Soup – Haferflocken Own cooks etc. Fires Allowed. M.O.'s & P's – good quarters in kindergarten day room – attached to dominion Party joined by 6 N.C.O.s from preceding party – who had been loose cā 4 days. Dressing & sick parade in barn 1 hr. Signs of recent occupation of this Dominion by British POWs – fire ashes still warm, tins & discarded sledges. ?R.A.F. left here at 1200 hr today Commenced to thaw in morning.

Food – Tea Potatoes & 1 tin M & V for 5 ++. V. good. Accident en route Blk 10 - Tickner<sup>64</sup> pulled along by horse for 100 yds when helping travelling horse drawn caravan down hill. Contusion of leg. Cooking in kitchen upstairs – unmarried mother. Sleeping – stretchers on floor. Lunch ½ hr rest – 1 slice bread Breakfast – Tea – 1 slice bread

Hpt Baumgarten Lt<sup>n</sup> Charon Lt<sup>n</sup> Handel Visit from Hpt<sup>m</sup> B in kindergarten Instructions for Feb 1<sup>st</sup>.

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<sup>62</sup> Colonel Churilov's mechanised group from the Russian Fourth Tank Army had established a bridgehead on the West side of the Oder on 23<sup>rd</sup> January. However, as Christopher Duffy notes in *Red Storm on the Reich* (p. 96) resistance continued in Steinau up to 3<sup>rd</sup> February led by personnel from the NCO training school at Jauer.

<sup>63</sup> The German authorities had planned the evacuation routes prior to the commencement of the march. As the Soviets were advancing faster than anticipated it would have been necessary to modify the route.

<sup>64</sup> Russell Tickner writes "Percy Henry Tickner was my grandfather. Yes he did survive the war and lived to the ripe old age of 91.....He was a devoted Arsenal supporter and we have carried on his tradition.....My father has retained some memories of my grandfather returning home in late May 1945.....He never told my father of an injury to his leg but was always complaining of a sore knee." And what of the horse? This travelling circus was probably part of the Sarrasani Circus and would have been returning to their permanent quarters in Dresden. On the night of 13<sup>th</sup> February 1945 the Sarrasani Circus was in the middle of a performance when at 10:00 p.m. the alarms sounded and the audience had to evacuate to the bomb shelters. The magnificent circus building survived this first attack but was destroyed, along with many of the animals, in a second attack a few hours later.



## McLardy

Dep. Rohnstock. Up 0600 hrs (Padrés tramping over feet all night! Moistish day throughout.G.C.R.2.

S/Mjs i/c → Tatt. off 8.0; Clare 8.15; & I at 8.30 = best start yet. 29 sick- (left ohne<sup>65</sup> posten!) (Car sent for them from Jauer). (x 40 yesterday!). Followed us./4 hrs good going to lunch; Bread.

Then through Jauer – č road-blocks & mines being laid. (sound of ? bombing nearest ever. = presumably Steinau.) Refugees ++, & no smiling faces! Jauer = rejunctn č originally intended route. Sound of battle diminished thereafter. 6 km of field-roading = rough on sleighs. I no casualties en route but 1 semi-[cartlge].

Passed within 17 km of Liegnitz. Arrd. Zeichau 3.15 pm. all together = 22 km v. good billets. Messes “A” & “B” in kintergarten remote barns. Potatoes +. Soup issue. 1/5<sup>th</sup> bread. Fires allowed./. 6 cpls x Tonys Block III joined after lunch - had been by selves since Sat. pm – story of snow-blind chap. etc./. Sick-parade in dim light of each barn → 6.30 Dinner ++ (= p??? --stew & boiled potatoes etc.) All 3 kits carried securely by H – Feldwebel. Cooking by Unmarried mother of 7/12<sup>66</sup> babe above: says Tony departed 1200 today. Raining by 7.0 pm! / Padre H. ransacking K.garten drawers! Tatt. saw chap dragged by horses./.Walked 1<sup>st</sup> 2 hrs č S/M. Muir (& Interpreter.) Chits to Batman<sup>67</sup> to collect rations for A & B. Our 2<sup>nd</sup> straw-less night – viz. on K-garten mat stretchers. Other Lt = Handel. (assisted Tatt. č Diary till 1030 -: [Nothal] T & C. case 🌟)

Battle tunic & trousers off for 1<sup>st</sup> time, & into [Scotts] new pyjamas. Soup = Haferflocken (Makes good glue job.)

H. reports Gräfin Richthofen being strangled by 2 Russ. freiwilligers<sup>68</sup> → shot.<sup>69</sup>

Total, offs & ORs, at 0830 hrs = 1313

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<sup>65</sup> German : without.

<sup>66</sup> Baby was seven months old.

<sup>67</sup> Term used to describe a soldier assigned to a commissioned officer as a personal servant. Private Jimmy Theobald was acting in this capacity for Major McLardy.

<sup>68</sup> German : volunteers.

<sup>69</sup> The famous World War I flying ace Freiherr Manfred von Richthofen (The Red Baron) had died on 21<sup>st</sup> April 1918 and was not married. This probably refers to Doris Margarita von Richthofen the widow of Manfred's brother Lothar. Captain (Dr.) Gibbens gives the following information in his diary entry of 8<sup>th</sup> February 1945 “Hauptman Baumgarten told McLardy he had shot two Vlosov Russians for molesting Graffen von Richthofen and that Lieutenant Yalu was to be court-martialed and shot for desertion of the family.” Russian General Andrey Vlasov was captured by the Germans in July 1942. He collaborated with them and established the ROA (Russkaya Osvoboditel'naya Armiya – Russian Liberation Army). The ROA was active on the Eastern front in early 1945.

## Thursday, February 1<sup>st</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Distance 12 km.

Breakfast, oatmeal porridge, bread, cocoa and cherries. Meat for sandwich on march. Left at 0900 hours, roads soft, snow melting; sleighs were being abandoned. Ours left behind 3 km from Goldberg. Road blocks being built; sunny, clear day. Arrived at Dominion 1 km east of Goldberg; stayed upstairs in Polish kitchen. Had tea. From 15.30 hours to 17.30 hours had sick parade of 31 men from Air Force group; 8 men from Breslau group. Issue – 1 loaf of bread for 10 men, thin soup. Poles gave us mashed potatoes. All the local families came to see the doctor. Slept on straw on floor; supper – potatoes and milk.

### **Tattersall**

Good night on stretchers (children's) & pillows. Up 0620 hr. Due to march at 0900 hr 12 kilos to Goldberg

Breakfast – Cocoa. Re Heated Haferflocken Soup Bread & tin of meat (gift) Thawing fast – No snow on rds.

Dept 0915 hrs. N<sup>e</sup> 3. Tickner & 2 of the sick on waggons. Many sledges abandoned – v. heavy & hard going for those still with. Air activity ++. Clear sky – Warm wind & some sunlight feet v. wet. Arrived Dominion 1 km E of Goldberg. Signpost 17 km Liegnitz 35 km to Hirschberg. Time 1300 hrs. Circa 31 sick from previous parties & R.A.F. party in this dominion. 8 Sick arrived in cart – fallen out sick from party which had marched from Breslau. Shave & Tea on arrival. Quarters – upstairs. Polish family. Sick parade 15.30 – 1700 hrs including 7 Breslau party & those left behind, 31. Issued – Bread – 1/10<sup>th</sup> loaf – Civilian Soup – Thin Haferflocken. Supper – Cocoa. Bread & Butter. Potatoes (gift) & Tin steak & kidney pudding among 5.

Bed down on straw – in kitchen at 2100 hrs

Distance 12 kilos

### **McLardy**

Awake 0700 – Most comfortable sleep yet in pajamas. Ger. 'bangers' for breakfast / & tinned cherries & juice stett<sup>70</sup> milk : cocoa : b&b & G. bully. Man & ?clavicle & cut eyelid from frost on glasses during breakfast. Still thawing ++. Clare & Co off 0840. We off 0905. Tatt off 0915. 50 + sleighs abandoned at 1<sup>st</sup>, snowless, hill. Remarkable thaw (& tauern<sup>71</sup>) – Fields abs clear! 3 non-marchers only. Furs & trousers which wd become you x<sup>72</sup>.

Fell back & chocolate & Tatt. sitting on tree. Padrés dragging logging sleighs! Arr. 12.30 – 3 sep. billets for men. Goldberg. Passed again within 17 km of Liegnitz.- spots of sunlight → air activity – Fighters harassing bombers over Liegnitz way. Off's (A) Quarters in Dominion farm-hands room & store – Polish girl of 24 & 4 chn –lessons in Russian. 8 squares chocolate to Lt's sister x Goldberg. Sick Parade 3.0 pm to 5.05 – RAF etc 31 for wagon tomorrow (first kms grade!) (1) McCallum, VII (aet 47) (2) Jones, X. (Frost B. Big Toe). (3) Sgt. Greenway (Boil L.

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<sup>70</sup> German : instead of.

<sup>71</sup> German : thaw.

<sup>72</sup> McLardy makes several diary entries that seem to be addressed to his wife. These are usually marked with an "x".

Knee) X (4) Lauzon (Acute Lumbago) VII (5) Tickner č leg by horse. (6) Webster (VI) Hernia.  
1<sup>st</sup> time a mess to ourselves! Also 7 x Breslau &/P č Frost- bitten toes. Pills to woman of house.  
1/10 loaf & Soup issue 5.15. Straw & bed 9.00. Slept +. 12 kms.

## Friday, February 2<sup>nd</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Distance 10 km.

Up at 0600 hours; Tea and bread; 39 sick. Issue – 1/5 loaf; Left at 09.30; all sleighs gone.

Carried packs 10 km to Pilgramsdorf. Men's accommodation poor, no water; Postens kicked out all fires. We had billets in Kindergarten; young school teacher. Had sick parade 14.30 to 15.45. Bought loaf of bread, jug of milk and 2 rye loafs. Teacher gave us potatoes and had an electric heater so we had tea and toast. Slept on straw in room. Issue of potatoes to some men. Had potatoes, bread, tea for supper.

### **Tattersall**

Reveille – 0600 hrs. Odd sick – Transport sick list altered & completed – cā 39. Dept at 0930 hrs. Did'nt see Nr 3. Issue – Bread Loaf for 5. No sledges – Sunny – Roads v wet & muddy – Packs on backs. Good windy road uphill & then down to Pilgrimsdorf. Distance 10 kilos.

Quarters – All 3 companies in large Dominion for men.

Sickparade. 1430 – 1545. Own Quarters – kindergarten across the road – 2 rooms – Electric storm. Fire – Bread for cigarettes. Dry toast. Milk from farm. Wood & coal for fire cā 12 blowers. Issue – Potatoes only.

V. Pleasant hostess in kindergarten. Straw. Potatoes. Tin meat x 5 (Pork & stuffing) Tea.

### **McLardy**

All slept well. Bright sunny day. g.c.r.3. Up 0600 for alleged 0700 start. – Then told nil till 1100, & finally started moving at 0900. –So I alone went ½ mile to IX&VI in other farms S/M Muir annoyed with Padrés<sup>73</sup> asking some Ger. for billets as he talking to rē food! Grumble rē no M.O. / Cpl sanitātor did heels. Only 1 non-marcher = Webster č Hernia →back to our farm (all gone) to join the other 30 for wagon (18 x RAF etc. 7 x Breslau, & 5 x VII – VIII & IX – X). 8 other “R.A.F.” whom I had ruled as fit to walk had also stayed! → Total of 39 for wagon. = note to SBMO. VIII A<sup>74</sup> (appreciated +). Bread issue 1/5. (incl. sick) IX & VI had potatoes rice and soup. No sleighs or wheeled sledges to be seen! Arrd. Dominion Pilgramsdorf 12.15 – 12.45. →offs to our 2<sup>nd</sup> Kindergarten across the road : we 5 in smaller room č store & elect. ring : padres in larger room č oven.

Unteroff.<sup>75</sup> Franks i/c us. Sick Parade 2.30 – 3.45 in Food-bin shed lugout farming ccl say nay? Tatts VI man č Rh. heart : Aortic Incompetence. Treated the wife's finger cut → milk & *Salz* & 1 Brd for 40 cigs (Clare). Our girl & her mother → elect. heater. potatoes 8 lbs, wood, -- for 1 soap, 20 cigs 8 squares chocolate. – Also a kindergarten book for my N. Roll. S/M Muir S/M

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<sup>73</sup> During this march, and subsequent marches, there were issues with the Padres. In his diary entry of 8<sup>th</sup> February 1945, Captain Gibbens added a note “The Padres as a group were a source of considerable exasperation. They constantly insisted on their rights as officers, but did little but hold services and bury the dead, and at all other times, think of their stomachs. In the end, I worked out a formula that the lower the Church, the more they thought about their stomachs. On the other hand, the Roman Catholics – and I was brought up to dislike them – were much more likely to be abstemious, to grin and bear all patiently, and to be helpful etc. There is a connection between food and non-conformity; whoever heard of a C of E or Methodist Parson with a poor appetite? Perhaps Catholics are all used to fasting, but I never heard one complain.”

<sup>74</sup> Stalag VIII A Görlitz.

<sup>75</sup> Unteroffizier. German : Non-commissioned officer.

Bennet finding his men too much for him. 4.30 Toast & butter. Potatoes (marg) for troops Roads  
abs dry in spots. No fires allowed. Still circ. 12 Blowers going! 630 Potatoes & Pork and Stuffing  
: Cocoa. Chat & Fr<sub>l</sub> Br<sub>ü</sub>schke the school Lehrerin<sup>76</sup> – aet 24, pilot fiancé dead, staunch Nazi –  
had eg. no fear of R's crossing Oder & barely admits Breslau where F = Sta. master : Discipline  
of children from 16 yrs, since 33 ? Padrés steamed out next door by potato-boiler & cement  
floor. S/M. Muir & Strickler arrd 8.30 – Bed 9.0. All 7 slept + (Table & chairs had to be  
removed to make space for the S/M's). Only 1 wheeled vehicle (nice sleigh) appeared!  
~~Add to Wagon of 3/2 :- WHITE 26451 U.S.A. (cook) Dys. CARROLL 4458691 Brit~~  
~~Heart. Ball 974024 Brit. Dys.~~

Medicaments most used.

Elastoplast. & Hansoplast<sup>77</sup> & Zn O<sup>78</sup> Tape. Ichthyol.<sup>79</sup>(Frost-bite) Dovers.<sup>80</sup> (Stomachs)  
S-Guanidine.<sup>81</sup> (Diarrhoea.) Zn O. Ung.<sup>82</sup> (Lips) Aspirins. Hyp. Sedatives. Cascara.<sup>83</sup>Formalin  
Throat Tabs. Osyl & T.C.P. & Spirit & Dettol. & Iodine. Bi<sup>84</sup> & Ginger. Suppositories &  
Glycerine. Scissors, Scalpel. Gauze, Lint, Bdge. Wool. M & B ( S-Thiozol,<sup>85</sup> etc).

Medic<sup>ts</sup> Missing.

Tanalbin.<sup>86</sup> Hmhhd. Ointment or Anusol Suposits. Yellow Eye Ointment. Oil of Cloves. Gentian  
Violet.<sup>87</sup> 1 cc pocket syringe for blisters. Anti-Malaria. Camphor & Oil Card. Stimulent. Foot  
Powder Foot Oil. Canadian P. Box for postage & quick opening. Sod. Bic.

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<sup>76</sup> German : School mistress.

<sup>77</sup> German equivalent of Elastoplast or Bandaid.

<sup>78</sup> Zinc Oxide.

<sup>79</sup> Ichthyol-Gesellschaft manufactures medicinal products for dermatology.

<sup>80</sup> Dover's powder containing ipecac and opium, used to relieve pain and induce perspiration.

<sup>81</sup> Sulphaguanidine: this non-absorbable sulphonamide was developed in the 1930's and was used in the treatment of diarrhoea.

<sup>82</sup> Unguent : ointment.

<sup>83</sup> A plant known for its laxative properties.

<sup>84</sup> Sodium bicarbonate.

<sup>85</sup> Probably refers to the anti-bacterial compound Sulfathiazole M & B 760.

<sup>86</sup> Tannalbin is used to treat diarrhoea.

<sup>87</sup> Topical antiseptic.

## Saturday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Distance 33 km.

Up at 0600. Cocoa and toast. Issue – bread 2/5 loaf; 32 sick on lorry. Started at 0800 hours; Our kit was cut down; All our blankets were on postens wagon. Had blister by noon; had drink of buttermilk. It was hard going uphill through Lowenberg. Had ride on ration wagon for last 4-5 km. Stopped at Gasthaus for coffee and bread; had beer from postens. Helped push wagon up a hill. At Welderdorf, Capt Tattersal and party stayed in village. Our party went on 2 km to poor barns. We had billets in a machine shed on straw. Ate in Hallway. Issue – soup and 3 potatoes. Bought loaf and apples from house. Held sick parade in horse stable. It was raining, muddy; Men wet and tired.

### **Tattersall**

Carroll – 286635 (POW) – for wagon Reveille 0600 hrs – Issue – Bread 2/5<sup>th</sup>. Breakfast – Dry toast. Cocoa & milk. Dept from dominion at 0815 hrs. (from Pilgrimsdorf). Sick 32 on lorry to Görlitz (incl Carrol.) Packs on trailer to nights stopping place. Carried small haversack & food. left i.e. 1 tin milk, 1 tin meat & tea, bread. Roads dry – fresh breeze. Picked up one straggler from previous party – Jew – Kahn. Hard going up hill, through ~~Goldberg~~ Löwenberg & then up hill to lift on ration wagon for last 6 kilos – pushing up the hill at steepest part – Fine scenery woody. Stopped at Gasthaus – 120 men of 3<sup>rd</sup> party billeted – sick parade there for one hour – coffee & bread on the home. Then 2 kilos further on to dominion – across country where parties 1 & 2 billeted. Poor billets. Soup – Barley. Cold draughty barn at side Hurricane lamp – Apple. of home – Food – Tea, potatoes & 1/5<sup>th</sup> tin meat in porch of house. Radio news. 2 Apples. Bed down at 21 hrs Started to rain. One acute dysentery Distance 29 – 31 – 33 kilos

### **McLardy**

Wakened 5.45 by McManus looking for water. 2<sup>nd</sup> night in Pyjamas. Cocoa & Toast. S/Mjs gone by 0600. We out at 0700. X & XI off 0745. 2/5 loaf ea. for 2 days ahead. Rechecked the doubtful Wagon sick – struck off 13 & added 3 from my flight. Total = 32 on Wagon → Görlitz. Elastoplast off feet (These since before started.) All off 0815. / Picked up Palestinian Kann in shed at edge of village! Walking 4 km/h. Road v. quiet. Stork<sup>88</sup> over. Many stragglers after Löwendorf = 17 kms. 2.0 pm – Hauptman<sup>89</sup> came along behind & picked up Tatt & self + 12 stragglers + Clare & Jimmy → steep climb in Riesengeberge foothills : out to push lorry → down to Welkersdorf Gasthouse 3.30 – coffee & bread & treacle → 120 of IX & VI into Gasths<sup>90</sup> : rest down the valley : VII – VIII & X – XI → 2 kms to Schossdorf where already our gepäck.<sup>91</sup> S/M Muir preparing barley soup. = 32 kms Quartered in fodder shed of nearest house : hurricane lamp : apple : meal in vestibule after acute-sick parade in stable & Clare, incl. one acute Δhha. Sl. blister my left ball of foot. Des Noyers – splinters. All men fagged & weary. Raining by 7.0 pm. Radio 8.0.

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<sup>88</sup> Fieseler Storch were German aircraft.

<sup>89</sup> Hauptmann. German : Captain.

<sup>90</sup> Gasthaus. German : Inn.

<sup>91</sup> German : baggage.

## Sunday, February 4<sup>th</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Breakfast – oatmeal porridge, bread, tea. Issue – one loaf to 10 men. Had sick parade in lean-to shed. Left 34 sick for wagons; on road at 9:30 hours. Very slow going; lunch at Lauban. Went through Lichenau; no room. Went further 8 km to Schloss Heidedorf. Passed large group of Jewish prisoners on road. One man fainted and helped him in last 4 km. Sent 33 men on lorry to Gorlitz. Spent night in castle. Had spring bed, 4 in a bed, hot and uncomfortable. Supper – potato soup from house, bread, tea. Men had barley soup. Had wash and shave. Started with nausea and dysentery.

### **Tattersall**

Reveille – 0630 hrs. Breakfast. Haferflocken & Tea. Dept 1030 hrs N<sup>r</sup> 3 { Sick parade in coach shed.} Issue –  $\frac{1}{15}$ <sup>th</sup> loaf Cold – slight snow – Slow start windy hilly roads through villages to Lauban. No Quarters in Lichternau – march further 8 kilos to large dominion & Schloss signpost to Görlitz – 20 kilos. Another 15 added to lorry load – total of 33 – by lorry to Gorlitz. Polish working girls č picks etc. Men's – quarters – good. Thin barley soup on arrival. Own quarters in bedroom in Schloss – Soup issue – mixed vegetables. Distance 25 kilos. Dinner – Xmas pudding & custard  $\frac{2}{5}$ <sup>th</sup>,  $\frac{1}{10}$ <sup>th</sup> tin spam & bread Tea. Large double bed – Countess who speaks a little English – hostess. Large twin bed. Own twin Mac & self 2<sup>nd</sup> twin MacIntyre & Wes Clare Mattresses on floor for 4 padres. Graf Sponet, Schloss Heidersdorf

### **McLardy**

Awake. 0600 – communal Breakfast of [Bourgon] & tea č Padres at 0700. Touch of Frost. Sick-Parade in coach-shed (coach pulled out) 7.30 – 8.30 – Kit just onto wagon. 20 sick from our 2 coys. 14 frm IX & VI (incl. 2 cpl.[Mlgs.]) = 34./ 1/10 for all but last 54. Last party off 1030. 2 apples from house. Small package of butter smuggled by Hm? McIntyre had pocketed Tatts spare bkfst tea! \ stated to Tatt that “must keep after boys for spiritual benefit.” !!!Dry, sunshine all day. [ Rechts ran ! ( = heran gehen)<sup>92</sup> : 1 doz/coy: Never talk of a parasite!] 12 Polish girls č clogs & shovels alongside into Lauban. [Dry sox & foot-powder nightly : bootpwdr in mornings.] Schloss<sup>93</sup> Heidersdorf : being march to within 17 km of Görlitz : arrd. 4.45. → past Lichternau. Schloss 2<sup>nd</sup> floor posh had a room. Gräfin Sponek at pains to accomodate us - + pillows for Sanitator room. Ready-made potato soup from cook. Xmas Ps. & custard boiled for us by Guest Evacuee č son P.O.W. in Calif. + Spam sandwiches & tea !cigarettes. Lorry auto picked up only the 1<sup>st</sup> wagon of 18 Krank → here – added 15 – 33 to Görlitz. Soup ready almost on arrival of 1<sup>st</sup> party : Tatt almost done for č R. heel & L. Latar. I carried the food parcel on stick all day. Sgt N. & Batman → sleep in gun-room. Cold bath in delux B-room : all plaster off. 3 Drs & Sen. Padre on the 2 semi-double beds Pyjamas next skin for 1<sup>st</sup> time! 4 Padres on the extra mattresses on the floor. Cascara x2. Sulphaguinidine finished. Total 1248 21 & Tatt & Self never got our 1/10 loaf ∴ 2<sup>nd</sup> wagon of Krank never appeared to render its  $2\frac{1}{2}$  loaves back.

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<sup>92</sup> German : keep right, keep going.

<sup>93</sup> German : castle.

Rumour rē no mail left Stalag for past 12 wks!!

Hauptman B:-

Total of Flight II 1 <sup>st</sup> day's March	= 1824
Add 1 <sup>st</sup> night known to him	= 8
// x Breslau w/p	= <u>7</u>
	1839
Subtract krank eliminated March	= <u>592</u>
	1247
Subtract Total counted into VIII A	= <u>1240</u>
Leaves discrepancy, missing, uncounted	= 7
Left at Weigelsdorf (6) & U.S.A. Richards (1)	= <u>7</u>
	<u>0</u>

Sick Left Behind (or advanced to Terminus)

	?150
D 2 am.....Total ?(215)(½ Geo. D.)	
D 3(a) am.....// ?100?(68)(→?Lazarett.)	
// (b) pm Weigelsdorf Gendarmerie – 6.	
D.5 am.....	59. (108)
D.6 am.....	40. (113).
D.7 am.....	1. (Richards).
D.9 am.....	29. (22)
D.12 am. (incl. x Tony & x Breslau!)	32 (→Görlitz)
	(34)
D.13 pm ( // // // )	33 (→Görlitz)
	(32)
// // Lost on 2 <sup>nd</sup> Wagon	16 (arrd. 6/2)
	.....
	466. (592)
D.14 am (Brought č to VIII A)	15
	Ger. Total

Arrival of Above at Görlitz.

D3(a):-19 arr.8/2(walked).See W.O.Badcock's Report  
rē arrival of 218 on 4/2.

H. reports (8/2) :-

12 Krank left still in Res. Laz. Schweidnitz x D5.

41 // // // // Leibnitz x D. 3.



## Monday, February 5<sup>th</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Up at 0800 hours. Had porridge, tea, bread. Sick parade for one hour. Issue – pea soup, one loaf bread to 4 men. Left at 12.30; put 15 sick on wagon. Arrived Gorlitz-Mays at 16.30 hours (Stalag VIIC<sup>94</sup>). Got kit from wagon. Met Capt Tony Stallard in front of Revier and Capt. Gibbons<sup>95</sup>, who had accompanied a group to Switzerland for repatriation, had arrived back at this camp. So 5 of the 6 doctors that had walked from Stalag 344 had arrived at VIIC.

### **Tattersall**

Reveille 0715 hrs. Breakfast – Haferflocken Tea Bread & Honey (Treacle) Sick parade – 1015 → 1100 hrs. Issue – Pea soup (for men) ¼ loaf. Met the Graf & saw over the Schloss. Dept at 1230 hrs – 15 sick on waggons. Total – 1219 + 15 i.e. 8 officers & 1226 men Easy marching – muddy roads through Schönbrunn – Arrived Görlitz – (Meuse<sup>96</sup>) at 1630 hr. Distance – 16 kilos Large – International Camp.V crowded No Red X food. SBMO Maj Downing. Quarters - Room for 3 MOs in Revier block. Usual beds & mattresses. Other M.Os Maj Downing SAMC, Capt Gibbons RAMC, Capt Stallard RAMC. Bucket bath in room. Changed underclothing shirt & socks – first time time for 14 days. Good meal Soup. Rice, meat & toast. Dried Bananas. Tea.

Total Min 272

Max 287<sup>97</sup>

### **McLardy**

Zu Tun<sup>98</sup> :- O.R. Staff Particulars. g.c.r. x 4. Boots polished. – By self! Shave. Repack. → satchell on shoulder č strap & laces. Send Jimmy & DesN. off sick & Interpreter. See round house - & met Graf. Total No. left in flight. M.I. Room.

Moist muddy day. All awake 0715. More restless than in straw! Tony's air-pillow still++. Brkfst [bourgon] & bread č Treacle (nice tea). Blacked own boots. Peas being boiled in 2 kitchens for men. Cpl ? did dressings in morning & pointed out the 2 worst sick. Sick-parade 1015 – 1100. Brew 1105. S/M Leaper c.f. insolent in attitude when asked to announce sick-parade. Off 12 – 12.30 after pea-soup. 15 Krank. ¼ loaf bread. Yesterday's 21 non-bread failed to appeal via C.S.M. ∴ missed back 21/10. View of house : & Graf, č Tatt.

Total 1219 + 15 = 1234 = 8offs & 1226.

Chat č Hauptman – who had telephone talk č 344 yesterday am : all quiet : no party behind us. 3.0 arr Görlitz sign Bd : 4.00 arrd. VIII A = ? 16 kms. Mud ++ in stalag. Maj. Downing → Revier – Tony still palish : Gibby! č Sgt [Shp] & 4 orderlies ! Dismissed Jimmy as batman.

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<sup>94</sup> This is clearly a transcription error as Görlitz is Stalag VIIIA.

<sup>95</sup> This refers to Captain (Dr.) Trevor Gibbons R.A.M.C. He had been held at Lamsdorf with the other doctors. On 15<sup>th</sup> January 1945 he accompanied several severely ill P.O.W.s who were being repatriated through Switzerland. On his return from the Swiss border he was unable to travel to Lamsdorf and was diverted to Görlitz arriving on 22<sup>nd</sup> January. His diary has been used to expand some of the entries in the other diaries.

<sup>96</sup> Moys was a suburb of Görlitz.

<sup>97</sup> This may refer to the number of P.O.W.s in Tattersall's column.

<sup>98</sup> German : To do.

Stick gifted by Sgt Nickels. Padres piqued re no quarters ready for them? Maj. Downing = Dr. Plassey's partner & D.A.D.M.S.<sup>99</sup> in Tobruk. (Only knew by telephone.) Tony's trip not so bad after all. Three-course dinner in Revier. 1<sup>st</sup> fleas picked up in the Revier! Jew & political prisoners marching ahd. Clare's abd → imminent sympts of Δ hh ?due to buttermilk 2 days ago. → Bad night. Dreamt rē you, hanging on arm, smiling & [dwn]x. Suggested message back to 344 via returning postens rē 1) Med Kit for VIII A 2)U.S.A. Dr 3) Tatt's notes 4) Gibbie's kit & Diary 5) Tony's Diary. Dismissed Jimmy as not temperamentally suited for batting → ? Lacey. Tin plate & knife to mess. No exp. of final peroration to Hauptman. My Lt not seen since Sat. last! Total counted into VIII A = 1240. instead of estimated 1247. ∴ Those missing 7 = 6 x Weigelsdorf (not reported to him G Lt C.) & U.S.A. Richards.

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<sup>99</sup> Deputy Assistant Director of Medical Services (N.Z.).

## Tuesday, February 6<sup>th</sup> 1945

### **Clare**

Rested. Took Sulfa-guanidine for dysentery.

### **Tattersall**

Late morning – up at 1100 hrs No parcels or clothing in lager. Visited Bks 10, 11, 12 where parties located

### **McLardy**

Wakened 0800 by cup of tea & yeast<sup>100</sup> sandwiches by Batman Roberts. In bed went through all Kit & pockets to check inventory & put out laundry. Only missing essential = collar to 2<sup>nd</sup> shirt & ?change of tie: Laundry = 1 collarless shirt. (Robin R.) 1 pr long pants (137.) 1 wool vest (green V.) 2½. 3 prs Kahki sox. (1x white : 2x green). 2 pr Grey sox ( Green & S.B. Ltd.) 2 Kahki Handkies.

Mess trial Orderly Lacey = a cpl ∴ appointed McMahon as ass. Batman to Roberts. Caution rē rackets. Darned 2 worn holes in grey pullover & small tear in trousers. 14581 C.S.M. Bilton. J. (who showed me to Revier yesterday.) reported č 1) 2 Crowns. 2) N. Roll of 15 of the 29 left č him on D.9 am. Lunch 1300 = G. Cabbage soup & 3 potatoes & B & b. 3.00 pm – Visited my Flight in Bks 9 & 10, checked organisation & Sanitators. → R.S.M. Goodliff. Introduced Sgt. N. to Maj. D. → agreed rē me i/c Lamsdorf 10 Bks Organisation & Psych. for all. Saw round Emergency Revier = 90 beds for Frost-bites & 90 for Δ hh + odds. Serbs separate i/c 1 of the 4 Fr. Drs. Diet Kitchen. Downing's Majority = 1/4/41<sup>101</sup>. Stalag History, past organisation, & proposed additnl orgn. after Dinner. - 300 Brit up to 3/52 ago. Now 2000 Amer from Dec. '44. & our 4000 & 1000 other Brit. Toe 'H' night-duty, stretchers, etc! 1000 Fr. non-workers ≡ 4 MOs: few Serbs & Slovaks 1500 Itals č own M.O.s awaiting repat. Russians č 3 MOs = strictly separate. Lazarett = 2 Km off – 8 Fr "Volunt." M.O.s & 2 Ger Drs. Unlimited (Surg.) Lads from Bü~~mer~~ Görnitz centre = 7 Kms. G-Moyse Sta = 5 Kms Tatt, Tony & West allocated jobs. I i/c Lamsdorf ½ Lager<sup>102</sup> & all Psych. Capt ~~mer~~ = at Waldenberg<sup>103</sup> [Grublie]. Most of my & Tony's Krank have now dribbled in. Read 1<sup>st</sup> chapter of Bk brought with me = T.A. Ross's "Facts on War Neuroses" 1942. Thanked Sgt. Earl for ring-making. Issue of 50 Fr. cigarettes/month, to workers. Camp Rations = coffee 0500 / Bread & Marg. am/ Soup 11-5.0 pm / Potatoes 3 times/wk.

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<sup>100</sup> Shortened form for yeast extract. Source of vitamin B and niacin, sold commercially as Marmite or Vegemite.

<sup>101</sup> Major McLardy was also appointed a Major in April 1941 so they were of identical seniority.

<sup>102</sup> German : camp.

<sup>103</sup> Probably refers to Oflag IIC Woldenburg, now Dobiegniew Poland.

## Diary Synopsis 7<sup>th</sup> February 1945 to 18<sup>th</sup> April 1945

### **Clare**

Capt. Clare remained in Stalag VIIIA until 17<sup>th</sup> February. On that date he left Görlitz by train together with Capt. Stallard in charge of 1000 men of whom 86 were bedridden. On 20<sup>th</sup> February they reached Stalag XIB Follingbostel. His diary stops on 22<sup>nd</sup> February. Based on his post war notes he remained in Stalag XIB until he was liberated by the British on 17<sup>th</sup> April. Due to the large number of bedridden P.O.W.s (5,000), and only five working doctors, he remained there for a further 10 days when he was transferred back to England.

### **Tattersall**

On 15<sup>th</sup> February Capt. Tattersall left Stalag VIIIA in charge of 2,500 men including 250 French and 250 Slovaks. They marched on foot past Dresden and eventually got as far West as Duderstadt on 22<sup>nd</sup> March. Due to the advance of the American and British armies from the West they were then marched East reaching Ditzfurt on 11<sup>th</sup> April. He was liberated by the Americans at 0730 hrs on 12<sup>th</sup> April and flown back to England on 18<sup>th</sup> April. His diary ends on 18<sup>th</sup> April. The conditions on this second part of the march were much worse than those encountered between Lamsdorf and Görlitz.

### **McLardy**

Major McLardy left Görlitz on 10<sup>th</sup> February on foot. He was in charge of 3,000 men and was accompanied by Capt. Gibbens. He got as far West as Stalag IXA Ziegenhain on 12<sup>th</sup> March and remained there until 28<sup>th</sup> March. From 28<sup>th</sup> March to 2<sup>nd</sup> April he marched East, with 1,700 U.S and British P.O.W.s, to Diedorf. The last entry in his diary is from 2<sup>nd</sup> April. He was liberated by the Americans on 6<sup>th</sup> April. As noted above these subsequent marches were under far worse conditions than the initial march. Major McLardy's diary also contains several pages of addresses and names as well as notes on organization, medication and supplies.

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## ENDNOTES

### <sup>i</sup> **Red Cross Parcels**

*The Convention relative to the Treatment of Prisoners of War*, Geneva 27 July 1929 stipulates in Chapter 2 Art. 11 that “the food ration of prisoners of war shall be equivalent in quantity and quality to that of the depot troops.” In practice, neither the quantity nor the quality of food received by P.O.W.s was comparable to the rations received by their German guards. Art. 37 of the Convention provides that “Prisoners of war shall be authorized to receive individual postal parcels containing foodstuffs and other articles for consumption or clothing.” In addition Art. 78 states that “Societies for the relief of prisoners of war, regularly constituted in accordance with the laws of their country, and having for their object to serve as intermediaries for charitable purposes, shall receive from the belligerents, for themselves and their duly accredited agents, all facilities for the efficacious performance of their humane task within the limits imposed by military exigencies.” The Red Cross Societies of Canada, the United Kingdom and the U.S. assumed the role of providing relief and most importantly food parcels to P.O.W.s.

In January 1941 Dr. Frederick Tisdall published an article entitled *Canadian Red Cross Parcels for British Prisoners-of-war in Germany* in the *Canadian Medical Association Journal*. The main components of the parcels were whole milk powder, butter, cheese, meat, fish, dried fruit, sugar and jam, biscuits, chocolate, salt and pepper, tea and soap. These ingredients had been carefully chosen to provide most of the calories, protein, vitamin and fat requirements of a prisoner, on the assumption that each prisoner would receive one parcel per week. In that case each prisoner would be receiving 2,070 calories per day. The daily calorie requirement of a man doing light manual work was 2,800 calories per day rising to 3,300 calories per day with moderate manual work. The shortfall in calories of 730 to 1230 per day was assumed to be provided by the German authorities in the form of flour and potatoes.

In March 1941 Dr. Tisdall published his *Final Report on the Canadian Red Cross Parcels for Prisoners-of-war*. This report was based on interviews conducted with over 6,000 returning P.O.W.s, primarily from the British and Canadian armies. The collated data provided a comparison of the different parcels (British, American and Canadian) and information on preferred foods, spoilage and the necessity of the Red Cross parcels. Ninety-nine percent of those surveyed noted that they would not have had enough food without the parcels and many said they would not have survived without them. The most popular parcel was the Canadian, as it was seen to contain more food, greater bulk and lasted longer. Biscuits, butter and chocolate were the most popular items. Only the Canadian parcels contained butter rather than margarine. Bacon was the most popular meat and salmon preferred over other fish.

Between January 1941 and the end of the war The Canadian Red Cross Society packed and shipped 16½ million prisoner-of-war food parcels at a cost of \$47,529,000.

### <sup>ii</sup> **Padre Desnoyers and the Zam Zam**

All three diaries make reference to Padre Desnoyers and, in particular, to his health. However, he is not included in any of the lists of British Empire P.O.W.s. Major McLardy’s diary gives an address in Montreal, but no records were forthcoming from Canadian Government sources. A second reference in McLardy’s diary appeared to read “Civ. Bernard des Noyers (R.C.)(2am-2am)” a closer scrutiny of the handwriting revealed that the last brackets actually

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read “Zam-Zam”. Enquiries through the Roman Catholic Church indicated that the Montreal address was, and still is, owned by the church. They also provided an obituary for Father Bernard Desnoyers who had died in 1993. Based on the obituary and information on the sinking of the *Zam-Zam*, it has been possible to piece together an outline of how a civilian priest from Quebec ended up as part of a P.O.W. march through Silesia in January 1945.

Desnoyers was born in Farnham, Quebec in March 1914. He had two sisters and four brothers and all the siblings, except two of the brothers, went into either the seminary or the convent in Saint-Hyacinthe. He took his vows in 1934, and studied philosophy and theology in Ottawa between 1937 and 1940. In July 1940, the Church began making plans to send a group of missionaries to Basutoland, South Africa. Due to the war and concerns for their safety, the plans were not put into effect until 1941, and by 20<sup>th</sup> March 1941 Desnoyers and 16 other priests had arrived in New York. They boarded the Egyptian flagged ship *Zam-Zam* which was to take them to Cape Town. In addition to the Roman Catholic priests there were 120 other missionaries (including women and children) en route to South Africa to replace German missionaries who had been interned by the British. Also on board were two dozen volunteer ambulance drivers (they were American and were described as young, irreverent and boisterous). They had signed on with the British-American Ambulance Corps and were to serve with the Free French in North Africa.

The *Zam-Zam* stopped at Trinidad and then at Recife Brazil which it left on 8<sup>th</sup> April. On the morning of 17<sup>th</sup> April the ship was in mid Atlantic when it was attacked by the German surface raider *Atlantis* under the command of Captain Bernhard Rogge. The *Zam-Zam* was disabled and most of the passengers and crew took to the lifeboats and were taken on board the *Atlantis*. Captain Rogge dispatched his launch to pick up those in the water and those still on the *Zam-Zam*. Desnoyers had a golden chalice with him and had left it on the *Zam-Zam* when he abandoned ship. The chalice had been a gift to Desnoyers from his brother, a doctor, on Desnoyers’ ordination and he was delighted when Captain Rogge retrieved it from the *Zam-Zam* and returned it to him. On 18<sup>th</sup> April the passengers from the *Zam-Zam* were transferred to the German passenger ship *Dresden*. The *Dresden* sailed to Biarritz, France and negotiations took place to return the neutral American passengers to the United States. The fate of the female Canadian passengers is well documented in Carolyn Gossage’s book *The Accidental Captives*.

The Canadian priests were treated by the Germans as prisoners of war even though they were clearly not belligerents. Desnoyers was transferred to Stalag XB, Sandbostel and eventually to Stalag 344, Lamsdorf. He described his time as a P.O.W. as a sea of suffering and having to endure inhuman treatment and degradation. After the forced march described in this portion of the diaries, he accompanied McLardy on the next march and was liberated on 4<sup>th</sup> April 1945. He was returned to Canada, and on 8<sup>th</sup> May 1945 he celebrated mass in his home town of Farnham, Quebec. In May 1946 he finally travelled to Basutoland where he served for 38 years, returning to Canada in May 1984. Soon afterwards, he was transferred, for health reasons, to his home diocese of Saint Joseph. He passed away on 10<sup>th</sup> August 1993 at the age of 79.

### iii **Adolph Hitler speech**

Adolf Hitler was appointed Chancellor of Germany on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1933. On that date, and on subsequent anniversaries of his assumption of power he delivered speeches to the German people. The speech heard by Clare, Tattersall and McLardy on 30<sup>th</sup> January 1945 was to be Hitler’s last address to the German people. This speech covers the betrayal of Versailles, the dire financial state in 1933 when Hitler was asked to accept power, the restoration of German military

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might between 1933 and 1939 and his railings against the spectre of Jewish Asiatic Bolshevism. Hitler expounds on his mission and duty to work and fight for his people. Finally, he exhorts old comrades, soldiers, able bodied, sick, weak, city dwellers, women and girls to resist, struggle and sacrifice. In contrast, his first speech as Chancellor in January 1933 had promised the awakening and the beginning of a great time for Germany.